

Temples and Tombs

Introduction:

My most downloaded book on the internet is 'The Tabernacle of David and the Temple of Solomon.' (90% and 10% respectively). [All my books on the internet are free and have no copyright.]

This has recently been superseded by Tongue of the Learned: Hebrew: Volumes 1, 2 and 3, Generational Blessings by Amanda Buys of South Africa and Tongue of the Learned: Greek: Volumes 4 and 5. [Current Status: May, 2013]

The former number one has slid to number four!

My current field of research, therefore, is not really new. The former part of the prior number one was published in the year 2000. It covers the Origin of the Teaching, Photographs of the Nelson Convocation, (1967), a Report on the Holy Easter Convocation Held at Nelson, N.Z., I Will Build Again the Tabernacle of David by Brother Coady, Scripture, Forms of Praise, Sacrifice of Praise, Music Induces Worship, Bill Gothard on Music, Three Stage Restoration of the Presence of God, The Ark of the Covenant (Josephus), David's Method of Worship, The Life of David, the Three Anointings of David, the Psalms, the Three Decisions of Zadok, Relationship of the Tabernacle of Moses, the Tabernacle of David and the Temple of Solomon, Deception and Usurpation in the Transfer of Power to Solomon, The Twenty-two Truths Restored to Church in 1948 and David Reflects on His House.

So, phrases like, the Tabernacle of David, the Ark of the Covenant, Zion, Psalms of Praise and Restoration, are not a new thing to me. Neither are the Gihon Spring, Hezekiah's Conduit, Pool of Siloam and David's Conquering Jebus (**2 Samuel 5**). Dr. E.W. Bullinger's map of the location of Zion, on page 234 of my book, together with Warren's Shaft and the Siloam Inscription, is being endorsed by current research.

Ken Kline's recent DVD titled, 'Jerusalem and the Lost Temple of the Jews', is well-worth viewing. In it he works extensively with David Sielaff. The film is dedicated to Dr. Ernest L. Martin. I am familiar with Ken and his work, but the latter two names are completely foreign to me. Another name that emerges is Professor Buchanan, and now from Ken Kline again, Andrew Gabriel Roth, who is in the process of releasing a DVD on the correct temple location.

When I listened to 'How Israel Will Conquer the Middle East', by David Sielaff, an edited and updated article of Dr. Ernest L. Martin's 1994, title of the same name, I was stopped in my tracks. It all made sense!

Here is that article.



Prophecy Article

Expanded Internet Edition - December 1, 1994

**How Israel will
Conquer the Middle East**

By Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., 1994

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The title of this Prophetic Report has within it the word "conquer." This is a word that often has accompanying its meaning the connotation of force and power. The word in national contexts usually gives people the impression that a total conquest is indicated by which the armed forces of a nation are used to compel other states into submission. But I must hasten to add that though the prophecies of the Bible show that Israel will have a supremacy of power and influence among most of the countries of the Middle East in the years just ahead, Israel's "conquering" will not be accomplished in the normal manner of one nation warring against another. Israel will actually "conquer" the Middle East in a far more subtle and esoteric way than most people imagine today. And the outcome is inevitable because the prophecies of the Bible show that Israel will be in a position of power and glory within the Middle East before the Second Advent of Christ. But how?

Let us first be aware of what will NOT apply in Israel's "conquering" of the Middle East. Though Israel is the strongest military power in their area of the world, with a highly technical and sophisticated military machine (with atomic weapons) which could wreck devastating power against any aggressor, the Bible shows that Israel will NOT use their military muscle in order to take over effective control of the Middle East. Oh yes, the military power will be there as a back-up, but the use of such force

will not be the main way in which Israel will come to a governance in their area of the world. Let me explain the biblical answer why the use of military force as a primary weapon will NOT be the method to be used.

It should first be remembered from a biblical point of view that in remote times God brought Israel out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses and commanded Israel to go into the land of Canaan and conquer the Canaanites who then inhabited the land. God intended for Israel at that time to "conquer" the land of Canaan by the ordinary method of using their armed forces. However, as we are all aware, ten of the spies sent to view the land grew fainthearted when they witnessed the physical size of the inhabitants as well as their well-trained armed forces and high walled villages and towns. Israel temporarily forgot how God had caused them to triumph over the superior forces of Egypt by the use of God's miracles, and now they were trembling that Israel was inferior in military strength to the Canaanites. This reluctance to invade the land immediately and "conquer" the land by military force caused God to get angry with Israel. He sent them into the wilderness for another forty years (for each day they spied out the land, they had to spend a year in the desert regions south of the land of Canaan).

This did not end the story, however. After forty years, the armed forces of Israel were finally led by Joshua into the land that was to become the "Holy Land,.'" and they were able to secure most of the central region of what God intended them to have. But again they disobeyed God. They gave up the attempt to drive out the Canaanites and their various tribes from the "Holy Land" so God prophesied that from then on these people would continue in the land and be a **"prick in their sides"** (Numbers 33:55). God even made them the promise that he would not drive out the inhabitants of the land before them, and that they would continue to be a curse upon Israel (Judges 2:20-23; 3:3-7). And this very thing occurred. Even much later, when David finally conquered all the land of Canaan from the eastern branch of the Nile in the south to the river Euphrates in the north and east, God still let many of the Canaanites and Philistines remain in some of the choicest parts of the "Holy Land." Actually, even the area called the "Stronghold of Zion" at Jerusalem remained in Canaanite hands until the time of David. Even after this, the peoples of the land continued to reside in Israel and Solomon even used some of them for menial service, which lasted until after the Babylonian Captivity. As far as the Philistines were concerned (who later gave their name to what people call "Palestine"), they still inhabited the five cities on the southwest coast of Israel from Ashkelon down through what is now called the Gaza strip. Truly, God meant business with Israel. Since they steadfastly refused to invade, conquer and expel the Canaanites and the Philistines in the manner that God had decreed by the normal methods of war, God then told Israel that these people would remain in the land. This condition still exists.

The Foolishness of King David

Though at the time of the Exodus God told Israel to "conquer" the Canaanites by using their armed forces, their failure to respond to God's directions forced them into a situation in which they will never be able to rid themselves of the earlier inhabitants (or later immigrants into the region) by the use of their armed forces alone. Indeed, King David secured most of the promised land of Israel that God had given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (though David did not expel all the Canaanites or Philistines). He then decided to do what God had not commanded. He ordered Joab, the commander of the armed forces, to muster a huge army from Judah in the south and Israel in the central and northern parts of the country. His intentions no doubt were to use this vast number of military personnel to take over Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. In a word, David thought it was now time for Israel to spread its wings and assume political and economic control of the whole of the Middle East. As a matter of fact, David's desire went further than that. Because of the influence of the Phoenicians in the western part of the Mediterranean and Egyptian dominance southward into the Sudan and central America, along with the control of the Aegean and Black Sea areas by the nations of Asia Minor, David would have effectively controlled the main part of the known world by conquering all those regions. Had he done so with the vast army that he had Joab to assemble, David would have taken over the practical control of the known world at the time. In writing some of the Psalms as he did during this period, he expressed his belief that he, or at least his son, would gain control over all areas of the world (Psalm 2 and 72). He felt that his Davidic dynasty would usher in what later people began to call "the Kingdom of God" which would dominate the whole world. This was no doubt the design of David when he ordered Joab to muster the armed forces and place them on a war footing.

But God had other ideas. David's ambitious plans were brought to a complete halt when God stepped in to frustrate the desires of David (I Samuel 24:1-25). At a much later period, Israel was also not allowed by God to overcome the Roman Empire in A.D.66 to 73 and again in A.D.132 to 135. And even today, Israel is only able, though quite effectively, to take care of its own interests in the Middle East. It does not now have the capacity to conquer and secure the whole of the area, and certainly not the totality of the world.

But back to David. In spite of being frustrated by God from carrying out his plan to "conquer" the world with his armed forces, God did allow Israel under Solomon to gain a decided control over all the earth, but by another means altogether. And it is this same type of maneuver that God will allow Israel to adopt and to practice to perfection in order for them to "conquer" the Middle East, and through their example, in the seven years before the return of Christ Jesus to this earth, to have an influence over all areas of the world. This is when a type of messianic ruler will emerge whom the apostles referred to (2 Thes. 2:1-12). He will come from the Middle East, and govern from Jerusalem in particular. On the heels of this will come the Second Advent and the Kingdom of God which the kingdom of Solomon was a type. Now note this

important point. Solomon managed to control (or, to "conquer") the Middle East and to influence the world, but NOT by the use of his army.

Solomon's Kingdom a Type

Soon we are going to find that the people of Israel will once again adopt the principles of Solomon in coming to dominate the Middle East. His methods will work every time if they are done in benevolence and good-will. And what did Solomon do in a typical fashion in order to have the Middle East and finally the whole world prostrating at his feet? Note what the Bible says in the clearest of language. It is by using these methods that Israel will be very effective at this end of the age. Israel is soon going to adopt them once they realize that the Holy Scriptures have the answers to all their social, political and economic problems as well as their national and international interests. Let us see what Solomon did that brought him a control over the Middle East.

There are several points that Solomon adopted, but let us attend to the more obvious. Look at I Kings 10:24. **"And all the earth sought [margin: sought the face of Solomon], TO HEAR HIS WISDOM, which God had put in his heart."** The essential faculty that Solomon possessed above all other men at the time was "wisdom," and the rest of the great men of the world knew it. **"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east country and all the wisdom of Egypt, For he was wiser than all men.. and his fame was in all nations round about"** (I Kings 4:29-31). The Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem to see Solomon and said: **"Behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard"** (I Kings 10:7). So, to gain the admiration of all on earth, Israel must begin to show exceeding wisdom in its affairs with others.

This fact of Solomon's wisdom led to other similar accomplishments. Solomon began to provide culture to all the world by his creation of literature (he spake 3000 proverbial stories) and his 1005 musical compositions (I Kings 4:32). Education in the sciences was a great attribute of his. He was a first class botanist and zoologist (verse 33) and he brought animals from around the world to Israel (I Kings 10:22). He established a wonderful transportation system over the Middle East (I Kings 4:26-28). His chief desire was to bring happiness and prosperity to all in his domain to Israelites and Gentiles alike (vs. 20, 21). Solomon was a top-notch negotiator and he brought peace among warring tribes and nations (v.24), and this brought safety to Israel (v.25). He made Israel the economic capital of the world and established a cartel which set the prices involved in trading around the Middle Eastern area (I Kings 10:28, 29). And besides this, he secured treaties with the nations of the world by having the kings send their daughters to him to be in his harem, and this helped to control the nations of the

world (I Kings 11:3). And though these princesses of the world finally turned away Solomon's heart from God, he was able to secure peace throughout the period of his reign because of the treaties he made with the foreign powers in the world.

Now, much has changed since the time of Solomon and we no longer have harems for peace treaties, but the same principles on the other matters still apply. Israel will have to wake up and begin to practice the ways of Solomon in aiding NOT ONLY ISRAELITES, but also the Gentiles still in the lands of Israel and in their neighboring countries. They need to start treating their neighbors and inhabitants (whether Jewish or Gentile) with the same kind of educational and cultural and economic benefits that Solomon began to provide to all within his territory. And though Solomon did not actually control the Middle East and the world by having his armed forces everywhere on earth, he still influenced and conquered them by his example: his wisdom, his peace, his patience, his knowledge, his understanding, his powers of negotiating, his benevolence and his care for all people under his supervision. When Israel as a nation begins to do these things in the next few years, God will bless them abundantly for their philanthropy and good deeds. Indeed, the kingdom of Jordan, Lebanon and even Syria (among others) will be' inviting Jewish professionals to come into their territories and help them to build up their economies and societies. The Bible also shows that many Jews will finally go into areas of Jordan and Lebanon and settle there (Zech.10:10). Even in Saudi Arabia Jews will be welcome if they come bearing with them the wisdom, knowledge, understanding and good-will of Solomon.

Does this seem like a fantasy? Is this a pipe-dream without any practical application in this part of the world where hatred now permeates the very air? Listen! It is God who will intervene in that area. God will soon send a spirit of grace and supplication to Israel (Zech. 12:9-14). They will make an "about face" in dealing with their neighbors and those within their territories. They will start showing the attributes of Solomon when they accept the One who is greater than Solomon, and that person is their real Messiah (Matt. 12:42). Israel will soon begin to mourn for the One who was pierced when He secured the salvation of the world. And though it was Israel by their prophets who introduced the teaching of the Messiah to the world, they are the very ones who remain without him. They have a messianic religion, without a Messiah! Yet this will change. They will be wise enough NOT to accept the long haired "Messiah" who was invented by Constantine and his successors and mimics the pagan gods. Israel will opt for the real Messiah with credentials from the Holy Scriptures. When they do, **"ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations.. .the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you"** (Zech.5:23). So, when Israel begins to show that grace, good-will and love to other people as did Solomon, and also accept the One greater than Solomon, they will "conquer" not only the Middle East, but they will also have the admiration of all on earth. That day is just on the horizon.

Ernest L. Martin

The Law Will Go Forth Out of Zion

And the Word of the Lord From Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:1-5 [KJ3] The Word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

2 And it shall be in the last days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it.

3 And many peoples shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mount of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion the Law will go forth, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

4 And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many peoples. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.

The greatest archaeological discovery in the history of the world is about to be made. It will assign the tomb of Tutankhamen into oblivion by comparison! Here is a major key to world peace. This will greatly change the Middle East and indeed, the entire world.

At the current time we do not see any evidence of this transpiring. But it will happen precisely as it is written in the Scriptures.

There will be a regrafting of Israel into its own olive tree. (**Romans 11**) The Jews, as a nation, will embrace the Messiah. The times of the Gentiles will cease. The centre of world evangelism will be Jerusalem. Their influence will extend to the entire planet!



[Temple Update Article](#)

Expanded Internet Edition - November 12, 2001

Major "Keys" in Discovering the Lost Temples of Jerusalem

By Ernest L. Martin, PH. D., November 2001

Just a few years ago (as late as 1995) all people in the world believed the Jewish Temples in Jerusalem were never lost from sight by modern man. It was universally agreed that the former Temples were once located somewhere east of the "Wailing Wall" and inside the Haram esh-Sharif. Yes, this is what the whole world accepted, but things are different now. The world is being staggered by new historical, biblical and geographical information that shows that all scholars throughout the earth have actually lost the knowledge of where those Temples were built. This loss of knowledge is rampant among Jewish religious authorities as well as ordinary Jewish laypersons. The historical documents show they have been oblivious to the true site of their former Temples for the past eight centuries. I show this fact in my new book "The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot." I have given convincing historical and biblical evidence that the Jewish people (and all scholars and religious groups throughout the earth) have thoroughly forgot the whereabouts of the once renown Jewish Temples. As a matter of fact, the "Wailing Wall" (that Jewish people insist is the remnant of their once glorious Temple) has absolutely nothing to do with any of the original architecture of the sanctuaries in Jerusalem. The western part of that rectangular shaped area that the Jewish people have selected to adore (and at which they presently congregate to worship, and they have done so for almost 430 years) is the remains of a structure that their forefathers held in utmost disdain and contempt in the first century. We now have available a major historical "key" that opens this truth to the clear understanding of all.

We can now see that modern Jews have lost their way on this important subject (including their Rabbis and religious scholars). They have literally set aside the true location of their former Temples and have substituted the real location for a first century Roman citadel called Fort Antonia that was built by Herod the Great. They are worshipping at the wrong place. The Jewish historian Josephus informs us that the southern wall of this Fort Antonia that they now revere was situated about 600 feet north of the northern wall of their former Temple at Jerusalem. ¹ The actual Temple with its exterior walls was a foursquare shaped tower that was a Greek *stade* in length on each side, or 600 feet on each of the four sides. There are no stones to be found on top one another of this former Temple as Jesus prophesied would happen. The original site of the Jewish Temple now stands in a secular and unsanctified state. It is forlorn, lonely, abandoned, and thoroughly forgotten by all Jews. It is even bereft of even a scant of attention by the very people who once adored it. The site is even accounted today by the Jewish people as an inferior part of Jerusalem and they give not the slightest reverence to it, though Maimonides (the great Jewish philosopher of the twelfth century) said the true spot would always retain its holiness and it would show

a permanent sanctification no matter what derelict condition it might become (see *Mishneh Torah*, sect.8, "Temple Service").

Strangely, the Jewish authorities lost the knowledge of the whereabouts of their Temples in the period following the Crusades. This was caused by their acceptance of particular doctrines (that to the Jews were novel mystical teachings of a religious nature and counter to biblical teachings) that diminished the role of the Temple in their social and religious environments. These false religious principles, along with making misjudgments on archaeological and geographical matters regarding Jerusalem, caused the generality of the Jews in the centuries following the Crusades to abandon their Temple site and to replace it with a false area. The erroneous site that the Jews accepted is interesting. It was their embrace of the Haram esh-Sharif (then sanctioned by Christians and Muslims) as the place where Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod constructed their Temples. By siding with the Christians and Muslim in this identification, they were wrong!

It is time that my Jewish brothers and sisters understand the enormous blunders they have made through their acceptance of false religious beliefs that their authorities (in the time of their "Dark Ages") have imposed upon the modern Jewish people. Indeed, they should "thank me" for having the gumption to point out to them their outrageous mistakes that the whole nation and religion are now engaged in. The Jewish people have a great future, but to achieve it they have to rid themselves of their nonsensical and false "Temple Mount" theories associated with the Haram esh-Sharif that are presently igniting the fuel of war and terrorism in the Middle East and alas, it has now arrived to my own country's soil with the terrorist attack on New York City. The Jewish authorities need to abandon their historical, geographical and religious misjudgments that originated among Jews within the medieval period by their absorption of mystical theological nonsense that their forefathers in the Talmudic and biblical periods shunned as heathen idolatrous concepts.

Listen, I am not "anti-Jewish" when I make my criticisms. I have nothing against the Jewish people in a personal sense. Even their own scholars will agree with me that my evaluation is correct. As for me, I am a Christian, and following the primrose path we Christians are as guilty as the Jews in selecting erroneous "holy places" in Jerusalem (and we Christians also need to get rid of them). The Muslims have not escaped either. They need to do the same thing with their equally false "holy places." In essence, the whole world has joined in the errors. There needs to be a thorough housecleaning of the enormous blunders among all groups regarding the history and geography of Jerusalem that are now thriving, festering and, yes, causing wars that are on the brink of spilling over into a grand scale world conflict.

The simple fact is, modern Jewish, Christian and Islamic authorities have literally abandoned and set aside the true location of the former Temples of God that were

once in Jerusalem. They have stripped the proper area (that was selected by God) of all its former holiness and sublime sanctification. They have substituted the real House of God (once located over the Gihon Spring at the southeastern ridge of Jerusalem) for the first century Roman military citadel called Fort Antonia that was built by Herod the Great. The Jewish people are unitedly directing their national devotions and religious worship to a wall of Fort Antonia (and by extension, to the interior buildings that were once on the other side of the wall such as a Temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, a Shrine to the City and People of Rome, plus an abundance of other deities and idolatrous artifacts that those in the Roman Imperial Army then worshipped). What an anachronism. What irony! It may be hard to believe but the Jewish authorities are adoring an alien pagan holy site once dedicated to the Roman army and gods.

The Medieval Historical and Geographical "Key" Unlocking the Location of the Temples

There is a major "key" that (if applied) can be of prime significance in identifying the true Temple site of God. This "key" is a historical truism vouched for by several eyewitness accounts of competent scholars from the time of Omar the Second Caliph (638 C.E.) to the historical evaluations of the first class Jewish historian Azariah De' Rossi who wrote as late as 1577 C.E. If modern historians and theologians will pay attention to this initial factor and subsequent ones that I will present (and let them serve as "deal points" in showing historical and geographical truths – which they all demonstrate), these facts will aid us in wading through the murky and sometime contradictory writers of Jewish literature beginning in the seventh century and thriving for the next thousand years that have confused Jewish scholars. The prime "key" is very clear. The first illustration of the "key" is not of Jewish origin. It is the observations a Christian archbishop who wrote a history about a main Jewish return to Jerusalem took place at the time of Omar the Second Caliph in 638 C.E. This historical account reveals a "deal point" of factual geographical knowledge that is recorded by the first Christian Arabic author and church leader by the name of Eutychius (Arabic name: *Said Ibn Bitriq*) who wrote his historical work in 876 C.E. He stated how Omar and Sophronius (the Christian archbishop of Jerusalem) originally came to a final recognition of the true site of the Jewish Temples in Jerusalem. In my new book mentioned above, I present the details about the conversations recorded by Eutychius that took place between Omar and Sophronius. If you have read my book, you will recall that there were three sites shown Omar by Sophronius as contenders for the place where the former Jewish Temples stood. Yet, it was the final place (the third site) that was eventually selected by Omar as the real area of the Jewish Temple. The first two places that Sophronius showed Omar (when Sophronius gave false identifications that the Caliph did not accept) were rightly aborted.

This third place suggested by Sophronius that Omar finally accepted was an area over the Gihon Spring. This former Temple site had a particular (and even a *unique*) architectural history associated with it that none of the other areas in Jerusalem possessed. Eutychius gave us a primary identifying "key" (that later Jews also recognized) that singled out this true site of the Temples. The "key" point of knowledge was the fact that the Romans from the year 70 C.E. to the time of Constantine (for 260 years) HAD NEVER CONSTRUCTED ANY BUILDINGS *of their own* on the site of the Jewish Temples. Eutychius made this statement as a standard sign of identification that all people in Jerusalem recognized. He went even further. Eutychius said it was also realized that the later Byzantine Christians from the fourth to the seventh centuries HAD AS WELL NEVER CONSTRUCTED ANY BUILDINGS *of their own* upon the site. These two evaluations eliminate the area of the Haram esh-Sharif from being considered as a proper Temple site because in 876 C.E. (even when Eutychius wrote) there was an Al Aqsa Mosque within the Haram and the structure called the Dome of the Rock was also there.

This means that Sophronius was informing Omar in 638 C.E. (that for over 300 years since the time of Constantine) there had been *no buildings of any kind* constructed by the former Gentiles who controlled Jerusalem on the site of the Temples in Jerusalem. Consequently, there were no ruins in the area that could have come from the Romans or Byzantines. What we discover is the simple fact that the Romans and the Byzantines left the whole region of the former Temples to be a unique "Jewish area" in Jerusalem between the year 70 C.E. and 638 C.E. (for 568 years). They had a specific reason for not building within the region. Early Christians said it was to sustain the reliability of the prophecy of Christ that the Temple area would remain in ruins with no stone on another. Note the words written by Eutychius (translation is by *F.E.Peters*). ²

"Then Omar [*Umar* in Arabic] said to him [to Sophronius]: 'You owe me a rightful debt. Give me a place in which I might build a sanctuary [*masjid* "a prayer shrine"].' The patriarch said to him: 'I will give to the Commander of the Faithful a place to build a sanctuary where the kings of *Rum* [the Romans] WERE UNABLE TO BUILD. It is a rock where God spoke to Jacob and which Jacob called the Gate of Heaven and the Israelites the Holy of Holies. It is the center of the world and was a Temple for the Israelites....[And], the Byzantines neglected it [that is, the Byzantines left the site empty] and did not hold it in veneration, NOR DID THEY BUILD A CHURCH OVER IT" (capitalization and bracketed words mine). These were well-known facts being told Omar by Sophronius.

The Gentile Romans and Byzantines deliberately shied away from building on the spot in order for the prophecy of Christ to remain in fulfillment. So, they left the southeast section of Jerusalem empty of any major buildings (where the former City of David had been at the original Mount Zion). Oh yes, we do have a few Christian records that the desolation of the area had been graced on occasion by a ramshackle

hut or a temporary covering for some Roman farmers who once watched over some crops that once grew in the region. Other than these few temporary and isolated agricultural shelters (none of them ever lasted more than a few seasons of farming), there were NO PERMANENT BUILDINGS constructed by the Romans or Byzantines within the area of the Temple Mount (there were no churches, no holy shrines and no government buildings). This was the clear teaching of Eutychius. This fact becomes a "key" sign (a "deal point") because there are two later writers (one in 1235, another in 1577) testifying the same.

Once it is recognized that NO ROMAN or BYZANTINE buildings had ever been built in the region of the former Jewish Temples up to the time of Omar the Second Caliph, then the actions that Omar and his successors undertook at Jerusalem begin to make sense in their dealings with the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the early Arabic period. This fact recorded by Eutychius becomes a prime "key" or "deal point." And though the records show that Omar and Sophronius witnessed ruins of buildings in the area where the former Jewish Temples were once located (and even the fourth century Archbishop of Jerusalem named Cyril said there were Jewish ruins in his time), ³ those remains were reckoned by those in the seventh century to be *ruins of Jewish buildings that were part of a previous Temple* rebuilt in the time of Constantine and Julian.

Jews Wanted to Live in the Southern Part of Jerusalem

In Omar's time there were still some ruins from a few *Jewish* buildings and ruins of an abortive Temple that was attempted to be built in the time of Constantine and Julian. To be near those ruined buildings and Temple on the southeast ridge, the Jews in the time of Omar asked the Second Caliph for permission to move from Tiberias in Galilee to this part of Jerusalem. We have absolute documentary evidence that 70 Jewish families in the seventh century were allowed by Omar to settle in Jerusalem. They specifically informed Omar that they wanted to reside *in the SOUTHERN* part of Jerusalem so they could be near the Siloam water system *and to be in proximity to the site of their former Temple*. Omar, who was then beginning to build his Al Aqsa Mosque in the southern extremity of the Haram esh-Sharif, allowed them their request. This historical fact is found in a fragment of a letter discovered in the Geniza library of Egypt now in Cambridge University in England. Notice what it states:

"Omar agreed that seventy households should come [to Jerusalem from Tiberias]. They agreed to that. After that, he asked: 'Where do you wish to live within the city?' They replied: 'In the southern section of the city, which is the market of the Jews.' Their request was to enable them to be near the site of the Temple and its gates, as well as to the waters of Shiloah, which could be used for immersion. This was granted them [the 70 Jewish families] by the Emir of the Believers. So seventy households including women and children moved from Tiberias, and established

settlements in buildings [then in ruins] **whose foundations had stood for many generations."** (emphasis and bracketed words mine) ⁴

This *southern* area was quite to the *south* of the southern wall of the Haram (where Omar was building his Al Aqsa Mosque) because Professor Benjamin Mazar (when I was working with him at the archaeological excavations along the southern wall of the Haram) discovered two palatial Umayyad buildings close to the southern wall of the Haram that occupied a great deal of space south of the southern Haram wall. Those 70 families certainly had their settlement *further south* than these ruins of the two palatial Muslim government buildings. And note carefully, that these seventy Jewish families wanted to establish themselves "in buildings whose foundations had stood for many generations." This is a most important observation. It shows that there were indeed "foundations" of the former Temples that were built in the fourth century *still in place* in the region. There were no walls remaining on the foundations. In short, they were still Jewish RUINS just as Eutychius stated. It was from those *ruined areas* that Omar took his stone and placed it in his new Mosque that he was building at the southern end of the Haram esh-Sharif.

Interestingly, in this early document from the Geniza library in Egypt (and in all pre-Crusade records), Jews showed no interest in the "Rock" now under the Dome of the Rock. Their sole attention was to the area *SOUTH* of the Haram esh-Sharif and even further south from the Muslim government buildings that were built in the Umayyad period. Also, when the Karaite Jews a century after the time of Omar settled in Jerusalem, they also went *to this same southern area* which was the former site of the City of David on the southeast ridge as well as adjacently across the Kidron into the Silwan area. ⁵ These first Jewish settlers certainly knew that the former Temple site was well *SOUTH* of the Haram esh-Sharif. Indeed, their area of interest was even further *SOUTH* than the palatial Umayyad buildings that Professor Mazar and our Ambassador students (under my direction) discovered *SOUTH* of the Haram. The Temple was actually near the "waters of Shiloah" (waters that flowed from the Gihon Spring). All the Jews within the early Arabic period knew that the Temples were located over the Gihon. Anyone who would have suggested any other area would have been laughed at by the Rabbis and by the generality of the Jewish people. The Jewish authorities were then aware the Temples were over the Gihon Spring.

The Two Jewish Attempts to Rebuild the Temple in the Fourth Century

There had been two Jewish attempts to rebuild the Temple after the destruction of the Herodian Temple in 70 C.E.: one in the time of Constantine (which was 12 years in building — from the Edict of Milan in 312 C.E. to Licinius's defeat in 324 C.E.) and the other attempt to rebuild was about 37 years later in the time of Julian the Apostate. ⁶ These two occasions at reconstructing the Jewish Temples by Jewish people were frustrated by Constantine and then by natural (seismic) disturbances and

the buildings were never completed. Their ruins continued at the site (including the "Western Wall" of the Holy of Holies from the Constantine/Julian Temple built over the Gihon Spring and that portion of the wall remained for several centuries. This was especially true of some of the foundations (as the Geniza records show). ⁷ This early "Western Wall" has nothing to do with the present "Wailing Wall" of Herod's Fort Antonia that the Jews have adorned for the past 430 years. These were all Jewish ruins from those two fourth century Temples because Eutychius stated there were no Gentile buildings erected in or on that Jewish "Temple Mount" for just over the previous 568 years — from 70 C.E. to 638 C.E.

Omar Selected a Portable Stone from the Constantine/Julian Temple Ruins for his Qiblah

It was from among these Jewish ruins that Omar was shown the special stone that he took out of the ground and had it carried into the Al Aqsa Mosque that he was beginning to construct. This stone was a *portable* one. He set it up at the southern end of his mosque to serve as the pointing device (the *Qiblah*) that directed Muslims to face Mecca. This *portable* stone certainly WAS NOT that rock under the Dome of the Rock within the Haram esh-Sharif because that stationary "rock outcropping" is a part of the bedrock formation on the northeastern ridge. The Dome of the Rock was also the former area of the majestic Church of the Holy Wisdom. That Church had specifically been built over that particular "oblong rock." This was because Christians from the sixth century onward reckoned that this "Rock" had been the site of the *Praetorium* where Jesus was judged by Pilate. The footprint of Jesus was embossed into the surface of that "oblong stone." ⁸

Indeed, Sophronius as an eyewitness even wrote a poem while he was a young man about that Church of the Holy Wisdom and its accompanying Stone (the special "oblong" Rock) that later became the center piece of the Dome of the Rock. But, the Persians and Jews (about 24 years before the discussion between Sophronius and Omar) destroyed that Church of the Holy Wisdom. This obliteration was in 614 C.E. Still, everyone in Jerusalem knew at the time that that particular area of rock outcropping within the Haram esh-Sharif WAS ONCE the site of the former *Praetorium* and also the famous Church of the Holy Wisdom. This fact alone disqualifies the Dome of the Rock area from being the place that Sophronius was showing Omar. The stone that Omar selected was from a "Jewish area" where the Temples had been. The later historical records show that the place where the *portable* stone of Omar was found was at the Temple area over the Gihon Spring. That area was NEVER BUILT UPON by the Romans or Byzantines.

What Omar did was to take a *portable* stone (a single stone) from the area of the Gihon Spring and re-positioned it within his new mosque that he started to construct at the southern end of the Haram esh-Sharif. That stone became the *Qibla* [the pillar stone

that pointed the faithful Muslims to pray toward Mecca]. The reason Omar selected the southern part of the Haram esh-Sharif is because it fit all of the parameters that he had witnessed in his vision that Muhammad had supposedly given to him about his "Night Journey" from the "Farthest Mosque" into heaven. That is the location in Jerusalem that Omar selected to build his Mosque. It is highly significant and of utmost importance to recognize that Omar gave no spiritual accolades whatever to the "Rock" under the Dome of the Rock at the time, and no other Caliph did until the time of Abn al-Malik near the end of the seventh century. Indeed, Omar rejected the "Rock" under the Dome of the Rock as not having any holiness to those in Islam. Only later (after 750 C.E.) did Muslims begin to think that "Rock" had the prophet's footprint and handprint that were placed there during the "Night Journey." This teaching, however, was later derived, and only after the "Rock" started to become famous after the building of the Dome of the Rock in 692 C.E.

Omar, however, in this early period concentrated only on building what became the Al Aqsa Mosque in the extreme south of the Haram. And he went even further. Omar began to retrieve many ruined stones from the same area that Sophronius said was the site of the Jewish Temple (in the southeast quadrant of Jerusalem – over the Gihon Spring) in order to build the Al Aqsa Mosque itself. Remember, the Geniza document said that there were "foundation stones" still in the area where the Jews considered to be the place of their Temples. Thus, Omar imagined he was using stones from the original "Solomon's Temple" to construct his Muslim shrine. This is one reason why it became common for those in Jerusalem to call the new Mosque as the remains of "Solomon's Temple" (there was also another reason that I will provide a little later in this article). In fact, the procedure of moving stones from a holy place to make another place holy was a well-known and significant ritual called in Arabic "*Barakah*." In Muslim theological thought, the use of the ritual called *Barakah* signified the *transference* of all the holiness and sanctification once associated with Solomon's Temple to the new area of the Al Aqsa Mosque that was built about 600 feet to the north (in the south part of the Haram). *The Encyclopedia of Religion* ⁹ describes the Muslim theological principle called "*Barakah*." The use of this procedure allowed the holiness of one site (in Arabic eyes) to be *transferred* to another place and the new place could be called after the former designation even though it was in a different site.

"What is *Barakah* among the Arabs and in Islam? In the Arab world, the Semitic root *brk* seems originally to have meant both 'blessing' and 'crouching.' In the Arab mind, the idea seems to have developed of transferring this quality; *barakah* (noun; pl., *barakat*) [the quality or influence could be transferred] to such acts as kissing a hand or touching a holy object. See [the article] *Touching*. In popular Islam, traces of this nomadic notion of *barakah* [that is, a *transference* of holiness or title, or the influence of persons] remain in attitudes toward localities, historical personalities, and sacred objects." (words in brackets and underlining mine).

Look at this Muslim principle closely. It is important in regard to our subject we are now discussing. This use of *barakah* is a major error adopted by the people of Jerusalem that helped even the local people to lose sight of the former spot of the Temple (or other sites). By practicing this ritualistic procedure, the Islamic people of Jerusalem began calling the Al Aqsa Mosque by the name "Solomon's Temple." Christians in time also adopted the same tactic. When the Europeans during the Crusades spoke of the Al Aqsa Mosque, they stated that it was indeed the remains of "Solomon's Temple." Christians in Crusader times used the same principle of *barakah* to transfer the influence and significance of a site (or a person) in the Holy Land to an area (or areas) in Europe that was found to be in proximity to the same holy person or persons.

In all likelihood, the early Arabs learned the practice from previous Christians (and perhaps Jews) who regularly used the ritual of "holy transference" (or, *barakah*) for many relics and holy sites [I will later give some examples of this *transference*]. So, it was no surprise that Omar reckoned that the influence and holiness of Solomon's Temple could in his day be *transferred* to his new Mosque at the southern end of the Haram esh-Sharif. In no way was this principle a proper one from a biblical point of view. Note that when the Tabernacle went from place to place in the Wilderness with the Shekinah (Spirit) of God leading it, the places where the Tabernacle had been formerly pitched retained no holiness with them. To further illustrate this, Jeremiah called the attention of the Jews of his day to the ruined state of Shiloh (where the Ark had remained for scores of years) and yet in Jeremiah's time the area of Shiloh was ruined, desolate and bereft of all holiness. Jeremiah meant that Shiloh was deprived of all sanctification. [10](#)

In spite of this biblical proscription, later people began to use this erroneous principle called *barakah*, and Christians from the fourth century, Muslims from the seventh, and Jews from the eleventh century adopted the procedure almost wholesale as a proper means of *transferring* the so-called "holiness" of one site to another – even to places hundreds of miles away. This allowed the *influence* and *holiness* of Solomon's Temple to be *transferred* to another the place (using the well-known and well-used *barakah* principle). But there was also another reason why the Al Aqsa Mosque became known as "Solomon's Temple" in early Arabic times (and even during the Crusade period the Christians themselves also referred to the Al Aqsa Mosque as "Solomon's Temple"). Also within the Crusades, Christians reckoned the Dome of the Rock as being likened to King Herod's northern extension of the Temple and it was called by Christians "The Temple of God." Still, the whole of the area within the Haram esh-Sharif before the Persians and Jews destroyed the area in 614 C.E. was a major Christian region with two large and sumptuous churches built in the area. One of those churches that was built over the "oblong rock" now under the Dome of the Rock and it was called the Church of the Holy Wisdom. This was the "Rock" that Josephus stated was a prominent feature around which Fort Antonia [the Roman *Praetorium*] was built in Jerusalem.

There was another church built just to the south. This was the Church of Mary built on the southern flank of the Church having the "oblong Rock." It was constructed by the Emperor Justinian. It was a very large church called "The Church of Mary" which the historical records show was so huge that one of its associated buildings occupying about a third of the overall size of the Church was large enough to have a hospital of 3000 beds. Procopius the Greek historian of the sixth century said this Church was so prominent in Jerusalem that there was no Church in the world that could compare to it regarding its various features. The people of Jerusalem began to call this Church the "Nea Church" (the New Church). Procopius describes the construction of this Church. It was a basilica that was extremely large in all its dimensions. This gigantic church edifice was constructed over the area now covered by the Al Aqsa Mosque. Let us see.

The Importance of Locating "Mary's Church" (the Nea Church).

There is a third point that shows the former Jewish Temples were NOT built in any region of the Haram esh-Sharif. Why? Because Omar took a *portable* stone from the former Temple region over the Gihon Spring and brought it through the southern gate of the Haram esh-Sharif into the place he finally selected to be the Al Aqsa Mosque. That site at the time was a ruined area of the Nea Church (called the Church of Mary) that formerly existed at that exact spot before its destruction by the Persians and Jews in 614 C.E. Procopius the Byzantine historian who lived at the time of the Emperor Justinian described the Nea Church in great detail. I remember reading Procopius about 30 years ago when I taught a class at Ambassador College in England called "Classical Literature." I then concluded that he could only be speaking about the southern part of the Haram esh-Sharif. The geography fits perfectly with what Procopius said about Justinian building the Church of Mary. The account of Procopius is appended below. [11](#)

Many prominent scholars and archaeologists up to the year 1977 C.E. noticed that Arabic historical sources had identified the Church of Mary with the spot where Omar built the Al Aqsa Mosque (that is, at the southern end of the Haram esh-Sharif). Before 1977 C.E., it was generally accepted that this identification was correct. But in that year, Prof. Avigad while digging in the valley area southwest of the Haram esh-Sharif found the remains of a foundational area near the top of an associated cistern. The inscription stated that the building was constructed by the orders of Justinian. Prof. Avigad almost immediately began to think that he had found the Church of Mary (the Nea Church). [12](#) The inscription (which is certainly from Justinian's builders) was enough to convince the majority of the scholarly world that he had discovered the Nea Church. He was so wrong! Caution was thrown to the wind. Exuberance over the discovery of a Justinian monastery (and Procopius said the emperor Justinian built several structures in Jerusalem), led the scholars to misidentify the building. They at once began to call it the Nea Church. But in NO WAY is this identification proper.

Their judgement was too hasty. There are historical facts that disprove Prof. Avigad and his colleagues. They are fatal to his assumption that this site was the Nea Church. Look at the facts that I will present below. What the historical records show (and even the archaeology demands) is that the Nea Church (the Church of Mary) was located at the southern quarter of the Haram esh-Sharif and covering the same site as Omar's Al Aqsa Mosque.

1). When one reads all of the account of Procopius (I only record in the footnote above the central part about the Church of Mary itself), it will be found that Justinian renovated or built at least seven other major buildings in Jerusalem within his long life and rule (born 483 and ruled from 527 to 565 C.E.). ¹³ Prof. Avigad should *not* have been so hasty in his enthusiasm to identify his building with the Nea Church, since Justinian built seven other like buildings in Jerusalem.

2). The inscription found by Prof. Avigad was (as he admitted with his own words) located in "almost total darkness some 8 meters [25 feet] within a subterranean cistern, indicates that it was not intended to be a display inscription [for the general public]." ¹⁴ It was situated at a place where only building inspectors would have been able to read it. Thus, it was not at ground level where inscriptions for church edifices were normally displayed. This location of the inscription shows the site to be one of the seven Monasteries that Justinian built in Jerusalem.

3). Even more devastating to Prof. Avigad's theory, the inscription (besides saying the building was sponsored by Justinian's generosity) stated that the religious leader in charge of construction was: "the Most Holy Constantinus, Priest and Hegumen," ¹⁵ whereas for the special construction of the Church of Mary (the Nea Church) we have the precise statement of Procopius that "the Emperor sent an architect named Theodore who was supervised by the Bishop of Bacatha named Barachos." ¹⁶ The supervisors were two different persons who lived at different periods. And though Prof. Avigad showed a historical account that this Constantinus was once (at a later time) in charge of the Nea Church, the supervisor that Justinian had selected specifically as the first supervisor and builder of the Nea Church was Barachos, the Bishop of Bacatha. Prof. Avigad's building was not the Nea Church. It does have credentials for being one of the seven Monasteries built by Justinian that were later associated with the Nea Church in administrative ways.

3). But there is more. Look at underline # 1 in the account of Procopius found in footnote 9. The precise location of the Nea Church is well described. Procopius said: (1) "But this church alone stands in a different position; for the Emperor Justinian ordered it to be built upon the highest of the hills." Procopius had just said that "buildings in the city [Jerusalem] stand in one place, being either built upon the hills, or upon flat and open ground." Now, the site building in which Prof. Avigad found the Justinian inscription was just west of the Tyropoeon Valley and slightly upslope. It was NOT on "the highest hill." Indeed, Avigad's structure was practically on "flat and open ground" with only its eastern part requiring some minor vaulting for support. However, the actual Nea Church was built "upon the highest of the hills." It

was at the very top! The "highest of the hills" in Jerusalem at that time was the Haram esh-Sharif. And, without doubt, the Nea Church was constructed on the southern part of this "highest hill" with the pavement of the Nea Church elevated to be even with the top of the rocky ridge itself. Procopius continues:

4) Justinian had given his architects some enormous proportions for the length and breath of the church and its accompanying buildings. It was to be so grand and large that it was to be "a church in honour of the Virgin, to which no other can be compared" (first line of Procopius' description). So large was the church to be that (2) "the hill was not of sufficient size to enable the work to be carried out." While this "highest hill" in Jerusalem had its eastern and southern sides inclined rather sharply from its top down to its base, the narrow level space at the top of the hill could not contain the massive dimensions of the Nea Church. This geographical fact alone prohibits one from considering Prof. Avigad's monastery from being the Nea Church. ¹⁷ This is because there was NO SINGLE HILL with a top being the highest in Jerusalem in the area of his ruins. But the southern region of the Haram esh-Sharif fits the description of Procopius exactly.

5) Procopius continues: (3) "But a fourth part of the church, that toward the south wind and the rising sun, in which the priests perform the sacred mysteries, was left with no ground upon which to rest." From the top of the hill the slope was inclined so steeply that it became necessary to build huge columns (higher as one got further south and east) in order to build a level platform on which the foundations of the church pavement could be placed. Interestingly, this is precisely what one observes at the extreme south of the Haram esh-Sharif and in its southeastern portion where the vaulted area called "Solomon's Stables" are found. Procopius then continues: (4) "They laid foundations at the extremity of the flat ground [in the east and south, especially], and constructed a building rising to the same height as the [top] of the hill." From the flat ground around this "highest hill in Jerusalem" they build up vaulted foundations to reach the height of the top of the hill, and then they build a platform or a pavement of flat stones to make the whole of the eastern and southern area to the walls as an elevated enclosure. This is exactly how the Haram esh-Sharif is built today. Procopius continues: (5) "When they reached the [height of the] summit, they placed vaults [columned supports] upon the walls and joined this building to the other foundations of the church [to those other foundations located in the west and north]." Procopius continues: (6) "This church is one place is built upon a firm rock [the northern half], and in another place is suspended in the air [the foundations and pavement in the south and east were supported by vaulted columns with air in between]."

6) We now come to an important phase of Procopius' description because he states the Emperor had to make a major addition to the hill at it then existed. The Emperor did something that was not in the original hill. Note this important addition: (7) "The Emperor has added an other portion to the original hill." Since the original Haram area was surrounded by four walls that were almost in the shape of a rectangle, the

Emperor "added another portion to the original hill." To do this he would have had to enlarge the walled area. And this is apparently what he did in the south (and a portion in the east and a small part in the west). Let us look at this "addition." The Haram was not large enough in its southern portions to satisfy the gigantic measurements of the Church of Mary (the Nea Church) as Justinian intended. So, the builders began to construct a brand new mountain within the Haram enclosure (south and east) alongside the former high area to the north. In elevating this new area, the builders were (8) "being forced to raise a building equal in size to a mountain." Indeed, they elevated the whole of the southern area of the Haram to become level with the highest elevation in the north. To do this (9) "they cut blocks of stone of enormous size out of the mountains." This was to make this new "elevated mountain" in the south. This new mountain extended beyond the former southern wall of the Haram. This, as Procopius states, allowed them the (10) "form the church of the great length [it extended all the way to the east wall]" and then "After [the eastern extension] they had built it of a proportional width [this extended it south to where it was extending beyond the former southern wall]. This extension was no impediment to Justinian's engineers. He simply had them to create a new southern wall for the Haram esh-Sharif. The evidence of this can be seen today in the southern part of the walls. Note this:

From what is called the "Seam" in the east wall (Kenyon said the "Seam" was a little over 107 feet north of the southeast angle ¹⁸), Justinian appears to have built a southern extension and made a new southeastern angle. He then repositioned the whole of the southern wall that paralleled the former wall (some 107+ feet south) with refurbished and new stones (which were made to resemble all Herodian type of masonry). This reconstruction formed a new southwestern corner about 107+ feet south of the former angle. From there his architects built a new part of the western wall about 107+ feet north to intersect with the former southwestern angle. If this is true, and it appears as though this is what Procopius is stating, then Robinson's Arch and its stairways were a creation of Justinian and not a part of the original wall build by Herod. It will be noticed that the whole of the southern wall even today appears in a much newer condition than any of the stones in other parts of the Haram walls. It could well be that it was Justinian who *re-positioned* the south wall. Only extensive archaeological investigations can determine if this is true or not.

By extending the whole of the southern wall 107+ feet further south, this allowed the largeness of the Nea Church to be accorded the proper dimensions that were vouched for by an eyewitness who saw and described it while soon after it was constructed. This was the Piacenza Pilgrim who said (just after its construction) that there was in Jerusalem the Church of Mary "with its great congregation of monks, and its guest houses for men and women. In catering for travelers they have a vast number of tables, and more than 3000 beds for the sick." ¹⁹ Procopius also mentioned these complex of buildings that were part of the Nea Church. He said: (13) "While on either side of the other road [next to the Nea Church] are two hospices — the work of the Emperor Justinian — one of which is destined for the reception of strangers [travelers], while

the other is an infirmary for the sick poor." An acre of land is 43,560 square feet, and that would be a minimum size of a building that could reasonably house 3000 beds for the sick (and there was also side-by-side to the infirmary the hospice for travelers and this was of similar size). These two structures besides the Nea Church itself that is described as gigantic. All of this is in contrast to the guessing of Prof. Avigad as to the dimensions of his rival church across the Tyropoeon Valley. He guesses it to be about one acre in size (and this included the two hospices). Even his guessing about the size (he found no archaeological evidence for the shape or size of his rival church), the real Nea Church was much larger in size. It truly occupied the southern fourth of the Haram esh-Sharif, and certainly all of the area now covered by the Al Aqsa Mosque within the Haram.

7) As a closing point on the importance of the Nea Church being located at the southern end of the Haram esh-Sharif, it should be mentioned that Procopius has an interesting evaluation of the Emperor Justinian that can help us to understand the Emperor's great interest in architectural endeavors during his reign. Not only did Justinian build the grand Nea Church (the Church of Mary) in Jerusalem and other fine buildings, but he also constructed in different parts of the Empire. Notable among his achievements was the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia), one of the truly great buildings of the classical world (which is still standing majestically in Istanbul). According to Prof. Hagi Amitzur of Bar Ilan University in Israel, Justinian had a specific wish not only to equal Solomon as one noted for his architectural accomplishments, but Justinian had an intense desire to surpass Solomon. He loved being compared to King Solomon.

Prof. Amizur points out that when Justinian first looked to Jerusalem to build a structure, the thing that came to his mind was to erect a "shrine" (that is, "temple") — a word normally connected with the meaning of "Temple." Amizur translates Procopius as: "And in Jerusalem he dedicated...a *shrine* [that is, a *Temple*, emphasis mine] to which no other can be compared.) ²⁰ In short (and Amitzur argues his case convincingly), Justinian wanted his Nea Church to be called "a shrine" or "a Temple." ²¹ No wonder he wanted it to be the most grand building in the world, and in the capital city of his religion. At the dedication of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul in 537 C.E., his dedicatory words show something in the character of Justinian that pleased him beyond compare. He stated in conclusion (as Prof. Amitzur relates): "Solomon, I vanquished thee."

Justinian wanted people to look on him as the new "Solomon," and even superior to Solomon. So, as Amitzur argues effectively, the Nea Church became known as Justinian's "shrine" or "Temple" and the people looked on its construction as the rebuilding of "Solomon's Temple." Indeed, Amitzur makes the wise observation that Procopius' description of two important columns on the east side of the "shrine" were depicting the Jachin and Boaz (I Kings 7:21) that were prominent in Solomon's Temple. Procopius wrote: (12) "Of these columns, the two which stand before the door

of the church are of very unusual size, and probably second to no columns in the whole world." The suggestions made by Prof. Amitzur make perfectly good sense to me. So, Christians began to call the site of the Church of Mary the "Shrine of Solomon" in the sixth century. But that "Solomon" was "Justinian," not the Solomon of history. It was easy for Christians to continue this identification to the time of the Crusades when it was dogmatically believed that the building in the Haram taken over by the Knights' Templar was indeed in their view, "Solomon's Temple." It was truly "Solomon's Temple," but the "Solomon" was *Justinian*.

There is more to suggest this conclusion. When the Piacenza Pilgrim in Justinian's time described the Church of the Holy Wisdom as being the *Praetorium* where Christ's footprints were found in the "oblong rock" (now under the Dome of the Rock), he then made the further comment that the Church stood "in front of the Temple of Solomon." In going southward from the Church of the Holy Wisdom, the first edifice that would be encountered was the "Church of Mary" (the Nea Church) but it was also reckoned to be a "Shrine" ("Temple") and that "Solomon" (that is, the new "Solomon" otherwise known as the Emperor Justinian) had built it. This Nea Church was so grand in design and in dimensions that there was nothing else in Jerusalem to compare to it (so said Procopius). This "Church of Mary" was the same as the new "Solomon's Temple" and this outstandingly large church with its two enormous hospices alongside were all located at the southern part of and within the Haram esh-Sharif. So, "Solomon's New Temple" came into existence at the Haram. Even the southern wall of the Haram was moved southward for about 107+ feet to accommodate this complex of buildings.

The Church of Mary Once Occupied the Southern Fourth of the Haram — Its Importance

The real Church of Mary (the Nea Church) described clearly in Procopius was indeed the structure that preceded the Al Aqsa Mosque that was begun by Omar the Second Caliph. It is NOT the new one suggested by Prof. Avigad. Look at what Arabic historians of later times believed and many of our own modern scholars of early Arabic times. For example, the outstanding scholar of Arabic history, Prof. Guy Le Strange in his "Palestine Under the Moslems" gives an exact quote from the Arabic historian Shams ad Din Suyuti (1470 C.E. who was himself referring to earlier Arabic histories) stated that the spot where Omar selected for his Al Aqsa Mosque was certainly the precise area where the Church of Saint Mary (the Nea Church) stood, and it was Justinian (that is, "Solomon") who built it. Notice what Suyuti wrote:

"Now, when Omar made the capitulation with the people of the Holy City[Jerusalem], and entered among them, he was wearing at that time two long tunics of the kind called Sumbulant. Then he prayed IN THE CHURCH OF MARY, and when he had done so, he spat on one of his tunics. And it was said to him: 'Dost thou spit here because that this is a place in which the sin of polytheism has been committed?' And Omar answered: 'Yes, verily the sin of polytheism hath been

committed herein; but now, in truth, the name of Allah hath been pronounced here.'" ²²

Professor Le Strange accepted this Arabic identification of the Al Aqsa Mosque with the site of the former Church of Mary (and the editors of The Palestinian Pilgrims' Text Society seconded this belief ²³). In my view (which I will soon give an abundance of evidence), there can really be no doubt that this is a correct evaluation. ²⁴ The geographical area for the site of Mary's Church (the Nea Church) built by Justinian fits the Al Aqsa Mosque region perfectly. ²⁵ Conder consistently referred to Al Aqsa Mosque as built on the ruins of the Nea Church without the any doubt in its identity. Clearly, before 614 C.E., all the Haram esh-Sharif was Christian.

This means that in the sixth century there were two major Christian churches standing within the walls of the Haram esh-Sharif. One was in the central and north part called the Church of the Holy Wisdom over the area of the later Dome of the Rock, and the other dominated the southern part (and even with the southern wall extended 107+ feet south to accommodate it) called the Church of Mary (Nea Church) situated over the southern fourth of the enclosure. Look at what the location of these two Christian churches means to our present inquiry. With the Church of Mary built by Justinian (the new "Solomon") being at the exact site of the present Al Aqsa Mosque, this then means that within the Haram esh-Sharif (when Omar told Sophronius that the southern end of the Haram was where he wanted to build his Mosque) that it was possible to see the ruins of two major Byzantine Churches within that Haram area that had recently been destroyed by the Persians and Jews in 614 C.E. Omar was looking over the ruins of those two Christian churches. And, as the early Arabic historians knew, it was the within the ruins of the latter church (the Church of Mary, the Nea Church), that Omar started to construct his Al Aqsa Mosque. This region is really a Christian site, but Sophronius gave it to Omar.

These facts present an impossible historical scenario according to the early records of the Arabs (and as we will soon see) as well as the Jews. As clear as Eutychius could write it, he stated that the place where Omar first selected his portable stone to be the *Qiblah* of his Al Aqsa Mosque within the Haram esh-Sharif, was a ruined Jewish area in which there had NEVER been any Roman, Byzantine or Arabic construction prior to the time of Omar. The site that Sophronius showed Omar was over the Gihon Spring and much to the south of the Haram esh-Sharif. Now note this. Further, we have the same testimony given to us by the Jewish Rabbi David Kimchi who lived just after the main period of the Crusades in 1235 C.E. (about 600 years after the time of Omar and Sophronius). The description he provides to us is very similar to what the earlier historical authorities had to tell us. It seems that the early Jewish sector of Jerusalem was always reckoned to be over the southeast ridge and across the Kedron Valley an up the slope of Olivet in the south. We should note carefully what this Jewish authority had to say about the site of the former Temple in his day. This Rabbi

was still testifying that NO GENTILE BUILDINGS were ever built within the former precincts of the Temple of God at Jerusalem.

The Witness of Rabbi David Kimchi on the Ruins of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Concerning the former Temple site in Jerusalem, we also have the express testimony of Rabbi David Kimchi, one of the great biblical commentators of the Jews (otherwise known as the RADAQ) who lived from about 1160 to 1235 C.E. Rabbi Kimchi said that as late as his time the region of the former Temples still remained in ruins and that it continued to be a fact that NO GENTILES (whether Roman, Byzantine or Muslim) HAD YET BUILT ANY OF THEIR BUILDINGS OVER THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE. He said (and I am quoting him verbatim): "And [the Temple] is still in ruins, [in] that the Temple site WAS NEVER BUILT ON BY THE NATIONS" (*Commentary* on Isaiah 64:10 and quoted by Prof. Kaufman in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April, 2000, p.61 – the letters in capitals are my emphasis).

The comments of Rabbi David Kimchi are first-class Jewish testimony in about 1235 C.E. He carried on the same theme as the former Archbishop Eutychius did back in 876 C.E. The tradition among the inhabitants of Jerusalem that *no Gentile construction* was permitted on the former site of the Jewish Temples was still in effect 360 years after Eutychius. So, in the year 1225 C.E., Rabbi Kimchi still continues the theme by dogmatically stating that NO GENTILE BUILDINGS had ever been built on the Temple site – and this included the period of 600 years before him when the Muslims (and during the Crusader period, also the Christians) had control over all areas of Jerusalem! In fact, Rabbi Kimchi said that the actual state of the former Temple EVEN IN HIS DAY was that it was "still in ruins."

There can be no doubt that Rabbi Kimchi was stating absolute fact and that he was not speaking allegorically that the so-called "ruin" including the Christian and Muslim buildings that were within the Haram esh-Sharif. Indeed, the buildings within the Haram esh-Sharif through the early Arabic period and through the first stages of the Crusades (when Christians controlled the Haram), the buildings were reckoned as holy and sanctified and they were in absolute beauty and well kept up in order for the masses to worship within their sumptuous surroundings. Those buildings within the Haram were anything but being in ruins. But, the testimony of Rabbi Kimchi states clearly that "the Temple is still in ruins, in that the Temple site was never built on by the Gentiles."

This latter observation of Rabbi David Kimchi is the second "key" (or "deal point") that the areas of the Al Aqsa Mosque or the Dome of the Rock COULD NOT be considered as possible contenders for the original sites of the Temples because those areas had long been built upon first by Christians (for the Dome of the Rock area) and then by Muslims for both the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. In fact, we have the

testimony of the Jewish poet Solomon Ibn Gabirol of Spain (born about 1021 and died about 1070 C.E.) who included among his collection of poems an important observation concerning the state of the Temple in Jerusalem. He wrote (and he was followed by many others who stated virtually the same thing):

"Remember me when You [God] rebuild Thy Temple, that I may behold the bliss of Thy chosen ones. And purify me to seek diligently Thy Sanctuary[the Temple now] *devastated and ruined*. And to cherish its [the Temple's] *stones and its dust, and the clods of its desolation, and rebuild Thou its wastes*." [26](#)

Gabirol cannot be describing the site of the Haram esh-Sharif which was everything but desolate. It was totally a built-up area and NOT in a ruined state. Then there are the comments of the eminent poet of the Jews by the name of Judah Halevi who lived a short time after Gabirol (Judah Halevi lived from about 1085 to 1140 C.E. – during the Crusades). He confirms the state of the Jewish Temple as then consisting of desolate ruins. He wrote several works about the condition of Jerusalem and the site of the Temple in his time. Note the lament of Rabbi Judah Halevi over the *ruined* and *desolate* state of the Temple Mount during this early period of the Crusades. The Temple site was certainly not then a built-up area like the Haram esh-Sharif was at the time! This area from the Crusades until 1900 C.E. was an empty area, with no houses.

"My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west. How can I find savor in food? How shall it be sweet to me? How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet Zion lieth beneath the fetters of Edom [Rome, Christians by inference], and I in Arab chains? A light thing would it seem to me to leave all the good things of Spain [where he lived], seeing how precious in mine eyes to behold *the dust of the desolate sanctuary* [in Jerusalem]." [27](#)

"Sweet would it be unto my soul to walk naked and barefoot upon *the desolate ruins where thy holiest dwellings were*; in the place of thine Ark where it is **hidden [Halevi believed the tradition that the Ark was hidden in the tunnels and caves underneath the Holy of Holies] **and in the place of thy Cherubim which abode in thine innermost recesses."** [28](#)**

Thy captives "pant toward thee, worshipping everyone from his own place toward thy gates [in Zion]. They are in pain *over thy* [Zion's] *desolation, and that weep over thy ruin*." [29](#) **"The tumult of my tenderness is stirred when I remember thy glory of old that is departed thine habitation [the Temple] *which is desolate*."** [30](#)

"They [our Jewish people] *mourn the wasteness of thine* [the Temple's] *overthrow and weep at thy destruction bitterly*." [31](#)

"Sweet to my soul it would be to wander barefeet, to go unshod in places waxen waste – desolate since the oracles were there: Where thine Ark rested, hidden in thine heart, and were, within [the Temple] thy Cherubim were placed." ³²

A short time later, the famous Maimonides (who modernized Judaism with rationalistic doctrines in the twelfth century) was also non-allegorical in his descriptions of the Temple Mount when he came to relate the condition of the Temple site in his day. We should pay attention to what Maimonides stated during the time when the Crusading Christians were in charge of Jerusalem. Indeed, he and his father and brother even visited Jerusalem for three days on their way from North Africa to Egypt and they all witnessed the ruins and desolation of the Temple site while the area of the Haram esh-Sharif and the Dome of the Rock were then built over with beautiful religious structures and plazas that were kept in the finest conditions (there were no ruins within the region of the Haram whatever). Note what Maimonides stated in his "Book of Temple Services," the eighth section of the *Misneh Torah* written in the year 1180 C.E.

"As far as the Sanctuary and Jerusalem were concerned, the first sanctification [by Solomon] hallowed them for all time to come.... Wherefrom the Sages have averred, even though they are desolate [at the time of Maimonides], the sanctuaries retain their pristine holiness.... Now just as we are obliged to keep the Sabbath for all time to come, so must we reverence the Sanctuary [the Temple] for all time to come; for even though it is in ruins, its sanctity endures."

There is even more testimony to the site of the Temple in Crusader times being in ruins. In 1210 C.E. there is a brief account by Rabbi Samuel Ben Samson that in Jerusalem was a place where "only the foundations [of the Temple] remain now in existence." It was near the "fount [spring] of Etham, the bathing place of the priests." This is a reference to the Gihon Spring which had been closed up by Saladin in 1187 C.E. Rabbi Samson said that opposite the fount was a Gate in the Western Wall. "At the base of this wall there is to be observed a kind of arch *placed at the base of the Temple*. It is by a subterranean passage that the priests reach the fount of Etham, the spot where the baths [of the priests] were." ³³ The spring was then being named after a site called Etham. This spring was also reckoned as the miraculous "Well of Miriam" that appeared in various places and was once located in the time of Moses at the Tabernacle entrance.

Why did some Jews in the Crusade period call the Gihon Spring "the Fount of Etham"? This is easy to answer. Etham was an area south of Bethlehem that was once a water source for Jerusalem when conduits brought water to Jerusalem from the higher area of Etham. Many people thought that the water that came from the Gihon had its origin in the Etham area and thus the Gihon Spring in Jerusalem was sometimes called by that name. In the time of Rabbi Samson, there was no outside entrance to the Gihon

or the Etham fount (it was "blocked up" by Saladin). The spring had to be reached by subterranean tunnels and shafts that led downwards from the Ophel mount [the site of the Temple] to the waters that finally emerged at the Siloam pool area southeast of the city. In no way could Rabbi Samson have been describing the Dome of the Rock area within the Haram esh-Sharif in his account of the Temple site. He concluded his remarks with: "*Only the foundations [of the Temple] remain now in existence*, but the place where the Ark stood is still to be seen" (*ibid.*). He then said that from that spot he and his party then journeyed to the adjacent Pool of Siloam.

And now we once again come to the comments of Rabbi David Kimchi. He reported about the condition of the Temple and the Temple Mount about twenty years after Rabbi Samson (about 1235 C.E.). He stated without ambiguity that the site of the former Temples in Jerusalem "were still in ruins" in his day and he qualified his statement with the further observation that NO GENTILE BUILDINGS WERE THEN ERECTED OVER THE TEMPLE SITE (this account disqualifies the whole region of the Haram esh-Sharif with its Dome of the Rock from being considered because there were then many Christian and former Muslim buildings in evidence in those areas). For the grandeur of the Haram esh-Sharif in Arab times, we have the eyewitness reports of Muslim travelers (principally *Nasir-i Khusraw* and *Al Ghazali*), and the Christian *Daniel the Abbot* ³⁴ who report the beautiful buildings and pavements of the plaza areas that were in various parts of the Haram esh-Sharif and that the earlier Muslims and the later Christians viewed the precincts as a holy and sanctified place. The Haram esh-Sharif was especially taken care of with utmost attention and that no ruins of any kind were found within its confines. Even with frequent earthquakes the sites were quickly restored.

So, these wonderful descriptions of the beauty of the Haram esh-Sharif during the period of the Crusades show conclusively that Rabbi Kimchi was not allegorizing about the ruins and desolation of the Temple site at that same time. It also backs up the truthfulness of his statement that none of the previous nations (the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Egyptians, Turks, Crusading Christians, etc.) had ever built any buildings whatever over the former site of the Jewish Temple located over the Gihon Spring area in Jerusalem.

There is a Third Jewish Witness in 1577 C.E. Who Virtually Repeated Rabbi David Kimchi.

The fact is, Rabbi David Kimchi in 1235 C.E. *was NOT the last Jewish authority* who unambiguously stated that the beautiful Christian/Muslim buildings of the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque COULD NOT BE the site of the Temple. These Christian/Muslim areas were not in ruins. Just the opposite was the case. Our next proof is yet a third "key" (or "deal point") on this same theme given by a first class Jewish historian some 335 years after Rabbi David Kimchi. This is the testimony of a

Jewish historian who was also aware in the year 1577 C.E. that the site of the former Temples WAS STILL NOT BUILT UPON by the Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Crusaders, Egyptians or Ottoman Turks. Other than the Jews themselves in the brief period in the fourth century in the time of Constantine and again in that of Julian (when two Temples were started by the Jews, but aborted), there had never been any buildings of consequence ever constructed on that southeast ridge over the Gihon Spring. And now we come to the sixteenth century. Jewish authorities as late as 1577 C.E. knew the Haram was not the Temple site. They knew that the City of Jerusalem *had been moved north and westward!*

We have written record from one of the finest Jewish historians of the sixteenth century (one who had access to scores of early Jewish records, as well as many Islamic historical accounts and he was a master of early Greek and Roman historical sources that he acknowledged as extremely valuable and with whom in most cases he agreed). His name was Azariah de' Rossi. He wrote a first class historical work published in Hebrew by 1577 C.E. in which he garnered the writings and records of former Jewish historians and complemented them with the major Gentile works of the past that most Christian authorities in the sixteenth century relied on for their accuracy.

The book of Azariah de' Rossi was: "*The Light of the Eyes.*" And true to the title, the book does illumine the eyes of the reader with some excellent (and true) observations on the historical accounts of the past that particularly interested Jews, but it incorporated many of the Gentile historians of the past that many Jews in the sixteenth century had jettisoned from their historical studies. From a historical point of view, this Jewish historian (Azariah de' Rossi) must be reckoned the finest Jewish historian from the time of Maimonides until the period of the enlightenment in our modern period. And, among other things, De' Rossi provided the same "key" (or "deal point") on locating the proper site of the former Temples of the Jews in the City of Jerusalem as did Eutychius in 876 C.E. and Rabbi David Kimchi in 1235 C.E. Let us see.

De' Rossi in his book "*Light of the Eyes*," ³⁵ relates a belief that was widespread in the sixteenth century among scholarly Jews. It was commonly accepted among the Jews that the present City of Jerusalem was NOT the actual City of David (or even the City of Herod in the first century). They believed it was a new city built by the Emperor Hadrian a few miles north of the former city that the emperor named Aelia. In this belief the Jews were correct about Hadrian constructing his new city, but De' Rossi wrote authoritatively to assure the Jews of his time that they were wrong to think that Hadrian had built Aelia several miles north from the original site of the Jerusalem of David and Herod. Even the famous Jewish statesman and scholar Don Isaac Abarbanel (who wrote some 70 years before De' Rossi's time) had stated that Zechariah 12:6 proved that modern Jerusalem was NOT in its original place. but that it was a few miles north of its former location. To many Jews living at the time, it was thought that the "Jerusalem" of their day (in the sixteenth century) was in a different

location than that of David or Herod. But it was also believed that this re-positioning of Jerusalem would be righted in the Messianic period, and that Jerusalem would once again be built in its original areas. Don Isaac Abarbanel specifically taught that the Jerusalem of his day would be moved back to its pristine site (as Zechariah 12:6 stated) once the Messiah would arrive.

While De' Rossi had no problem with Abarbanel's evaluation that Jerusalem and the Temple at Moriah would be restored to their former places, De' Rossi felt compelled to inform his readers that Don Isaac Abarbanel [who wrote about 1495 C.E.] was wrong in believing that Hadrian had moved Jerusalem a few miles north of the original site (some thought as much as 5 miles). True, it was a fact that the Jerusalem and Moriah of the sixteenth century was located further north than David's and Herod's sites, but not as far as 5 miles. Indeed, the move was just less than a mile. Note what De' Rossi said in correcting Don Isaac. "[Abarbanel believed that] Hadrian completely rebuilt the City of Jerusalem some miles away from its original site, and for this reason the promise [in Zechariah 12:6] that she would in the future be restored to the real site of Jerusalem" (pp.249,250). De' Rossi gave more information. Other Jews were saying that "the present site of Mount Moriah [where the Temple was once built] was about five miles away from Jerusalem [north of the original Jerusalem of David and Herod]" (p.250).

Though De' Rossi admitted that Abarbanel was correct about Zechariah 12:6 and that the Jerusalem of David and Herod was located in a different area than the present Jerusalem built by Hadrian, De' Rossi insisted that the records that the Gentiles maintained (he meant Josephus written in Greek and other Greek writings) that Hadrian only enlarged the city to embrace within his new city the northern cemeteries of Herod's Jerusalem. According to De' Rossi, Hadrian made those northern cemeteries of the earlier Jerusalem, to be inside the later walls of Aelia by at least a bow's shot. De' Rossi's exact statement was: "The Gentile historians, whose evidence he [Abarbanel] cites for the life of Hadrian and [the] restoration of Jerusalem [under the name Aelia], simply state that he [Hadrian] destroyed it [completely destroyed Herod's Jerusalem] and then enlarged it ... enlarged it to the north so that the cemeteries which had been an arrow's shot outside the city came within the walls [came within the north and west walls]." Since those cemeteries in Herod's time had to be "outside the camp" [at least 2000 cubits or 3000 feet] from the original Temple area, this means that Hadrian's Jerusalem was located north of the earlier city of Herod. This was De' Rossi's reasoning, and he was correct.

But within this context concerning the geographical differences between Hadrian's and Herod's Jerusalem, De' Rossi then made two major observations about the original site of the Jerusalem — the Jerusalem of David and Herod and also the site of the Temple [Moriah] in the time of Herod. He said that in spite of the fact that the location of Jerusalem and the Temple had been moved northward since the time of

Hadrian, there was still a reason for all Jews to take comfort and show their satisfaction that the original site of the Temples had not been disturbed at all by Hadrian's actions. Hadrian left that southeastern region where the Temples once stood alone and did not build on it. As a result of this maneuver, De' Rossi stated: "OUR HOLY SITE [Moriah] HAS NOT BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ANY OTHER PEOPLE" (p.250). De' Rossi is acclaiming that NO HOUSE OF PRAYER for any other people had been built on the site of the former Temples. Indeed, De' Rossi went even further in his observation which he gave at his own time (1577 C.E.).

De' Rossi went on say (in the same context) that though the Jewish Rabbi Nachmanides 300 years before was willing to tear his garments when he first saw the modern Jerusalem of Hadrian and the Al Aqsa Mosque as being the location of Solomon's Temple and that the Dome of the Rock was acknowledged as the area for the new Holy of Holies (and this is where the Christians and Muslims were then placing them), De' Rossi insisted that Abarbanel in 1495 C.E. knew this was not the true site. The original Jerusalem and Temple were not associated with the Haram esh-Sharif (which was further north). Now note what De' Rossi concluded in his observation for his own generation. He said that "*the original Jerusalem*" was located in an area "*in which, even in his own time [the time of Abarbanel], and nowadays [also in the time of De' Rossi] NO ARAB WOULD PITCH HIS TENT*" (p.250). ³⁶

De' Rossi stated categorically that all Arabs were afraid to approach the original site of the Jewish Temples in 1577 C.E. and that they would not so much as pitch a tent in the region. De' Rossi was certainly NOT TALKING ABOUT the Haram esh-Sharif in this context because that area was the central shrine and their religious site of gathering for the Muslims of which most of the Arabs belonged. Indeed, Arabs from 638 C.E. and throughout their history had been pitching their tents (and building monumental shrine type buildings and mosques) within the Haram esh-Sharif (and Christians had built equally monumental churches within the Haram esh-Sharif before the time of the Arabic occupation of Jerusalem). Yet, De' Rossi said that Jews of his time could take some consolation in one particular point. That Jewish consolation rested in the fact that the true site of the Temple over the Gihon Spring area because "OUR HOLY SITE [Moriah] HAS NOT BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ANY OTHER PEOPLE" (p.250), and that "NO ARAB WOULD PITCH HIS TENT [there]" (p.250). This observation by a contemporary Jewish historian (with outstanding scholarly credentials) who favorably referred to those who were eyewitnesses about the true site of the Temples is of utmost importance in showing our modern Jewish scholars that they are wrong in their acceptance of the Haram esh-Sharif as the place of the former Temples.

Let's face it. De' Rossi was trying to instruct his Jewish brethren in 1577 C.E. about the real site of the Jewish Temples. He was making the clear and certain statements that *the actual site of Moriah had never been transformed into a house of prayer for any other*

people...and that nowadays [in 1577 C.E.] and that in his day "NO ARAB WOULD PITCH HIS TENT" in the true region. This shows that De' Rossi knew exactly where the former Temples had stood because he made the statement (backed up by eyewitnesses) that NO ARAB would in his day PITCH HIS TENT at the ruined site. In fact, in the period just after the Crusades when the Gihon Spring was once again discovered, its water was then bitter and unsanitary. Christians were beginning to call it, however, the Spring of the Virgin. ³⁷ This was an region of Jerusalem (and the only one) that "**HAD NEVER BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ANY OTHER PEOPLE.**" And even today, there is in the region only a smattering of secular and ramshackle dwellings that are of poor construction and it is the most undesirable place in modern Jerusalem for people to set up house.

This eyewitness testimony of De' Rossi as late as 1577 C.E. that *no Gentile buildings of any kind* (religious or non-religious) had ever been built on the true Moriah (the original Temple site) and that Arabs were shunning it is simply a continuation of the statements of Rabbi David Kimchi (and earlier those of Eutychius) that the Gentiles would never construct their holy buildings on the site of the former Jewish Temples. It was different for Christians and Muslims. They had long before transferred their new Temples up to the Haram esh-Sharif and they built holy structures within the Haram esh-Sharif as a re-dedicated Temple of Solomon (the Al Aqsa Mosque) and what they thought to be the northern extension of Herod's Temple which became known in Crusader times as the Temple of the Lord (the Dome of the Rock).

Yes, there is evidence that some Jews in the time of the Crusades began to believe the Haram had some credentials for being the original Temples that the Christians and Muslims were demanding. Others thought it was actually over the Gihon Spring in the south. We now need to devote some attention to the fact that some Jews in the latter part of the Crusade period were willing to abandon the former spot of their holy Temples and retreat (along with the Christians and Muslims) to believe that the Haram esh-Sharif (and especially the area of the Dome of the Rock) may have had some credentials as being the former "Temple Mount." Let us look at the historical records to see what was happening in the Crusader period that brought some Jews to accept the Gentile location of the former Temple (rather than their previous beliefs that it was over the Gihon Spring). It is an interesting story and one that all should understand. It is simply amazing that the generality of the Jewish people would forget the whereabouts of their former Temples that they held in such esteem and adoration. It is almost as if God hid the site from them. If any wants my judgment, this is precisely what has happened. We should read Isaiah 29.

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The Start of Jewish Attention that the Dome of the Rock was the Actual Temple Site

But things began to change about the site of the Temple at Jerusalem. Even in the time of Maimonides, Rabbi Samson and David Kimchi who showed the actual Temple site to be in desolate ruins, there were some Jews who were beginning to think that the Dome of the Rock was indeed the location of the Temple. And within another hundred years, *all Jews* accepted the changeover with the full sanction of the Jewish authorities. The change in Jewish attitude came quickly and without ambiguity. It first developed with the observations of a Jewish traveler who happened to pass through Jerusalem on his round-trip journey from the city of Tudela in northern Spain into Babylon, then to Egypt and finally back to Tudela. This traveler made his trip in the middle of the twelfth century. He was known as Benjamin of Tudela. He visited Jerusalem for a short visit about 1169 C.E. He was the first Jew who unambiguously stated that the area of the Dome of the Rock was the Temple site.

Benjamin of Tudela arrived on the scene in Jerusalem when the Christians in the Crusade period were in control of Jerusalem and they had been masters of the city for the previous 70 years. When Benjamin got there he found four Jewish people who lived near the Tower of David (as it was being called) near the present day Jaffa Gate. Some texts of Benjamin state that he found "200 Jews," but this is contradicted by

another Jewish traveler of the same period by the name of Petahyah of Regensburg who stated that there was only one Jew (a dyer) in the city when he visited it. ³⁸ Just a handful of Jews were in Jerusalem when Benjamin of Tudela hurriedly visited the Holy City. This has to be the case because when the Christian Crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099 C.E., they forbade any Jew from entering the city (this also included Muslims) and this prohibition was strictly adhered to for at least 52 years. But after that period of 52 years of complete Jewish abandonment of the Holy City, a few Jews then began to live in or on the edge of Jerusalem. So, there were from one to four Jews in the area in the time of Benjamin of Tudela. It was at this time that some Jews (but not all) first began to think that the Dome of the Rock was the site of the Holy of Holies of their former Temples. Benjamin testified to this fact. These Jews simply began to acknowledge that the Christians and Muslims were right in identifying the spot as that of their former Sanctuary. And though this was a major departure from Jewish tradition of the previous centuries, there was an archaeological discovery (so the story goes) that prompted many Jews to turn their attention to the southwest hill as being the real Zion and that the southeast ridge could no longer be considered as the former "City of David."

Why Benjamin of Tudela Readily Accepted the Dome of the Rock as the Temple Site

Let us now look at an important observation made by Benjamin of Tudela when he got to Jerusalem. He reports an event that occurred 15 years before he visited the city during which some workers on the *southwestern* hill called by Christians "Mound Zion" (while working on rebuilding a wall of a Christian church) accidentally came upon a cavern which was filled with tombs and other finery that was interpreted by a Jewish resident of Jerusalem as being the tombs of David, Solomon and the other Kings of Judah. The Jewish person who made the interpretation was named Abraham al-Constantini. So, this means (if the story is factual – and later Jews took it to be) that this Abraham al-Constantini must have been in Jerusalem in the year 1074 C.E. (some 15 years before Benjamin of Tudela talked with him about the discovery of the so-called tombs of David, Solomon and the Kings of Judah when he visited the city). Before that period of Abraham al-Constantini (and for a period of at least 52 years) there had not been a single Jew who could enter into Jerusalem. The city had been empty of Jews for over five decades. Indeed, in 1129 C.E., the Spanish Rabbi Abraham Hiyya said: "Not even one Jew is to be found in Jerusalem in our own days." ³⁹ The early Crusade period saw NO JEWS whatever in Jerusalem.

Those 52 or so years when there were no Jews able to visit Jerusalem (from 1099 to 1151 C.E. or thereabouts) is an important period of time in our quest to explain why Jews finally began to accept the Dome of the Rock in the Haram esh-Sharif as the real site of the Temple (even though the Jews who began to think so were mistaken in their beliefs). The fact is, during that period of 52 years Jerusalem underwent a great change geographically. The Christians came into the region and began to tear down former

buildings and to construct new ones. And when Jews (almost two generations later – and having been ejected from Jerusalem for over five decades) came back to the city, the memories of how it once appeared were different from what was then being displayed. That span of 52 years is a long time for Jews to be prohibited from entering Jerusalem. That is like stating that no Jew of modern times ever visited Jerusalem from Israel's Independence Day as a State in 1948 until the Spring of 2000 when the Pope visited the city. Of course, in our time Jerusalem has grown and grown so that over a half million Jews live in the surrounding area, but back in the period of the first five decades of the Crusader period, NOT A SINGLE JEW had visited or entered the city of Jerusalem (the Jews were banned from doing so by the Christian masters of the city). In that time, the Jewish people *lost knowledge* of Jerusalem.

In 1152 C.E., however, one or two Jews were permitted to live near the Tower of David at the Jaffe Gate. One of them must have been Abraham al-Constantini because it was about 1154 C.E. that Benjamin of Tudela stated that Abraham al-Constantini told him of the discovery of the Tombs of David, Solomon and the other Kings of Judah underneath a church on the *southwest* hill of Jerusalem then being called by the Christians "Mount Sion" (Christians use the spelling "Sion" rather than "Zion"). Indeed, Benjamin states that it was this Abraham al-Constantini that informed the Christian bishop that the newly discovered tombs were those of David and the other kings. Though the bishop had the entrance to the tomb/cavern soon closed up and no one has since seen the resplendence of the Tombs as they were described by Benjamin, still the knowledge of that archaeological discovery spread like wild-fire throughout the whole of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish worlds. This new "Tomb area" was considered an archaeological discovery of great significance and the interpretations based upon it began to change the very way Christians, Muslims and especially Jews viewed the early geography of Jerusalem. It is a fact that one story (no matter how well intentioned) can reap devastating results. Let us see why.

If there really was a Tomb area found on the Christian "Mount Sion" just before the time of Benjamin of Tudela, it was because Simon the Hasmonean in the second century before Christ moved David's "Tomb" (which he built as a cenotaph, and not an actual *Tomb*) to the *southwest* hill. I have explained this as a definite possibility in my book. But whatever was discovered, the matter became a very controversial subject even with the Jews when they came to interpret that "archaeological" discovery. If those tombs were reckoned to be genuine (and not simply a later cenotaph), then it meant that the *southwest* hill was indeed the real and proper "Mount Zion" and it was NOT the *southeast* ridge that the Jews from the time of Omar had thought (recall that the SEVENTY FAMILIES mentioned in the Geniza documents wanted *to be near the Temple* in the SOUTHERN part of Jerusalem and Jewish presence continued in the *southeast* quadrant – and only there — until 1077 C.E.). The Jews in the early Arabic period knew these facts!

This discovery of the so-called "Tomb of David," however, prompted some Jews to question the validity of the *southeast* hill. This was especially so because this "Tomb of David" was now located at a church that was believed to be built over the ruins of a Jewish synagogue whose walls showed that the building was orientated with its niche directed northward. Though our modern scholars have now surmised that the ruined structure within the church area is actually that of a fourth or fifth century Christian church (NOT a synagogue) that was destroyed by the Persians in 614 C.E. or by later Muslims in 965 C.E. (a good summary of these archaeological details is found in the excellent book: *Blue Guide Jerusalem*, p.237), in the Middle Ages it was thought the remains were those of a Jewish synagogue built at the so-called "Tomb of David."

What was striking about the holy niche in the building was its northward orientation that seemed to focus attention toward the Haram esh-Sharif and the Dome of the Rock. Since Jewish tradition stated that early synagogues in Palestine were normally oriented *toward the Temple*, this particular configuration of this church (that was erroneously thought to be a synagogue) was precisely in the direction of the Dome of the Rock. This appeared to be proof that the region of the Haram esh-Sharif must have been the true site of the Temple (and that it was NOT situated on the *southeast* ridge as all history and biblical teaching demanded that it be). Because of this assumption, within a century of this so-called "archaeological" discovery, Jews were now speaking dogmatically about "the Royal Tombs on Mount Zion." ⁴⁰ This is further confirmed by what is called *The Forged Itinerary of Rabbi Menahem of Hebron* in 1215 C.E. who spoke of "the Tombs of the Kings on Mount Zion." ⁴¹

This does not end it. In 1270 to 1291 there is *The Itinerary of the Anonymous Pupil of Nachmanides* who not only visited the site of the "Tomb of David" (and the other kings) but he described a building at the place which was then being called (hold on to your hats, folks), "the Temple of David" with the Hebrew name *Heikhal* describing it. This same Hebrew word was that which sometimes was used for the Holy of Holies in the actual Temples. And note this. This later Jewish traveler gave a further interpretation about this new site on the Christian "Mount Sion." He stated: "Some [Jews] say that the Ark of the Covenant which was brought by David [to Jerusalem] rested here [on the *southwest* hill] until he built the Temple." The author then added the further interpretation: "Not far away [from this "Temple"] is the Tower of David, built of huge stones." This was the Christian "Tower of David" located at the Jaffe Gate to the north and west. The author then stated that anyone can see that this *Tower of David* "is an ancient building." ⁴² This new location for the "Tower of David" was near half a mile from the true site.

So, by the end of the thirteenth century, even the Jewish authorities throughout the world had mistakenly gone over to believing that the *southwest* hill was indeed the original "Mount Zion" of David's time. And with the so-called "synagogue" under the church where the "Tomb" was supposed to have been pointing its niche toward the

Dome of the Rock, it was easy for the whole community of the Jews (along with the Christians and Muslims) to identify the area of the Haram esh-Sharif as the former Temple site of the Jews. They also began to believe that the so-called "Tower of David" at the Jaffe Gate was the real "Tower" of David. The truth is, that false "Tower" was built no earlier than the sixth century and it was situated about three quarters of a mile *northwest* of where the former and accurate "Citadel [Tower] of David" was positioned in biblical times. From this time onward, the confusion (it should be called "the *deception*") was now complete and within two generations after the time of the Crusades, *all people* (including the Jews) now accepted the Dome of the Rock as the place near where the Holy of Holies once existed. They forgot all about the proper place on the *southeast* ridge.

This was the period when *all peoples* finally accepted the *southwest* hill of Jerusalem as the actual "Zion," and they forgot the real biblical "Zion" on the *southeast* hill. So certain did this false identification become in the eyes of all scholars, historians and theologians that even Robinson (one of the great explorers of Palestine in the early 19th century and after whom "Robinson's Arch" in the western wall of the Haram esh-Sharif is named) said the truth of the *southwest* hill as being the real "Mount Zion" was thoroughly unassailable. To him and his colleagues there was not the slightest doubt that the *southwest* hill was the correct biblical site. Indeed, virtually everyone throughout the world (and at all official levels of academic and theological authorities of all religious persuasions) dogmatically accepted that the *southwest* hill was the true "Mount Zion." The error brought chaos to the actual biblical geography of Jerusalem. Among other mistakes because of this wrong identification, Robinson went so far as to believe that the Gihon Spring (which the Bible shows was at the foot of "Mount Zion" at the *southeast* ridge) was actually a place west of the *southwest* hill and down in the upper valley (*wadi*) Er-Rababi where water would drip from crevices in the wet season. Robinson's location was at least a mile west of where it actually was. ⁴³ These false locations were almost a mile off.

Still however, the Jewish authorities had been swayed by this archaeological discovery and the orientation of the so-called "synagogue" at what was considered the "Tomb of David." They shifted the real "Mount Zion" of biblical Jerusalem erroneously to the *southwest* hill. So entrenched did this new concept become regarding the geography of the city that both Christians, Muslim and Jews began to accept the *southwestern* "Zion" as certain. As a matter of fact, as I explain in my book, all scholars in England and America until the year 1875 C.E. strongly believed that the *southwest* hill was the "Mount Zion" that David conquered from the Jebusites. Thankfully, however, common sense finally returned to the thinking of scholars about 1875 C.E. It was the indefatigable efforts of W.F. Birch in England who wrote his passionate pleas (he held out almost single-handedly against the opinions of all the scholars in his day) that the *southwest* hill WAS WRONG and that the *southeast* hill was the correct "Mount Zion." ⁴⁴ He was right!

Birch's persistence on behalf of the truth paid off and all the scholars in the universities finally had to give in and accept that the *southeast* hill was proper and that the *southwest* hill WAS NOT the original "Mount Zion." Yes, W.F. Birch won the match against *all the top scholars of his day* including the most respected and prestigious in the business. It is interesting that this procedure is now being repeated in my endeavor to get the Temple site back to its original position over the Gihon Spring. The truth is, everyone now knows that the original "Mount Zion" was truly on the *southeast* hill and this shows that the Jewish authorities who wanted to settle "near the former Temple" in the time of Omar and Sophronius went to that *southeast* region and settled. No Jew before the twelfth century showed any interest in the erroneous *southwest* hill until that "archaeological discovery" was made 15 years before Benjamin of Tudela went to Jerusalem. The main culprit who introduced the error was the reference to this "discovery" in the account of Benjamin of Tudela in 1169 C.E. This man is an enigma to many Jewish scholars. Just was he?

What Did Benjamin of Tudela Report and What are his Qualifications?

The events that were told Benjamin of Tudela about Jerusalem when he got to the Holy City made him instantly arrive at some profound conclusions on the early geography of Jerusalem that no Jewish authority before his time had unambiguously accepted. But Benjamin presented his views with vigor and certainty. Without the slightest doubt, and with full dogmatism, Benjamin arrived at the conclusion that the Christians were right and that the Dome of the Rock was the actual site of the former Temples of the Jews. He stated: "Jerusalem is furnished with four gates, called the Gate of Abraham, of David, of Zion, and of Jehoshaphat. The latter stands opposite the Holy Temple, which is occupied at present by a building, called *Templo Domino* [the Dome of the Rock]. In front of it [to the west, because Christian entrance to the building was on the west] *you see the western wall, one of the walls which formed the Holy of Holies of the ancient Temple*, it is called the Gate of Mercy [on the east where one could view it] and all Jews resort thither to say their prayers near the wall of the court yard [the east wall of the Haram]." ⁴⁵ His dogmatism as to these identifications were no doubt prompted by what he learned from Rabbi Abraham al-Constantini about the Tombs of David found on the Christian "Mount Zion" and the orientation of the early church (which they interpreted as being a "synagogue") being directed toward the Haram esh-Sharif. It was the discovery of these so-called "Tombs" (and the "synagogue") that prompted all later Jews to adopt the Dome of the Rock as the actual site of the Temple (as Christians demanded and even the Muslim were now accepting).

Though some Rabbis in the first hundred years after the archaeological discovery knew better (notably Maimonides and Rabbi David Kimchi who said the Temple site was still in ruins and was desolate – and Rabbi Kimchi even stated that no Christian or Muslim building had ever been constructed on the true Temple Mount), by the end of the thirteenth century, most Jews in the world (of which we have record) accepted

the Dome of the Rock as the real site of the Temple. Still, a few educated Jews held out against this error until the sixteenth century when the historical studies of Azariah De Rossi proved again that Maimonides and Rabbi Kimchi were right and that the true Temple site had still remained vacant of any Gentile buildings of consequence. The majority of Jews, however, persisted in believing the Dome of the Rock was the former Temple site. Even the "western wall" was identified as being in front of the entrance to the Crusader *Templo Domino* (there was a short and low balustrade that once stood in that area that the Jews mistakenly thought was the "Western Wall" of the Holy of Holies that the Jews wrote about in the period of the Talmud and a short time afterward). This was a short stretch of wall that the Italian Rabbi Obadiah Da Bertinoro just before 1516 C.E. referred to as "the western wall, part of which is still standing." ⁴⁶ It was only after the time of Rabbi Isaac Luria (died in 1572 C.E.) that the present "Wailing Wall" was finally selected for Jews to venerate.

The Jews of the earlier Talmudic period were speaking about the part of a "Western Wall" that was located near a cave over and near the Gihon Spring. Some Jews during the Crusades changed the site to the western side of the Dome of the Rock. Benjamin of Tudela boldly asserts (and without the slightest compunction) that the so-called "Western Wall" was then found at the entrance to the Dome of the Rock. [Note: even this so-called "Western Wall" of the Holy of Holies as described by Benjamin of Tudela, is NOT TO BE CONFUSED with the later "Western Wall" of the Haram esh-Sharif (which only became the "Wailing Wall" of the Jews in the sixteenth century). I will soon explain how the later "Wailing Wall" became the so-called "Western Wall" of Jewish tradition. There is NOT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT, the present "Wailing Wall" of the Jewish authorities (accepted by most religious Jews) is an invention of the sixteenth century and it has no relevance whatever to any architecture of the first century. Interestingly, Jewish scholars today admit this fact.

However, it was this Benjamin of Tudela who was the first Jewish person who unambiguously stated that the Dome of the Rock was the site of the Holy of Holies and that the balustrade then in front of its west entrance was the "Western Wall" of Jewish tradition. Just who was this Benjamin of Tudela who pontificated on these matters? No one knows anything about him besides what he wrote in his treatise that has come down to us. He writes of the Jewish people who were in the towns and cities he visited (even giving the names of eminent scholars and politicians), but his accounting is strange because when he gets to Cairo in Egypt he fails to mention the presence of Maimonides (the leader of all Egyptian Jews, and one of the most outstanding Jews in all history and one who had influence throughout all Jewry). That would be like someone traveling to Mount Vernon in Virginia two hundred years ago and mentioning all about several activities of the area (and Benjamin always mentioned the top leaders of Jewry and even of the Gentiles in the other lands he visited), yet the man visiting Mount Vernon failed to say a word about the activities or presence of George Washington the first President of the United States. There is

much to be desired in the geographical reporting of this Benjamin. He was sloppy in his accounting. This is easily shown.

The Glaring Geographical Mistakes of Benjamin of Tudela

The geographical knowledge of Benjamin of Tudela was one of great ignorance and his judgments are often absurd. For one thing, when the archaeological discovery was made of "David's Tomb," Benjamin boldly placed Mount Zion in Jerusalem half a mile west of where it actually was. He also placed the early Citadel of David (called in his day the Tower of David) almost a mile northwest of where it once was. He placed the Temple a third of mile north of its actual location. Not only that, when he entered the Holy Land at Tyre, he journeyed south and when he came to Haifa he called it the ancient Gath-Hepher where Jonah was born (although the actual city of Gath-Hepher was located about 25 miles northeast of Haifa). He also said Capernaum was located south of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast, though it was actually located on the Sea of Galilee about 40 miles northeast of where he placed it. He also said that the famous Maon of Judah (located about 8 miles southwest of Hebron in Judah) *was also the same place as Capernaum* and located just south of Haifa. He said that Caesarea was the city of Gath where David hid out for awhile, though the city of Gath was 30 miles south and east of Caesarea. He stated dogmatically that one of the streams that came from Mount Hermon (the eastern one) was in fact the River Arnon that anciently separated Moab from Edom (but the Arnon River was actually located about 100 miles south of where Benjamin placed it). And he also located the city of Keilah of Judah at least 60 miles away from its actual location.

Most of these anomalies of Benjamin are recorded by Col. Claude R. Conder of the Royal Engineers (and one of last centuries' top scholars regarding Holy Land geography) in a report to *The Palestinian Exploration Fund Journal* dated 27th of October, 1876. Indeed, when this Benjamin was traveling through southern Italy in the province of Apulia, he said the capital city of that province is where the Assyrian king named "Pul" came from (mentioned in II Kings 15:19 and I Chronicles 5:26). Let's face it, the land of Assyria in Asia and the area of Southern Italy in Europe are two very different locations on earth. And even if there were a slight bit of historical truth that Benjamin recorded from the Jewish tradition that he accepts without criticism, his opinion is jaundiced because he gives so many ridiculous and outrageous erroneous statements concerning geographical matters in his work that a child would know are not correct. Without the slightest tinge of criticism, Benjamin reported that he saw in Rome "two copper pillars constructed by King Solomon, of blessed memory, whose name 'Sh'lomo ben David' is engraved on each." He continues: "The Jews of Rome say that every year, about the time of the Ninth of Ab, these pillars sweat so much that the water runs down from them." ⁴⁷ One wonders how the Romans (and for what reason) received the two pillars of Solomon from the first Temple that was destroyed in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon in Mesopotamia) in the sixth century

B.C.E.? Though Benjamin expressed no doubt in the veracity of the story, I have to apologize to my friends who are believers in such folklore that I cannot accept such unreasonable nonsense. The fact is, Benjamin was not only a sloppy and ignorant geographer, he also became a most dangerous authority for later Jews because many accepted his opinions without criticism. It is amazing how people at the time swallowed hook, line and sinker such nonsense.

But wait a moment. The Jews who lived after the Crusades are not entirely to blame for accepting these outlandish geographical anomalies of Benjamin of Tudela and other Christian and Muslim accounts of the time that are equally absurd and false. Do you know why Benjamin of Tudela placed Capernaum and Maon (two different cities and miles apart from each other) at the same location near the Mediterranean coast south of Haifa? That's because the Christian authorities told him that is where those cities were then reckoned to be, and he gullibly believed the Christians. Col. Claude R. Conder of the Royal Engineers in his report to *The Palestinian Exploration Fund Journal* dated 27th of October, 1876 related that Benjamin of Tudela placed Capernaum and Maon on the main highway from Haifa to Jerusalem because Christian authorities wanted to grant pilgrims their full religious indulgences that the Roman Church were then awarding if they went to such places. But because at the time, the Muslims controlled both Capernaum and Maon, so the ecclesiastical authorities wanted to satisfy Christian pilgrims that they had indeed been to those holy places so they *officially moved* those cities from their original sites to the main road to Jerusalem so that Christians could conveniently stop off and gain their sought after indulgences that the Church guaranteed. That's right. It was our misguided Christian church authorities who moved those two cities to the same convenient location on the main highway (at least 40 and 60 miles from their sites) and Benjamin of Tudela simply accepted these geographical errors without the slightest criticism.

Such things were common practice at the time. In the year 1291 C.E., the so-called "House of Mary" in Nazareth was, according to top ecclesiastical authorities, transported physically through the air to a place in Croatia in Europe. But that was not on the most favored route for pilgrimage, so three years later it was also carted (lock, stock and barrel) by the angelic hosts to a laurel grove near Loreto in Italy where it became a very famous place of pilgrimage. Now, the faithful did not have to go to Palestine to get their indulgences from the Vatican. They could now accomplish all they needed to do in regard to worshipping at the very "House of Mary" that the angels had transported to Loreto. Note what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* has to say about this famous site of pilgrimage. "Papal bulls were issued in favour of the shrine. Pope Innocent VII established a special mass for the feast of the Transportation of the Holy House (December 10)" (article: Loreto). Indeed, so sure and certain is the Vatican of the holiness of the site and that the angels did in fact transport Mary's House to Loreto in Italy that "Benedict XV declared the Madonna di Loreto to be the patron of modern aviators (1920)." ⁴⁸ Some of us might laugh at such nonsense (and I believe the

story deserves such laughter), but Roman Catholic Church officials to this very day DO NOT laugh at these accounts. Some take them seriously and even papal authority vindicates their veracity by awarding the patronage of those angels to our modern airplane pilots. Many of my Catholic priest friends know these things are false, but simply smile at them. What they ought to do is to blast such nonsensical beliefs out of the saddle of orthodoxy.

Of course, this transporting through the air by the angels of the "House of Mary" from Nazareth to Loreto is a Christian story that requires a miraculous element of outstanding merit to vouch for its veracity. We should think that no Jewish person would be so daft as to believe such nonsense. Oh? Again (hold on to your hats, folks) because the Jewish religious authorities have a similar account that happened about the same time to the stones of the Temple once it was destroyed by Titus in 70 C.E. Note the following quote from the excellent work by Zev Vilnay. ⁴⁹ It states:

"In the city of Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, there is a synagogue which dates back to the most ancient days of the exile. According to tradition, its foundation contains stones taken from the Great Temple in Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple, angels carried on their wings a number of stones, and said to the Holy One, blessed be He: 'Lord of the Universe, we take these holy stones on the condition that when the Temple is rebuilt, we are to return them to their place.' Then the angels took the stones to Prague and left them in the Jewish quarter; over them a synagogue was built. Therefore the Jews name the synagogue 'On Condition' – in Hebrew *Al Tenai*. With the passing of generations, the name *Al Tenai* was corrupted into *Altneu-Shul*, which in Yiddish means Old-New Synagogue."

That is not all. Following up on the belief that angels deposited some stones of the Temple in Prague, Vilnay continues:

"It is reported by Rabbi Yitzak of Moskovera: 'The old synagogue in the city of Prague was built from stones of the Temple, because as the children of Israel went forth in the abundance of their love for its holiness, to fulfill the words of the psalmist: 'because Your servants desired her stones.' And when they came to the city of Prague, they built there a synagogue, and they placed there these stones." When the Temple was destroyed, the Holy One, blessed be He, scattered its stones over all the world. And on every place where a stone fell, a synagogue was erected. Therefore, each synagogue is called "a little Temple" because it contains within it a little of the Great Temple of Jerusalem." ⁵⁰

There you have it! No wonder archaeologists cannot find stones of the Temple in Jerusalem! We have this Jewish account that the angels have carried them to all areas of the world and then the angels directed that synagogues be raised up in the sites in

which those stone chips have been deposited. Believe it if you will. People in the Middle Ages certainly did. We can call all of this mere folklore if we wish (but, as I said before), the papacy of Christendom does not consider the transportation of the "House of Mary" to Loreto as folklore, nor do many Jewish religious leaders believe their "little Temples" (with stones from the literal Temple in Jerusalem at their sites) to be mere folklore. But folks, this is the very type of teaching that finally got the Christians to switch the place of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ Jesus from the Mount of Olives (where the Holy Scriptures demand that the events took place) to their Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the western part of Jerusalem, and it was the same type of teaching that got the Jewish authorities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to transfer the site of their former Temples from the *southeast* ridge up the *northeast* quadrant of early Jerusalem where the Dome of the Rock is now situated. And these erroneous sites are being taught by official church and synagogue leaders within this modern period. Oh God, help us! Folks, this is modern Judaism!

But the Muslims are no better off. Vilnay gives another tradition (this time a Muslim one). He relates that the Muslim geographer Makadissi, who was born in Jerusalem, wrote in 955 C.E. that "on the night of Arafat [when Muslim pilgrims gather on the Mount of Arafat near Mecca], the water in the holy well of Zamzam [which was shown to Hagar and her son Ishmael, and is near the mosque of Mecca] flows underground to the water of the Spring of Siloam [in Jerusalem]. And the people hold a festival here [in Jerusalem] on that evening." ⁵¹ This Muslim belief reckons that underground stream at travelling about 800 miles from Mecca to Jerusalem. Indeed, nearby the Haram esh-Sharif is the famous Muslim bath called "the Bath of Healing."

Vilnay again comments with a modern example of transference: "They [the Muslims] believe that its waters come from the Well of Zamzam in Mecca, the holy city of Arabia. Should you appear unconvinced," said Vilnay, "they will tell you the following story, which you must admit," said Vilnay with tongue in cheek, "is conclusive proof." Vilnay then relates the story: "A few years ago a Muslim from India went on his pilgrimage to Mecca. As he was bathing in the holy waters of the Well of Zamzam, a unique and valuable bowl which he had brought with him was carried away by the stream. This bowl was made of copper, and engraved thereon were many artistic and distinctive pictures and designs. The pilgrim was much grieved over his loss and consoled himself by visiting sacred sites. From Arabia he traveled to Jerusalem, and there he went to the Bath of Healing. When he was bathing, he suddenly saw in the flowing waters the very bowl he had lost. Only the water which flows underground from the Well of Zamzam in Mecca to Jerusalem could have carried it thither." ⁵² Many of the religious Muslims in Jerusalem believe this story. Should we believe it? I must confess that I think the story is an outright lie.

What I am trying to show is the fact that even modern religious authorities (Christian, Jewish, Muslim) continue to relate or sustain such stories about the transference of

sacred spots and items to other areas of holiness. Since this is the case, why should we blame Benjamin of Tudela for reporting that Capernaum and Maon (brought to a single location) was where the Christian authorities had falsely placed them just south of Haifa? It is difficult to blame Benjamin (who merely reported what he was told), when we have the Vatican in our modern period also stating with firm belief that "Mary's House" in Nazareth can no longer be seen in that city because the angels took it to Loreto in Italy. And we have religious Jews convinced that the oldest synagogue in Prague was made from stones from the ruined Temple that the angels carried through the air to the spot. And many religious Jews confidently believe that each site for a synagogue is where an angel dropped a part of a stone from the Temple. My plea is: Oh God, save us from nonsense!

Indeed, even Vilnay tells us that the originator of modern Zionism (Herzl, who was NOT a practicing religious Jew) was prompted by his nostalgia to name his book proposing a modern Jewish state by the name of the Prague synagogue, *Altneu-land*. The Hebrew translation of this very work was titled *Tel Aviv* (Hill of spring) the name later given to the first city established by Zionist efforts in the land of Israel. The naming of the modern city of Tel Aviv from accounts generated from Jewish folklore may be for nostalgic reasons alone, but such innocent procedures often have a strange way of becoming very literal as time passes and people want to rescue traditional beliefs from being *traditional* nonsense. We need to jettison all such false beliefs!

It is the use of such erroneous teachings that people are led far away from simple and common sense biblical truths. All historians are aware that particularly in the period of the Crusades and up to the time of the Reformation, it was common for people to believe religious myths (of the above kind) at the expense of real historical truths. The fact is, however, we in this modern age are still saddled with many of those mythic accounts that have arisen since the close of the Holy Scriptures, the Talmud and even the Koran. Countless stories of such mythic and absurd themes have developed over the centuries and we moderns need to jettison them from our beliefs. They, however, are still plaguing us, particularly in matters concerning Jerusalem and its history and geography. The modern church, synagogue and Islamic authorities need to change their ways and admit that the majority of these early accounts are pure fiction and they perpetuate profound errors. We Christians are equally wrong in what we have accepted from our ignorant past.

Stories of Myths Given by Mystics or Teachings of Facts Given by Historians

But both Rabbi David Kimchi in 1235 C.E. and De' Rossi in 1577 C.E. assured their Jewish readers that those Christian and Muslim buildings located within the Haram esh-Sharif were NOT those on the site of the true Temples of God that were built over and around the Gihon Spring. But, as interesting as De' Rossi's plea was to his scholarly colleagues, the historical truths he was advocating fell into immediate disuse

and abandonment even in De' Rossi's own generation. Indeed, at this very time in history, a man came on the stage of history that had such power and authority among the Jewish authorities and the lay people at large that he completely changed their minds on the issue. The whole of the Jewish nation had their minds blinded to rationality, and they went over to the opinions of a profound mystic and religious eccentric by the name of Isaac Luria. Most psychologists today would describe him as truly "mentally ill."

When this man, called "The Ari" (Rabbi Isaac Luria) came in the midst of the Jews in Safed in Galilee and in Jerusalem (he lived from 1534 to August 5, 1572 C.E.), every bit of advice given by De' Rossi (as well as that of Maimonides and Rabbi David Kimchi in the earlier period) was pushed aside and the Jews embraced the teachings of Isaac Luria almost totally (and this is no exaggeration). Almost to a man, woman and child the Jewish people went into a belief in utter mysticism as the true teaching of Judaism. It was a time of lapse into religious beliefs that can only be described in modern terms as tantamount to mass hysteria and thorough delusion. Jewish scholars admit this. The whole nation went into a type of "Pentecostal" experience with paranormal outbursts among the Jewish leaders on such a wide scale that the influence permeated the whole of Jewish society for just over a century. And what emerged from this mass hysteria? This is the very time that the Jewish authorities decided to accept the "Wailing Wall" as the holiest site in all Judaism. They did so by paying attention to the mystical teachings and visionary experiences of Rabbi Luria. It was Luria who directed the Jews in his time to the "Wailing Wall" and to the Haram esh-Sharif as the place where the Shekinah (Spirit) of God had returned to the Holy Land from exile. Luria came up with beliefs that were "proof positive" that the Shekinah had returned to Jerusalem and that the divine wedding of the Shekinah with God was just on the doorstep. And where had the Shekinah returned? It was to the "Wailing Wall" and NOT to the area of the former Temples over the Gihon Spring.

This return of the Shekinah to the "Wailing Wall" was absolute proof (as the Jewish religious people then viewed it) that the area of the Haram esh-Sharif was indeed the site of their former Temples. And even if there were any lingering doubts about the area of the Gihon Spring, they vanished from Jewish consciousness because the Shekinah had chosen the "Wailing Wall" area and none other. From then on, the true spot of the Temples that was over and near the Gihon Spring was completely and thoroughly substituted (wrongly) for the buildings within the Haram esh-Sharif that the Christians and Muslims had long accepted as the place of the Temples. The fact is, Isaac Luria was wrong in so many ways concerning the things he taught, and he was absolutely in error in telling the Jewish people in his day to look to the Western Wall as the spot marking the former Temple wall of Herod, but the Jewish population accepted him and his teachings almost to a man, woman and child.

For the next hundred years and more, the teachings of Lurianic Kabbalah reigned supreme in the beliefs of Judaism. It led to their final acceptance of a false messianic pretender known as Sabbatai Sevi (1660 C.E.) who duped the whole of the Jewish nation (much to the embarrassment of later Jewish intellectuals) into believing the most absurd form of Messianic belief imaginable. It was a time when practically the whole of Jewish society went into a "Dark Age Mentality" in which rational thought and beliefs were substituted with some of the most absurd and ridiculous religious beliefs imaginable. This time has to be reckoned in a modern sense as the period when the lowest form of religious madness that any people could experience became predominant in Judaism. It still remains in some Jewish sects. (By the way, we Christians and Muslims have had similar times when rational and true spiritual beliefs were also substituted for such utter mystical nonsense.)

True to their tradition, some religious Jews today are still smarting over the doctrinal catastrophe that took place from the time of Luria to Sabbatai Sevi. Even later Jewish scholars (most of them) have admitted to the complete absurdity of Jewish belief derived from many of these men in the period from 1550 to 1670 C.E. It is a period that most Jewish intellectuals and rational scholars would hope that people would forget. But the fact is, they should NOT FORGET that period. It was the acceptance of such false beliefs (many of them still entrenched in modern Judaistic sects to this day) that caused the Jews to lose the site of their own Temples. Religious Jews ought to rid themselves of such nonsense (of course, I am not Jewish, but I hope they will heed what I say). Indeed, it is essentially from the teachings accepted by the Jewish people in that time of religious madness that is causing them to wail at the wrong "Wailing Wall." They have simply accepted the teachings of religious fanatics (whom most psychiatrists today would label as mad-men and very mentally disturbed). Forgive me for being plain, but someone ought to speak out on this issue, and most Jewish intellectuals would agree with my conclusions. Still, we Christians and Muslims are no better off in many of the utter nonsensical teachings we now hold sacrosanct that we inherited from the same religious fervor of our own "Dark Ages." The truth is, there needs to be a thorough housecleaning of all Jewish, Christian and Muslim absurdities that we moderns have embraced from our historical experiences in the "Dark Ages."

Let us be plain. The Jewish people almost to a man, woman and child from the time of Luria to Sevi did what many of our Christian people have done in following false teachers and also what some Muslims have done who have followed false Imams and prophets over the centuries. In my view, it is time to get rid of all such beliefs from Christianity, and I hope my Jewish and Islamic scholar friends would say the same thing in regard to the equally absurd religious teachings that plague us all today. I am NOT talking about giving up pristine Christianity that got its teaching from the New Testament (which I feel is a divine work from God), nor am I speaking about giving up Jewish teachings from wise Rabbis of the past, nor am I asking for Muslims to give up pristine Islamic teachings from the original Koran. I am speaking about something

that is far more sinister. I am referring to the nonsensical absurdities inherited from later times that have been promoted by religious fanatics and by psychologically disturbed individuals that have saddled false teachings onto the original religious writings that make the religions we see today to be about as far from the original versions as it is possible to get.

How the False Wailing Wall Was Selected as a Jewish Holy Site

The ordinary Jewish people in the sixteenth century had their minds turned toward the teachings of Rabbi Isaac Luria called "Ha Ari" or "the Lion" — a visionary man who was to lead all in Judaism into the most profound errors that any society has ever encountered. This evaluation is no exaggeration as any rational Jewish scholar today (and there are thousands out there) will testify. At the very time of De' Rossi (who was a sensible and intelligent man with wisdom and knowledge), we find that the Jewish scholars and people in the area of Safed in Galilee and in Jerusalem was "religiously conquered" by Rabbi Luria. He almost single-handedly secured a significant change in the way the Jewish people began to look on their former religious beliefs. A dramatic change took place in Judaism when they adopted almost wholesale, Lurianic Kabbalah. Luria alone (with the insistence of his some of his contemporaries and especially later admirers) changed the whole of Judaism into a Kabbalistic type of mystical religious belief that was as different from the basic teachings of the Tanak and even of the Talmuds as daylight and dark.

The "Ari" was responsible for altering the essential basic teachings of the Moses into what some Jewish people today consider to be a Gentile Gnostic type of religious belief. And in the wake of his unique and wild interpretations of the Bible, he also got the whole of the Jewish people to turn the eyes from the former Temple spot over the Gihon Spring (that De' Rossi spoke about) to accept in an official manner the area of the Gentile "Temples" that were then believed to be within the confines of the Haram esh-Sharif. It was Luria's teaching concerning the Shekinah and its Exile (along with the prophetic Exile of Israel) that turned the trick. It was this Isaac Luria who falsely led the Jewish people to accept the "Wailing Wall" as the western wall of the Temple of Herod because he provided proof that the Shekinah glory of God was (according to him) already within the Haram esh-Sharif (directly behind the "Wailing Wall") and the Shekinah would not leave that wall and that the time of the Jewish Exile was soon to be over.

The ordinary Jewish population had no idea how anti-biblical Luria's teachings were or how wrong his geographical identifications were. They accepted his teachings altogether because he was to them a visionary holy man of the first rank. With his spiritual attributes (that others did not have as he did), he was able to select and identify for places to worship former unmarked graves of early Rabbis of the past, and also to show holy places long forgotten by the Jews. He gave the principal

determination that the "Wailing Wall" (that was at first a Christian/Muslim holy site) was (or had become) a holy place for the Jews. Indeed, in my research it appears that Luria was the first person in Jewish history (450 years ago) to point out the present "Western Wall" (the "Wailing Wall") as the site to assemble for the Jewish people and where they ought to worship God. No Jewish person had ever gone to the "Wailing Wall" (as we call it today) until Luria told one Rabbi Abraham Halevy that he was worthy to see the Shekinah (the Divine Presence). Vilnay spoke about Luria (Ha-Ari) and what he said to Rabbi Abraham Halevy. Notice the comment by Vilnay. The account below shows why later Jews flocked to the Wall.

"Once the holy Ha-Ari said to Rabbi Abraham: 'Know that your days are numbered and that you will soon die if you will not do as I tell you: but if you do, you will yet live another twenty-two years. This is what I bid you do: Go to Jerusalem and pour out your prayers before the Wailing Wall and you will prove yourself worthy by seeing the divine Presence there.' Rabbi Abraham went home, shut himself in his house for three days and three nights, clothed himself in sackcloth and ashes, and fasted the whole time. Then he went forth to Jerusalem; he stood before the Wailing Wall in prayer, deep meditation, and weeping. The image of a woman, clad in black, appeared to him on the face of the wall. Immediately he fell upon the ground in great fear. Tearing his hair, he cried in a loud voice: 'Woe is me, what have I seen?' Finally he fell in a deep slumber and in a dream the divine Presence appeared to him, clad in fine raiment, and said to him: 'Console thyself, My son Abraham; there is yet hope for thee, and the children of Israel will return to their inheritance, and I will have mercy on them.' He arose and returned to Safed, and when Ha-Ari the Holy saw him, he said to him at once: 'Now I know that you have seen the Divine Presence and you can rest assured that you will live another twenty-two years.'" ⁵³

As a result, Rabbi Abraham Halevy who witnessed these things at the "Wailing Wall" lived exactly 22 more years. This was the "key." His longevity was exactly as Luria had told him, and the Jewish authorities considered that only God could provide such precise powers for life extension. The people thus considered this an astonishing confirmation of Rabbi Luria's divine powers and the truthfulness of his revelations for identifying geographical sites of former holy regions. This included the site of the "Wailing Wall." From that time forward, Jews in Jerusalem began to flock to that former Christian holy spot (which the Muslims had cleaned up after they inherited it from the Christians), and the Jewish authorities soon turned it into what is now called the "Wailing Wall." The fact is, the Jewish people at the time should have tested Rabbi Luria a little more. From the records that have come down to us about him, it is easily seen that he was one of the biggest liars (or false prophets) that could be imagined. Let us look at some of his big mistakes in geography and history — the very things in which he was supposed to have divine knowledge. When one surveys what Rabbi Luria taught, he was one of the greatest of liars!

Notice Some False Geographical Identifications Made by Rabbi Isaac Luria

This Rabbi should not be looked on as a simple deceived "religious man." This is because of the supreme influence that the man and his teachings have had (and still have) on modern day Judaism. Let us look at a few points. There was also a side to Rabbi Luria that many people have decided to ignore. But we need to be aware of it. The fact is, Luria also made some outstanding mistakes in his selection of former sites mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. We are told in Vilnay's *The Legends of Jerusalem* that Rabbi Luria supposedly knew in his day in a supernatural way where Jeremiah was placed in the Court of the Guard mentioned in Jeremiah 32:2. Notice what Vilnay records:

"It is told of Ha-Ari the holy, head of the Safed Kabbalists in the sixteenth century, that he discovered the Court of the Guard and its pit into which Jeremiah was cast. [Ha-Ari then envisioned:] 'And the mouth of the pit is narrow and its bottom large and round, about two ells in diameter. And there are places cut out of the mountain rock which were used as jails by the kings of Judah. And it is told that Jeremiah the prophet is buried in the Court of the Guard.'" [54](#)

The only trouble was, Rabbi Luria (that is, Ha-Ari) picked the spot now called "Jeremiah's Grotto" in back of the East Jerusalem bus station. Luria selected the wrong place — a place that the Holy Scriptures would in no way allow. Luria was about 3000 feet north of the true site that was near the Gihon Spring. It is clear in the biblical text that the prison in the House of the King of Judah was located just south of the Temple. The poor guy had no knowledge of the truth.

Another geographical and historical error attributed to Rabbi Luria (Ha-Ari) was his selection of the person who supposedly "blocked up" the Gihon Spring in earlier days (which had in the previous century been re-discovered in Jerusalem). According to Jewish historical sources, the Gihon Spring was again revealed and restored to the knowledge of the Jewish people by the disciple of Isaac Luria named Rabbi Haim Vital. This great mystical leader of the Jews brought all Judaism within the embrace of the Lurianic Kabbalistic teachings in the sixteenth century. I shall give the Jewish rendition of how the Gihon Spring was again restored to the knowledge of the Jews, as shown by Zev Vilnay. [55](#) Remember that Jews of this time were prone to accept the teachings of some of the mystics as divine revelations direct from God.

"In the sixteenth century, Jerusalem was ruled by a tyrannical Turkish governor called Abu-Seifen — Father of Two Swords. Knowing that a king of Judah had sealed up the Fountain of Gihon, he asked whether there was one who could open it. His friends advised him: 'There is a wise Jew in this city, a man of God, and his name is Rabbi Haim Vital. He will surely know how to open it.' The governor sent for him on Friday, the Muslim day of rest, and said: 'I command you to open the fountain, which was sealed by your king, during the time that I am at prayer in the mosque. If you obey not, your blood be on your head.' Then a miracle occurred, and

there appeared to Rabbi Vital in a vision his teacher, Ha-Ari the holy [that is, Rabbi Luria], **head of the mystics [who had been dead several years]. He said: 'The soul of King Sennacherib, the enemy of King Hezekiah, has been transmitted into the body of this governor, and in your body there is a spark of the soul of King Hezekiah, peace be upon him!** [The Lurianic Kabbalistic teaching of the Ha-Ari (Isaac Luria) believed in the Transmigration of Souls — an Indian or Gentile doctrine never believed by mainline Jews before the revelation of the Kabbalah in the thirteenth century. This vision of Isaac Luria to Haim Vital continued by saying:] **'And now is the time to open the Fountain of Gihon, for it was without the consent of the sages that Hezekiah sealed its waters.'** **'And now,' continued the vision of Rabbi Luria, 'if you are able to open the sealed Gihon, you will bring great blessing upon the people!'** Rabbi Vital answered: **'I shall open the fountain.'**"

This account vindicates the belief that Rabbi Vital accepted the instruction of "Rabbi Luria" that it was indeed King Hezekiah who "blocked up" the waters of the Gihon Spring [this belief, however, was the first historical falsehood]. As it has been shown in my book "The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot," we have records from the Crusade period that it was actually Saladin, the Kurdish Muslim ruler about 400 years before who "blocked up" the Gihon. ⁵⁶ But the Jewish people in the sixteenth century believed that Rabbi Luria was (through the teaching of the Transmigration of Souls) a re-manifestation on earth of Adam, Abraham, Moses, Elijah and the Messiah all combined in the person of Luria. This man was one of biggest frauds in history.

With such credentials that the Jews accepted, the Jews thought Luria must have known the true sites in Jerusalem and the long-lost unmarked graves of many early Rabbis who lived in Galilee. They also believed he must have known it was Hezekiah who "blocked up" the Gihon, rather than Saladin as the historical records revealed. Saladin was the right person, NOT Hezekiah as Luria stated in his visionary explanation. Some of Luria's identifications were gigantic errors.

But why blame the Jewish people for believing such "miraculous" identifications when we Christians equally have a similar amount of erroneous sites promulgated by our early Christian and Muslim authorities and still maintained by their modern representatives. I have made my plea to modern religious leaders. There needs to be a thorough housecleaning of all of these nonsensical and paganized forms of idolatry that now permeate the religious beliefs, customs and traditions of the Jews, of the Christians and of the Muslims. God help us and save us from our utter stupidities. My quarrel over these so-called "holy sites" is not only with the Muslims and the Jews, but our Christian scholars and theologians are equally guilty in perpetuating such absurd teachings about them.

The "Wailing Wall" Was Also One of Rabbi Isaac Luria's Bequests to Modern Judaism

The fact is, the geography of the "Wailing Wall" was equally a fallacious identification of Rabbi Luria. He was no more right on that selection than he was in his other visionary discoveries. But the Jewish people at the time were not equipped to test him out properly. They were wanting miracles and visions in their lives, and Rabbi Luria gave them what they craved. So, Luria gave them the "Wailing Wall." The symbolic teaching in its architecture and geography fit the erroneous theological teachings of Luria to a tee. Beyond that wall (eastward) was "nothing" (no buildings or shrines) but once it was the holiest of areas. This belief provided support to his Kabbalistic teaching that the Shekinah was in Exile (the Shekinah was reckoned to be the lowest form of the Godhead of ten spheres — like the Christian Trinity has three) but the top manifestation of the deity was known as the *Ein Sof*. Both were in Exile and in a state of "Nothingness," but on the verge of a return from Exile. The final manifestation of God's presence in the Lurianic concept was that God's "end" would terminate in "nothing." In other words, Luria's God for the Jewish people was a "Nothingness" (a truly exiled and unknowable "God"). It is no wonder that Luria's "God" could not be seen. But the lowest manifestation known as the Shekinah could on occasion be witnessed either in mourning and non-glory or in a bridal attire in glory awaiting the Messianic Age. The Shekinah was a key to Luria's theology.

To Luria and those who followed him within Judaism for the next 200 years, there was "NO discernable God" in the final degree of his non-theistic understanding of the divine epiphany. Plainly, if a person reasoned the Lurianic philosophical beliefs to a proper conclusion, the person finally encounters "NO God." He finds only "empty space." There was good symbol at the "Wailing Wall" because the "empty space" east of the Western Wall was ideal in Luria's mind to emphasize the "*Ein Sof*" (Nothingness) of the Deity. And the Deity was not in His Temple, but in Exile (like the Children of Israel). But the Shekinah had made its first appearance come back from Exile when it showed itself as an old woman in ragged clothes. To demonstrate this, the account shows the Shekinah was first decorated as an old woman in black mourning clothes as a sign of its Exile from its "home," but then Rabbi Halevy a short time later dreamed he saw the Shekinah in glory and that he was blessed with a period of 22 more years of life because of it.

To Luria, it was this Wailing Wall that best represented the spot to show the exilic condition of the Shekinah (and even Luria's ten displays of his divine epiphany called the *Sefirot* — the *Ein Sof* as also being in Exile). With this revelatory experience of Rabbi Luria and Halevy and the site of the "Wailing Wall" as the proper spot of the Shekinah caused Jews to begin their serious assembling at this part of the Haram esh-Sharif. In a very short time, it became their most holy place in Jerusalem. It had nothing to do with the Western Wall of the Holy of Holies that earlier Jewish authorities had spoken about that was once a part of the aborted attempts to build the Temple in the time of Constantine and Julian. This was a different "Western Wall" altogether, but its location satisfied Rabbi Luria that he had found the home (or the "Wall") of the Shekinah.

As far as I can find, before the time of Luria no Jewish person ever went to the present "Wailing Wall" to pray. But Luria directed the Jewish people to the Western Wall. In doing so, he sent them to the wrong place and they have been flocking there ever since. Jewish people at the time were so impressed with Luria, that they gave him a status that equaled that of Moses (or even greater). Luria himself believed he was a re-born Elijah and that he was the Messiah in several attributes. The Jewish authorities at his time absorbed his beliefs almost hook, line and sinker. These beliefs are Kabbalistic in origin. They do not come from the Scriptures nor even from the Talmuds. They come from the mind of Luria and some of his misguided contemporaries.

The Perpetuation of the False (and Anti-biblical) Teachings of the Kabbalah

Luria also established his own unique version of the Kabbalah. The teachings of this form of worship are almost thoroughly in the mystical vein. Through his teaching of Transmigration of Souls, he stated to his disciples that he had inherited the "soul" of Adam, along with some other "souls" (who came into Luria's body to inhabit it by reincarnation). Several "souls" entered Luria's body: those of Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah and he even had the "soul" of the Messiah. His visionary experiences and his extraordinary feats as a religious holy man, won over the whole of those in Judaism. His desire was to begin a new type of Judaism, and he did.

Luria won over most of the influential Rabbis at the time with his teachings, and for the next 200 years (until the Jewish enlightenment of the 1700's). Lurianic Kabbalah reigned supreme in most Jewish circles. ⁵⁷ Of course, most Jews do not believe in many of the weird teachings of Rabbi Luria today. Many Jewish scholars and intellectuals have now learned to place such beliefs into a category of "dark age mentality" that most religious groups have gone through at one time or another. We Christians and also the Muslims have inherited equally absurd teachings that many denominations of Christendom and sects of Islam practice today. They all come from this "dark age mentality." It should not surprise any sane person today that many of these outlandish teachings of eccentric religious personalities are in no way authentic forms of early Christian, Islamic or Jewish beliefs. This is true enough, but it is the philosophy behind the concepts of Rabbi Luria that we still see continuing in mainline Christianity, mainline Islam and mainline Judaism. It is the retention of what must be called "Dark Age doctrines of a Middle Age mentality" that promote some of the most absurd teachings known to mankind.

At any rate, I have shown with an abundance of historical and biblical evidences that the original Temples of God were positioned over and around the Gihon Spring in the *southeastern* part of Jerusalem. The evidence is so strong that one wonders how such an obvious fact could be so hidden from the attention of the world for so long? Perhaps we all ought to read the whole of Isaiah 29 once again. The answer why the

site of the Temples has been hidden is shown in Isaiah 29. If one will read that section closely, it will explain our present dilemma perfectly.

In conclusion, the acceptance of the present "Wailing Wall" by the Jewish authorities as a wall of Herod's Temple was inspired by false visions and dreams and so-called miraculous events that turned a former Christian holy site into the prime Jewish spot for divine veneration. That spot was NOT discovered by using historical and biblical facts. The present "Wailing Wall" is a modern invention (devised about 430 years ago) and Jewish scholars know this to be a certain fact. That "Wailing Wall" is actually the Western Wall of Fort Antonia. It is time for people to wake up from this "Dark Age Mentality" and get back to the pristine truths of the Holy Scriptures and also to a belief in the true facts of history and geography that are abundantly available to correct us in our present ignorance. Let us realize the truth. The real Temples of God were located over the Gihon Spring on the *southeast* ridge of Jerusalem. There can be no doubt of this fact. It is time for all people to abandon their false religious sites derived from the religious beliefs of fanatics who can be proved to be liars.

Thankfully, we are informed in the Holy Scriptures that Israel will soon begin to mourn for the One who was pierced when He secured the salvation for the world (Zechariah 12:10-15). And though it was Israel by their prophets who introduced the teaching of the Messiah to the world, they are the very ones who still remain without Him (and they even adamantly rebuke Him). They have a messianic religion, without a Messiah! Yet this will change. They will soon be wise enough to accept their true "Messiah," but NOT the longhaired "Christ" that is now displayed in our churches who was invented by Constantine and his successors to mimic the pagan gods. Israel will be different. They will opt for the real Messiah with credentials obtained from the Holy Scriptures. When they do, "ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you" (Zechariah 8:23). When Israel begins to show that grace, good will and love to other people as did Solomon, and when they also accept the One greater than Solomon, they will "conquer with good works" not only the Middle East, but they will also have the admiration of all on earth. They need to start their CHANGE now.

Truly, the time for Israel to change its ways and to get into conformity to their role as shown by the Holy Scriptures is NOW. Every year in the Autumn, the people of Israel fast for a 24 hour period. It is known as Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). That is a day when the whole nation of Israel fasts (refrains from food or drink) in order to ask God for the forgiveness of their sins. There is some specific teaching in the book of Isaiah about the kind of fast day that God really desires for the people of Israel. It could equally apply to us Gentiles if we wish to share in the quests of the Jews to obtain righteousness from our God. Yes, even we Gentiles (who are likewise sinners in the eyes of God and can also ask for forgiveness) along with Israel can reflect on the sublime teachings that Isaiah the Prophet gave to the early Israelites. That

commonsense teaching of Isaiah is as pertinent today as it was for those almost 800 years before Christ. Here is what Isaiah taught ancient Israel. I hope that all the people of Israel will adopt these statements of Isaiah with a united purpose and a diligence to perform them (and that we Gentiles will join them in doing the same things). Note Isaiah 58:1-12.

"Cry aloud [God said to Isaiah], spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people [Israel] their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

3 Wherefore have we fasted [on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement], say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast [says the God of Israel] ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors.

4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it such a fast that I have chosen [a mere physical "day"]? a day for a man [merely] to afflict his soul? is it [merely] to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a [proper] fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? [NO, it is NOT!]

6 Is not this the fast [the proper kind of "fast"] that I have chosen?:

- to loose the bands of wickedness,
- to undo the heavy burdens,
- and to let the oppressed go free,
- and that ye break every yoke?
- Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
- and that thou bring the poor that are cast out [in Exile] to thy house?
- when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;
- and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger [of blame], and speaking vanity;

10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

That section of Isaiah is a very appropriate one for Israelites throughout the world at this time. It is most instructive and needful to be heard on their Yom Kippur. Israel seriously needs to consider this command and promise from their God (from our God the Father of us all). Indeed, it is such a beautiful and necessary obligation that even we Gentiles around the globe can learn and benefit from its teaching. What is described above is the simple (yet profound) display of the democratic principles of life that people of all nations and creeds can know to be proper. It is time to jettison the teachings that we Christians, Muslims and Jews have inherited from the false theologies of our forefathers who were applying "Dark Age Mentalities" as their basic foundational themes for the religious beliefs that they have handed down to us. We all need to get rid of such absurd teachings and return to the original documents of our faiths that have a far purer concept of religious teaching than what we have all inherited from the medieval period of our religious decline. We need to revitalize our respect and devotions to the original sources that generated our faiths. If we do, we will all be better off. And as for Israel (both the government and the people) and also for those adhering to Judaism as a whole, if they obey the teachings of Isaiah given above, and if we Gentiles follow them, terrorism will cease on earth among all peoples, and Israel will become (with all in the world applauding) the nation that all nations will call "the People of God." May God speed that day. ELM

¹ See my "*The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot*," p.417 where I show what words Josephus actually wrote in Greek that most translators leave out in their

modern translations. Josephus said there was a *stade* of space between the southern wall of Fort Antonia and the northern wall of Herod's Temple.

Footnotes are listed in this section. Use your browser BACK button to return to your place in this article after reading the footnote.

2 "Jerusalem," pp.189,190.

3 See my "*The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot*," p.210 where I quote the reference given by Cyril.

4 See Hammer, Reuven, *The Jerusalem Anthology*, p.148.

5 Bahat, Dan, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem*, pp.81,87.

6 See my chapter 12, pp.199-212 in my book "*The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot*" for adequate proof. Indeed, the Bordeaux Pilgrim described a "Temple" as being at the site (and he gave no hint that it was in ruins). So many Jews were inhabitants of Jerusalem from the Edict of Milan in 312 C.E. unto the defeat of Licinius in 324 C.E. — 12 years — that seven synagogues were built on the southwestern hill called "Zion" to provide them places to worship (and one of those synagogues still remained when the Bordeaux Pilgrim viewed the area in 333 C.E.). At this same time there was also a standing building on the site called "Hezekiah's House" which was a Jewish title for the prophesied palace that the Jewish authorities had just built to house their soon-coming Messiah that they then expected to appear. Parts of these buildings from the time of Constantine were reconstructed a few years later in the reign of Julian the Apostate, and after that there were ruins to be seen of these buildings over the Gihon Spring for the next 600 years including a part of the "Western Wall" of the Holy of Holies from the Temple that the Bordeaux Pilgrim viewed. But this region over the Gihon Spring was never built on (either churches, shrines, government buildings, etc.) by the Romans, Byzantines nor the Christians. As we will see, the spot remained vacant until 1577 C.E.

7 It is significant that the Geniza document points out that there were *foundational ruins* at the Temple site.

8 See chapters Six and Seven of my book "*The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot*."

9 See under the article "Blessing" (Vol.2, pp.251,252).

10 Jeremiah 7:12-14; 26:6-9.

11 "These were the works of the Emperor Justinian in Cilicia. At Jerusalem he built a church [Prof. Amitzur says: "shrine"] in honour of the Virgin, to which no other can be compared. The inhabitants call it the 'new church.' I shall describe what it is like, prefacing my account by the remark that this city stands for the most part upon hilly ground, which hills are not formed of earth, but are rough and precipitous, so as to make the paths up and down them as steep as ladders. All the rest of the buildings in the city stand in one place, being either built upon the hills, or upon flat and open ground; (1) but this church alone stands in a different position; for the Emperor Justinian ordered it to be built upon the highest of the hills, explaining of what size he wished it to be, both in width and in length. (2) The hill was not of sufficient size to enable the work to be carried out according to the Emperor's orders, (3) but a fourth part of the church, that towards the south wind and the rising sun, in which the priests perform the sacred mysteries, was left with no ground upon which to rest. Accordingly those in charge of this work devised the following expedient: (4) they laid foundations at the extremity of the flat ground, and constructed a building rising to the same height as the hill. (5) When it reached the summit, they placed vaults upon the walls and joined this building to the other foundations of the church; so that (6) this church in one place is built upon a firm rock, and in another place is suspended in the air — for the power of (7) the Emperor has added another portion to the (original) hill. The stones of this substruction are not of the size of those which we are accustomed to see: for the builders of this work, having to contend with the nature of the ground, and (8) being forced to raise a building equal in size to a mountain, scorned the ordinary practices of building, and betook themselves to strange and altogether unknown methods. (9) They cut blocks of stone of enormous size out of the mountains which rise to vast heights in the neighborhood of the city, cunningly squared them, and brought them thither in the following manner: they built wagons of the same size as these stones, and placed one stone upon each waggon. These wagons were dragged by picked oxen, chosen by the Emperor, forty of them dragging each waggon with its stone. Since it was impossible for the roads leading into the city to take these wagons upon them, they made a passage for them by cutting deeply into the mountains, and thus (10) formed the church of the great length which it was the Emperor's pleasure that it should have. (11) After they had built it of a proportional width they were not able to put a roof upon it. While they were inspecting every grove and place which they heard was planted with tall trees, they discovered a thick wood, producing cedars of enormous height, with which they made the roof of the church, of a height proportional to its length and width. These were the works which the Emperor Justinian constructed by human power and art, though assisted by his pious confidence, which in its turn reflected honour upon himself, and helped him to carry out his design. This church required to be surrounded on every side with columns, such as in beauty would be worthy

of the main building, and of a size capable of supporting the weight which would be laid upon them. However, the place, from its inland situation at a distance from the sea, and its being entirely surrounded by the precipitous mountains which I have mentioned, rendered it impossible for the builders of the foundation to bring columns thither from elsewhere. While, however, the Emperor was grieving at this difficulty, God pointed out in the nearest mountains a bed of stone of a kind suitable for this purpose, which either had existed there in former times and been concealed, or was then created. Either story is credible to those who regard God as the cause of it: for we, measuring everything by our human strength, think that many things belong to the region of the impossible, while for God nothing whatever is difficult or impossible. The church, then, is supported by a great number of columns brought from this place, of very great size, and of a color which resembles flame, which stand, some above, some below, and some round the porticos which encircle the entire church, except on the side turned towards the east. (12) Of these columns, the two which stand before the door of the church are of very unusual size, and probably second to no columns in the whole world. Beyond them is another portico, named the Narthex (reed), I suppose because it is narrow; after this is a court of square shape supported by columns of equal size; from this lead interior doors of such grandeur as to show those passing them what a spectacle they are about to meet with. Beyond this is a wonderful porch, and an arch supported on two columns at a great height. Proceeding further, there stand two semicircles, opposite to one another, on each side of the way to the church; (13) while on either side of the other road are two hospices—the work of the Emperor Justinian—one of which is destined for the reception of strangers, while the other is an infirmary for the sick poor. The Emperor Justinian also endowed this Church of the Virgin with large revenues. Such were the works of the Emperor Justinian in Jerusalem" (Procopius of Caesarea, translation in *The Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society*, "Buildings of Justinian," Book IV, Sect. VI, in Vol. 2, pp.136-143, London, 1890).

12 Avigad, Nahman, *Discovering Jerusalem*, Israel Exploration Society, 1980.

13 Procopius stated later in the text at section 356 (XI.1-11): "In Jerusalem he [Justinian] restored The Monastery of St. Thaleleus; The Monastery of St. Gregory;...The Monastery of the Iberians in Jerusalem; The Monastery of the 'Lazi in the Desert' of Jerusalem;...The Monastery of the Spring of Elisha in Jerusalem; the Monastery of Siletheus; The Monastery of Abba Romanus."

14 Avigad, *Ibid.*, p.245.

15 Avigad, *Ibid.*, p.245.

- 16 Wilkinson, John, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades*, see Gazetteer under "New Saint Mary," p.166.
- 17 Professor Oleg Grabar expressed surprise that the spot of Avigad's suggestion for the Nea Church was built "on such an inhospitable and inconvenient space" (*The Shape of the Holy*, Princeton University Press, 1996, p.35).
- 18 Kathleen Kenyon in her work on Jerusalem said that the "Seam" was 32.72 meters north of the southeast angle, or in English feet that answers to 107 feet 4.5 inches.
- 19 Wilkinson, John, *Ibid.*, p.84.
- 20 Amitzur, H., *The Centrality of Jerusalem*, editors: Pourthuis and Safrai, Pharos, Kampen, Netherlands, p.164.
- 21 The southeast section of the Haram esh-Sharif was long afterward associated with Mary and the presentation of Jesus in the Temple at the time of his circumcision. Throughout Islamic times the Muslim historians have often mentioned "Mary's niche" for prayer as being in the southeastern part of the Haram. The area called the "Stables of Solomon" was where the "Shrine of Mary" (also the Cradle of Jesus) was located and the spot was always connected with the early life of Jesus with Mary. Even as late as the sixteenth century the region of Solomon's Stables were known as the "Shrine of Mary" (see F.E. Peters, *Jerusalem*, p.480). Procopius said Justinian called it a "Temple" area. And, as I will reveal in a moment, it was recognized by Arabic historians that the whole area of the Al Aqsa Mosque in the southern part of the Haram was accounted the original "Church of Mary" (or, the Nea Church).
- 22 Le Strange, pp.143,144, capital letters mine for emphasis.
- 23 The Editors of the *PPTS* state: "Church of the Virgin [Mary], Jerusalem: The description by Procopius of this church [the NEA CHURCH] is very detailed; but the great alterations and destruction of buildings throughout the Haram [the Haram esh-Sharif] area since his time make it extremely difficult to arrive at a correct understanding of his account, or to identify any portion of the church with existing buildings. It is usually supposed to have occupied the site of the present Mosque El Aqsa, the entrances to which the Duc de Vogue believes to be remains of Justinian's church" (Vol.2, Appendix II, p.171). I have no doubt that these observations are correct.
- 24 This area at the southern (and most particularly, the southeastern) part of the Haram had long been associated with Mary and her giving birth to Jesus. Christian tradition that persisted unto the time of the Crusades associated the

area as the place where the priest blessed Jesus as an infant, and later Muslim tradition even thought it was the region where Jesus was born (and not, as the Gospels truly attest, in Bethlehem). This is where the Muslims selected as the "Cradle of Jesus" that commemorated the birth of Jesus "on the Temple mount." It is no wonder that Justinian selected this southern area to build a church to the "Mother of God" because of these early traditions about Mary. The Nea Church was certainly built in the southern part of the Haram esh-Sharif. See the following footnote.

- 25 Throughout the histories written by Islamic scholars, they have made mention of Mary having her niche for prayer in the southeastern part of the Haram esh-Sharif. It was no surprise to them that the "Church of Mary" should have been in that region of the Haram.
- 26 Poem 39, trans. Israel Zangwill, *Jewish Publication Society*, 1923, p.121.
- 27 Section One, *Judah Halevi*, edited by Heinrich Brody, *Jewish Publication Society*, 1924, 1952). NOTE: the Dome of the Rock and the Haram esh-Sharif were not then in a desolate state.
- 28 Section 5, *ibid*.
- 29 *Ibid*.
- 30 Section 8.
- 31 *Ibid*.
- 32 Section 19.
- 33 *Jewish Travelers in the Middle Ages*, p.104.
- 34 See F.E.Peters, "Jerusalem," pp.246-250, 280, 314-316, 358, 374,5.
- 35 In the division "Words of Understanding," Section One found on pages 249-251 in the English translation by Joanna Weinberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
- 36 The clause was found in Isaiah 13:20 and became proverbial for any desolate area judged by God for its evil and now inhabited by evil spirits and wicked or unclean demons. Arabs in De'Rossi's time shunned the Gihon Spring and they had even renamed it "the Dragon's Well."

37 In the time of the Crusades it became common to call the Gihon Spring by the name "Miriam's Well." The early Jews attached the name "Miriam" to the location of the spring when they believed it to be the proverbial "Miriam's Well" that was once situated inside the entrance to the Tabernacle in the wilderness. But because this site where the former Temples stood on the southeast ridge of Jerusalem had become like the original Zion that Isaiah the prophet described in Isaiah 29 (where the Bible stated that ghost-like appearances would be made at the former site), the Gihon Spring ("Miriam's Well") became known to post-Crusader Arabs in Jerusalem as the Dragon's Well (a place of evil spirits). Just like no Arab was prophesied to enter Babylon once it would become a haunt of evil spirits and demons (Isaiah 13:20), it became proverbial among Jews that no Arab wanted to go near any place that was designated a site of evil spirit for fear of being demon possessed. So, in the time of De' Rossi (1577 C.E.) we find the historian resorting to the proverbial fact that "NO ARAB WOULD PITCH HIS TENT" in an area where evil spirits were known to haunt. Thus, the Arabs of De' Rossi's day would not enter the area of the Gihon Spring.

38 See Prawer, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, p.48.

39 See Prawer, *ibid.*, p.48.

40 See the work *Sefer Qabbalath Sadiqei Eretz Israel* as cited by Prawer, *ibid.*, pp.176-180.

41 Prawer, *ibid.*, p.223.

42 See Prawer, *ibid.*, p.48.

43 See George Adam Smith, *Jerusalem*, vol.I, p.83.

44 W.F. Birch (he wrote in the *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly* from 1875 to 1885)

45 Sandra Benjamin, *The World of Benjamin Tudela*, p.171, emphasis and words in brackets are mine.

46 Hammer, Reuvin, *The Jerusalem Anthology*, p.166. This could not be a reference to the present Wailing Wall because its length is complete and is 1596 feet long. Note that Rabbi Da Bertinoro's "Western Wall" was only partially standing. This was the short ruin of a wall just to the west and north of the Dome of the Rock.

47 Sandra Benjamin, *The World of Benjamin of Tudela*, p. 88.

[48](#) *Ibid.*

[49](#) *Legends of Jerusalem* that is published by the Jewish Publication Society of America, p.204.

[50](#) *Legends of Jerusalem*, pp.204,205, the punctuation is Vilnay's.

[51](#) *Ibid.*, p.280.

[52](#) *Ibid.*, p.212.

[53](#) *Legends of Jerusalem*, pp.165,166.

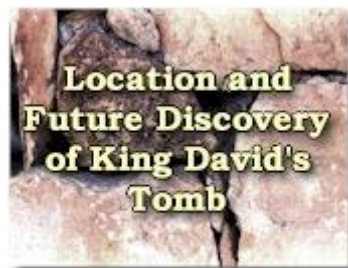
[54](#) *Legends of Jerusalem*, pp.242,3.

[55](#) *Legends of Jerusalem*, pp.276,277.

[56](#) Gabrieli, Francesco, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, p.93.

[57](#) See the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* article "Judaism."

The Location and Future Discovery of King David's Tomb



Temple Update Article

Expanded Internet Edition - October 1, 2006

The Location and Future Discovery of King David's Tomb

By David Sielaff, October 2006

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for October 2006](#)

The location of the Tombs of King David and his family can be easily understood once the proper site of the Temples of God is taken into account. If the biblical and historical evidence is correctly understood (and I believe it is), then what those Tombs could contain would change the world and lead millions to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah, starting from Jerusalem.

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In his book *The Temples That Jerusalem Forgot*, ¹ Dr. Ernest L. Martin explains in a few words the location of the Tombs of King David:

“Particularly notice that at the time of Nehemiah the sepulchres of David (and many other early kings of Judah) were located at the base of the stairs that went down into the Kedron Valley from the City of David. ²They were positioned alongside a pool that was fed by the waters of a conduit from the Gihon Spring. ...

These sepulchres in Nehemiah’s time were positioned not far south of the Gihon Spring over which the Temple then stood. In the earlier period from David to Nehemiah it was common to place the tombs of distinguished persons (especially kings) outside the Temple, but not far away. They were certainly not buried far to the north near the Dome of the Rock.”

• **Martin, *Temples Jerusalem Forgot*, p. 336**

He was exactly correct in this assessment. Later, in chapter 24 of his book, Dr. Martin shows that in the time of Simon the Hasmonean the buildings on the top of Mount Zion, including the Zerubbabel Temple, were demolished and their function transferred to different locations. The hill was cut down to bedrock and an enlarged Temple was reconstructed on the original site, expanding to the north and to the west.

Dr. Martin goes on to state that Simon’s transfer of structures included the sepulchres of David. He thought that the sepulchres of David comprised an above ground structure. ³While this may be true for some sort of structure at the entrance to the

sepulchers, it was not the case that the underground structures of the sepulchers of David were transferred. While sepulchers of other kings of Judah were indeed moved, the sepulchers of David, Solomon, and others were not transferred. They remained in their original location but inaccessible to the world.

Substantial biblical and historical evidence can now show a more precise location of the unopened Tombs of King David and his immediate family in relationship to one unchanged foundational wall of the Temple sanctuary, above and west of the Gihon Springs. This same wall did not change position throughout the various Temple reconstructions after the destruction of the original Solomonic Temple. This wall was used in the reconstruction of the Temple by Zerubbabel after the return of the people from Babylon. The same wall was used again in the later enlargement during the time of Simon the Hasmonean. The wall was used for a final enlargement of the Temple by King Herod. Each time the Temple was rebuilt or enlarged, the position of the southern wall remained unchanged. Enlargements of the Temple did not expand to the south, but only to the west and north.

The research by Dr. Martin provides an important framework for additional evidence leading directly to the location of the Tombs of King David of Israel. In turn, the discovery of the Tombs of King David will totally validate Dr. Martin's evidence beyond question. The bodies are likely still in those tombs waiting to be discovered, along with astonishing artifacts, and most important of all — written documents. It is my understanding and belief that these written documents, along with the other artifacts, may initiate a period of rediscovery and presentation of the truths of Scripture to the world, leading to the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21). [4](#)

Toward the end of this article I describe the writings and artifacts that could be contained within the Tombs. You will be amazed! Keep in mind, that at present it is pure speculation what items might be within the Tombs, although the speculation is informed by intriguing historical references, as you shall see. Then I shall describe one possible method by which the sepulchers can be located even more precisely so that an archaeological excavation can be conducted and the sepulchers entered without damaging the precious writings and artifacts within, so they can be properly preserved.

King David's Unusual Burial

First, some background regarding King David's burial. A comprehensive 1948 article by S. Yeivin, "The Sepulchers of the Kings of the House of David" [5](#) provides an excellent survey of the subject matter. Yeivin points out that in ancient times one important desire was to be buried with one's ancestors:

“Moreover, several verses in the Bible not only voice the express desire to be buried in a family tomb but consider it a special privilege, while failure to be buried with one’s ancestors is regarded as a curse and a disaster.”

- **Yeivin, “Sepulchers,” p. 30**

Genesis 47:29–30; Judges 8:32; 2 Samuel 19:38 are three examples of this ancient desire of Israelites to be buried with their ancestors. Failure to do so was seen as a curse and disaster. ⁶ King David was not buried with his fathers, although David helped others fulfill their burial customs (2 Samuel 2:32, 3:31–32, 17:23), even reburying the bones of King Saul and his son Jonathan in a more proper grave (2 Samuel 21:11–14).

“Yet this same David, who was so loyal to traditional customs, was not buried in his ancestral tomb at Bethlehem, but in a new grave: ‘So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David.’

[Yeivin’s footnote #12:] **I Kings 2:10. It is unthinkable that this was done against David’s will or that he left no instructions concerning his burial place. ... David, who remembered to give Solomon final instructions with regard to all his enemies, surely cannot have forgotten directions concerning the place of his own burial.”**

- **Yeivin, “Sepulchers,” pp. 30–31**

David did in fact make provision for his burial. To be more precise, God made that provision for David’s burial and David acceded to God’s desire.

King David’s “House”?

King David was the second king of Israel chosen by God after King Saul (2 Samuel 6:21; 1 Kings 8:16, 11:34; Psalm 78:70). After capturing Jerusalem, David ruled the 12 tribes of Israel from that capital city for the next 33 years, naming it the “City of David.” David came up with an idea to build a Temple to honor God within which would be placed the Ark of the Covenant and other items from the Tabernacle of Moses. ⁷ The prophet Nathan thought it was a good idea. He was sure that God would approve (2 Samuel 7:3). God thought otherwise and stated bluntly to King David through Nathan:

“Go and tell my servant David, Thus says the Lord, Shall you build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.”

- **2 Samuel 7:5–6**

God reviewed for David all that He had done for Israel and for David. God concluded:

“Also the Lord tells you that he [the Lord] will make you [David] an house. And when your days be fulfilled, and you shall sleep with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, which shall proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever [olam, for the age]. ...

And your house and your kingdom shall be established for ever [olam, for the age] before you [before God]: your throne shall be established for ever[olam, for the age]. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.”

- **2 Samuel 7:11–13, 16–17
(cf. 1 Chronicles 17:10–12, 14–15)**

God states explicitly that He shall make David a House (7:11). What does that mean? This does not mean a dynasty, contrary to what most all commentators believe. In fact the term “house” in 2 Samuel chapter 7 — in all 15 instances — always refers to a physical structure. A dynasty of David’s descendants is separately promised to David when God states **“I will set up your seed after you, which shall proceed out of your bowels”** (7:12), after David’s death. The mistake is conflating the “house” with the “seed” in this passage. ⁸

In my article, “The House of David,” I explain there is an intentional and precise distinction made in this passage between the “house” of David and the “seed” of David. Professor Lyle Eslinger is one commentator who understands this distinction correctly. ⁹

The fact that God will make a house for David tells us that this “house” is a physical structure. It will not be a building above ground like the Temple, but it will be a structure such as a cave or series of caves common to sepulchers of kings in ancient times. ¹⁰ As Professor Eslinger puts it:

“Having revealed to David that God would be the one to make a ‘house’ for his covenant partner and not vice versa, Yahweh proceeds to talk about time after David. This house will be a house for the dead!”

- **Eslinger, *House of David*, p. 43**

In other words the “house” structure built by God will be a tomb or sepulcher structure that shall remain for a long time: **“And your house and your kingdom shall be established for ever [olam, for the age] before you”** (7:16). Both David’s house and his kingdom shall be established for the age. ¹¹

Although God did not allow David to build the Temple, he was allowed to gather everything necessary for its construction. The “pattern” for the Temple, the plan for its construction, was given directly from God Himself in God’s own handwriting! ¹² When David died everything was prepared for Solomon to build the Temple of God exactly as God indicated. While David received plans for the Temple directly from God, no plans were necessary for the “house” that God “made” for David (2 Samuel 7:11).

As you read through David’s response to God, try to understand the mental turmoil David was going through: First, David desired to build God a Temple. His request was refused by God, but then God tells David that He “made” a house, a structure specially intended as David’s burial place. At the same time God tells David that a son of his shall build a Temple. Sometime later David receives the plans for the Temple from God’s own handwriting.

David’s Response to God

When God rejected David’s desire to build a Temple for His name (2 Samuel 7:5–16), David went before God and prayed about the house God was building for him. He was upset, frightened, and at first he did not understand what God was doing. David questions God in a complaint: Why did God bring him all this way through David’s life, protecting him, promoting him, assisting him in every trouble, raising him to be King over Israel, bringing Israel to peace and greatness, and then to tell David that God would build a “house” — a Tomb — for David?¹³

God was pronouncing a death sentence upon David. David naturally asks, “Oh God, why?” During his prayer to God, David answers his own questions, and then concludes with the confession that whatever God has in store for him, David will accept from God in obedience. Read David’s entire response to God in 2 Samuel 7:18–29, keeping in mind that when David refers to his house he is referring to the tomb or sepulcher that God made for him (not the proposed Temple, the house for God). In fact, David did not fully understand what God had in mind. After all, David just received news from God that he was going to die!

David’s prayer to God is a model for us whenever we are presented with a major situation in life that we do not like or understand, when circumstances before us seem totally opposed to what we thought was God’s will. David challenges God with questions about what God really wants. The mention of the “house,” meaning the Tomb that God has prepared for him, has David questioning God’s intention.

“Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, ‘Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that you have brought me hitherto[brought me so far]? And this was yet a small thing in your sight, O Lord God; but you have spoken also

of your servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

And what can David say more unto you? for you, Lord God, know your servant. For your word's sake, and according to your own heart, have you done all these great things, to make your servant know them."

- 2 Samuel 7:18–21

What God says in an off-hand manner, as David refers to it: **"a small thing in your sight,"** is to David a death sentence! David complains that he has been brought so far in life, apparently to be given a sentence of death by God Himself at the pinnacle of God's accomplishment using David as his servant for the good of God's people. David does not understand. Like the apostle Paul (Ephesians 1:11), David realizes that God does everything according to His own heart and as He has spoken (**"for your word's sake,"** verse 7:21).

David prepares to come to terms with whatever God will give him in life. Then David reviews what God has done for Israel and for him personally. While doing this, David realizes that God must have a plan to somehow glorify Himself, even with the death sentence He gave to David (verses 7:22–24). David then speaks to God directly about the "house" that God would "make" for him:

"And now, O Lord God, the word that you have spoken concerning your servant, and concerning his house,

[1] **establish it for ever** [confirm it for the age, *olam*], **and**

[2] **do as you have said.**

[3] **And let your name be magnified for ever** [*olam*, for the age], **saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel': and**

[4] **let the house of your servant David be established before you** [close to God].

For you, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed to your servant, saying, **'I will build you an house':** therefore has your servant **found in his heart to pray this prayer unto you.**"

- 2 Samuel 7:25–27

Note the numbered points in the passage. David completely and totally accepts what God presents to him. It was not easy for him. He had to search his heart to accept the difficult thing God proposed. David finally **"found in his heart to pray this**

prayer.” He will no longer struggle with God about this matter. David was truly a man after God’s own heart, willing to fulfill God’s will (Acts 13:22, with Paul citing 1 Kings 15:5).

He asks God to **“establish it,”** meaning his “house,” his Tomb, and asks that God’s name **“be magnified”** for the age (verse 7:26) by His action. YHWH of Hosts is the God over Israel (and over David) and that the house (Tomb) of God’s servant David will be built with acquiescence and without complaint. David states directly **“do as you have said”** (verse 7:25), which equivalent to saying **“thy will be done.”**

“And now, O Lord God, you are that God, and your words be true, and you have promised this goodness unto your servant: Therefore now let it please you to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue for ever [olam, for the age] before you: for you, O Lord God, have spoken it: and with your blessing let the house of your servant be blessed for ever[olam, for the age].”

- **2 Samuel 7:28–29**

David understands that God intends good for him regarding the Tomb. David accepts God’s pronouncement and asks that God will bless the house.

Contrary to his expectation at the time, David lived decades more. In fact the exchange of 2 Samuel chapter 7 occurred soon after the Ark was brought to Jerusalem, before David even saw Bathsheba and they married. Solomon was born from that union and he would build the Temple as God intended.

It may seem incredible to put forth that “house” means Tomb in this context, but the usage of “house” meaning “tomb” is borne out in several passages, particularly where the phrase “House of David” has that meaning. (See footnote #8 above.) To clarify the situation I substitute the word “tomb” for “house,” in these passages because that is what it means in context, and it will clarify your understanding:

“Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, ‘Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my TOMB, that you have brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in your sight, O Lord God; but you have spoken also of your servant’s TOMB for a great while to come. ...

And now, O Lord God, the word that you have spoken concerning your servant, and concerning his TOMB, establish it for ever [olam, for the age], and do as you have said. And let your name be magnified for ever [olam, for the age], saying, The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the TOMB of your servant David be established before you. For you, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed to your servant, saying, I will build you a TOMB: therefore has your servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto you.

And now, O Lord God, you are that God, and your words be true, and you have promised this goodness unto your servant: Therefore now let it please you to bless the TOMB of your servant, that it may continue for ever [olam, for the age] before you: for you, O Lord God, have spoken it: and with your blessing let the TOMB of your servant be blessed for ever[olam, for the age]."

- **2 Samuel 7:18–19, 28–29**

Now substitute the word "dynasty" where "house" is in the original, where I have "tomb," and note that the passages do not make near as much sense. David always desired and intended to have a dynasty. It is the goal of every ancient ruler. Why would David complain when God makes it so? Would David question God for creating a dynasty from him, as he questions God in verses 7:18–19? Would David ask for God's blessing for something already so positive?

No. In his response to God in 2 Samuel chapter 7 David is not initially expressing thanks and praise. He expresses shock about an evil situation, his death sentence. David was partially accepting because a dynasty and kingdom were announced in 2 Samuel 7:12–16 with the words "seed," "kingdom," and "throne," all of which indicate the establishment of a dynasty from David. Indeed, the dynasty was to be established for the age, although the duration of that age would be shorter than the "age" for the duration the "house." David came to understand that he would have the best of both worlds. He would not die immediately as he initially feared. He would have his dynasty and he would have a "house" or Tomb built for him by God. ¹⁴

I analyzed 2 Samuel chapter 7 in detail to show that the Tombs of David are not ordinary sepulchers. They were made by God Himself for a special purpose, and that purpose will last "for the age." That age has not yet seen its completion, even to our day.

Psalm 30 and David's Last Words

David finished and furnished the interior of that "house," those Tombs, in preparation before his death. ¹⁵ We can know this for a fact because Psalm 30 is written specifically to commemorate **"the dedication of the House of David"** (Psalm 30:1). This Psalm is not talking about a dynasty or David dedicating his personal house and home (his palace if you will) to God. That "house" or palace was built by Hiram king of Tyre, not by God. It was already completed when David conceived his idea to build a Temple for God (2 Samuel 5:11, 7:1–2; 1 Chronicles 14:1, 17:1). Psalm 30 must refer to the "house" that God made for David. ¹⁶

When David spoke his last words (2 Samuel 23:1–7), he states that he was a prophet and that God spoke through him (verse 23:2). David then spoke about the "house,"

which makes no sense in the King James Version, but is made clear by the New American Standard translation:

“Truly is not my house so with God? For He has made an everlasting covenant [a covenant for the age, *olam*] with me, Ordered in all things, and secured; For all my salvation and all my desire, Will He not indeed make it grow?

- *2 Samuel 23:5 (NAS)*

David talks about his house as a place of security for his salvation and fulfillment of God’s covenant to him. As he nears death, David desires his salvation. He likens his situation to a seed planted to grow. He even refers to thorns, undesirable elements burned in fire (verses 23:6–7). David’s body was being preserved until the resurrection, unto his salvation and desire (verse 23:5). The apostle Paul may be referring to this passage when he tells about the resurrection body:

“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? You fool, that which you sow is not quickened, except it die: And that which you sow, you sow not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God gives it a body as it has pleased him, and to every seed his own body.”

- *1 Corinthians 15:35–38*

David came to understand, as expressed in Psalm 132 (and several other Psalms of David), that just as God desires Zion to be His habitation, Zion also becomes a desired place of rest for David:

“For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.”

- *Psalm 132:13–14*

“House” as Grave

Some may still question the understanding that “house” occasionally means grave. A definitive example is in Isaiah chapter 14. Here the context of verses 18–20 demands that “house” means tomb or a grave:

“All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie [dead] in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. You shall not be joined with them in burial ...”

- *Isaiah 14:18–20*

The Tomb that God built for David is indicated in several contexts of Scripture by the phrase “House of David.” While that phrase certainly is often used to denote David’s kingly descendants, it is important to distinguish by the usage, in context, when “House of David” refers to the Tombs of David. In my article “The House of David” the term “house” often means “tomb” if the context indicates. ¹⁷ Two other definitive passages that indicate that “house” can mean tomb or sepulcher are Ecclesiastes 12:5, 7 and Nehemiah 2:3.

“House of David” in Isaiah

Another example of “house” meaning a structure takes place during the reign of King Hezekiah. Again, I must give the background because it shows relevance to burial and tombs. There was an important man in Hezekiah’s court by the name of Shebna who was a high official of the kingdom, perhaps the most powerful man after King Hezekiah himself. Shebna carved out a sepulcher himself for himself just like the kings of Judah. His sepulcher was **“on high.”** Shebna thought that his status was so great in the society of Judah that he intended to be buried with honors like a king, buried in the best and highest positions in the city:

“Thus says the Lord God of hosts, ‘Go, get you unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, ¹⁸ which is over the house, and say, What have you here? and whom have you here, that you have hewn you out a sepulchre here, as he that hews him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth [carves] an habitation [Hebrew: tabernacle] for himself in a rock?”

- *Isaiah 22:15–16*

Three facts come out from Isaiah chapter 14 passage above, and the Isaiah 22:20–22 passage below: (1) “house” can mean grave and sepulcher, (2) many sepulchers were carved out of rock hillsides, and (3) the most desirable locations were high on the hillside, befitting exalted status. Shebna’s successor is discussed later in Isaiah chapter 22, leading to the important verse 22:22:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkihah ¹⁹: And I will clothe him with your [Shebna’s] robe, and strengthen him with your girdle, and I will commit your government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

And the key of the House of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.”

- *Isaiah 22:20–22*

In this context **"House of David"** is a physical structure and does not refer to the descendants of David, even though the earlier phrase **"house of Judah"** refers to the people of the kingdom. This is clearly the case because of the reference to the key, and to opening and shutting. Keys do not open and close people. A key is used to open and close doors and enclosures, locking and unlocking them. In this case the door is to the **"House of David,"** a real physical structure and place. There is likely a direct connection to the Temple or the palace of the king. And yes, keys in ancient times were so large that they were put on the shoulder.

The name "Eliakim" means "God raises" or "God sets up." This and other factors show that Isaiah 22:22 has a direct messianic reference as used in Revelation 3:7, almost a direct quote with one important change, in the message to the *ekklesia* of Philadelphia where it refers specifically to Christ.

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; 'These things says he that is holy, he that is true, he that has the key of David, he that opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens; I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept my word, and have not denied my name.'"

- *Revelation 3:7-8*

The difference between the two passages is that Isaiah 22:22 has the long phrase **"key of the house of David,"** and Revelation 3:7 reduces it to **"key of David."** The phrase **"house of"** in Isaiah is missing in Revelation, yet the reference to Isaiah in Revelation is obvious. ²⁰The **"key of the house of David"** refers to the sepulchres of David. We shall know in the future whether the sepulchres of David are part of the door opened by Christ.

The Burials of David and His Successors

David was buried in his capital city called at that time the City of David: **"So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David"** (1 Kings 2:10), and not in his ancestral tombs, because God "made" the sepulcher for David. David's son Solomon was buried there also: **"And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father."** (1 Kings 11:43). Note what was written about some of David's successor kings, their tombs, and burial practices ²¹:

"And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign. And they buried him in his own sepulchres [plural], which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and diverse kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him."

- *2 Chronicles 16:13–14, cf. 1 Kings 15:24*

King Asa prepared sepulchers for himself and others in the city of David. It is unknown how close to the sepulchers of David they were. One successor to Asa was Jehoram (Joram). He was buried **“in the city of David but not in the sepulchres [plural] of the kings”** (2 Chronicles 21:20). King Azariah (named Uzziah in Chronicles) was buried in the city of David (2 Kings 15:7) but with added detail in 2 Chronicles 26:23: **“they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings.”** Because he was a leper Uzziah was buried in the field, not in the sepulchers. King Ahaz also has interesting details added:

“Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned ...”

- *2 Chronicles 28:27*

It is clear from these passages in 2 Chronicles that the author considered the sepulchers of the descendants of King David (Ahaz’s fathers) to be **“the sepulchres of the kings of Israel.”** King Hezekiah died:

“Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David.”

- *2 Chronicles 32:33*

This verse indicates that there were several **“sepulchres [plural] of the sons of David”** in the City of David. They comprised the sepulchers of the kings of Judah up to the time Hezekiah was buried. Was Hezekiah buried with David? Perhaps. This may be what is meant by **“chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David.”** ²² Of the first 12 immediate heirs of David all are said to be buried in the City of David. The successors to Hezekiah were not buried there.

The Carcasses of the Kings: Ezekiel 43:7–9

We come now to a verse that discusses the “wall” that gives us a major clue to a more precise location of the Tombs of David. It is to be found in Ezekiel chapter 43.

The vision of Ezekiel chapters 40–48 is a single prophecy given to the prophet Ezekiel and precisely dated to the 25th year of captivity, the 14th year after the destruction of Jerusalem (and the Temple, Ezekiel 40:1–2). In this vision Ezekiel was taken to view Jerusalem from the east (from the Mount of Olives) and then he is taken into the Temple sanctuary. Most of the vision relates to the future (Ezekiel 40:1–42:20 and 43:13–48:35). However, Ezekiel 43:1–12 is a historical parenthesis, obviously looking

to the past, at least 14 years. The text describes the Temple before it was destroyed by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Glory of the Lord brought Ezekiel to the east gate (verse 1), then through the east gate of the Temple:

“So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house [the Holy Place in the Temple]. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me.”

- *Ezekiel 43:5–6*

Important information is then given regarding the sepulchers of the Kings of Judah in direct relation to God’s presence.

“And he said unto me, ‘Son of man, [1] the place of my throne, and [2] the place of the soles of my feet, [3] where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever [*olam*, for the age], and [4] [the place I put] my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.”

- *Ezekiel 43:7*

There can be no doubt that the phrases [1] through [4] listed above all refer to the Temple, the sanctuary of God, and the place for His name, from which the Glory of the Lord was speaking. The carcasses of their kings were close to where God had His throne, placed His feet, and had His glory. ²³ They were defiling His holiness by their presence so close to God’s sanctuary ²⁴:

“In their setting of their threshold [singular, but implying one threshold per king’s sepulcher] by my thresholds [plural], and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever [*olam*, for the age].”

- *Ezekiel 43:8–9*

God took action and consumed the evildoers. Now God wants the carcasses and their sepulchers removed: **“let them put away ... far from me”** (verse 9). This was done in the time of Simon the Hasmonean.

How close were the sepulchers of the kings to God’s sanctuary? Verse 8 indicates that **“thresholds”** and **“posts”** separated the sanctuary from **“the carcasses of their kings.”** It appears that these sepulchers were above ground, unlike the sepulchers of David that God made. The text does not say they were in graves underground.

Reference to **“thresholds”** and **“posts”** indicate buildings. For the Sanctuary the **“thresholds”** were doorways in the outer wall, while the **“posts”** were likely upright beams that supported the lintels of the doorway. ²⁵ Those were often highly carved and likely had idolatrous designs.

Most importantly for our consideration here is that there was only **“the wall between me and them.”** The sepulchers containing **“the carcasses of their kings”** may have been along side the wall of the sanctuary so that the separation of just one wall was the distance of the sepulchers of the kings to God’s sanctuary. If we can identify that wall, it will give us a major clue as to the location of the sepulchers of the kings, and most particularly the House of David.

Evil Kings Defile the Sanctuary, Not Good Kings

It was not only the carcasses of evil kings whose proximity to the sanctuary was defiling to God (verse 43:7), but also the actions of people who did evil at the carcasses. This is explicitly stated by God:

“... they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever [*olam*, for the age].”

• **Ezekiel 43:8–9**

The evil kings and others in Jerusalem were consumed by God’s anger. This was done by the invasion of the Babylonian army in successive attacks, mass death in Jerusalem, and exile for thousands in the city. God had no grievance with the good and righteous kings of Judah. Once the carcasses of the evil kings were removed from His presence, away from His sanctuary, God says He shall **“dwell in the midst of them”** for the age, meaning to the end of the age.

David, Solomon and their families were buried underground in the chambers “made” for David by God close to the Temple sanctuary. The evil kings of Judah were buried in above ground structures. It was the **“carcasses”** of the evil kings and their sepulchers that were removed in response to God’s command (Ezekiel 43:9) not the sepulchers of David that were deep in bedrock. When Simon the Hasmonean cut down Zion and the Temple in fulfillment of Isaiah chapters 25 to 35, he also moved **“the carcasses of their kings.”** Perhaps the earthquake that occurred (Isaiah 29:2–6) that destroyed a portion of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, as Dr. Martin believed, caused Simon to decide, with support of the religious leaders and the people, to cut the remains of Zion down to bedrock. ²⁶ The earthquake might have prevented Simon from entering and moving David’s sepulcher, although Simon’s son, John Hyrcanus, was able to enter the Tomb and remove treasure (as we shall see below).

These structures were turned into **“high places”** where the most foul evils were committed and had some sort of defiling abominations that were done and performed involving carcasses and whoredom. ²⁷ Idolatry and whoredom (ritual sexuality) have always been part of pagan religious practice. Human depravity being what it is, and given God’s extremely strong reaction to these structures, it is not outrageous to suppose that these sepulchers had some ritual sexuality performed that involved the dead (**“abominations that they have committed ... their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings”**). While it is unpleasant to think about such things, God’s reaction in Ezekiel 43:7–9 has these things in mind. Read all of Jeremiah 19:1–15. The same kind of activity spoken against in Ezekiel is found there:

“And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.”

• *Jeremiah 19:13*

There was only one king of Judah at any one time. In prior days they did their defilements in the valley of Tophet, now they do it openly in Jerusalem on the rooftops of houses and on the rooftops of **“the houses of the kings of Judah.”** This is referring to the houses or sepulchers of the kings where the people of Jerusalem committed their evils — in the cemetery of the kings. Those acts include human sacrifice (Jeremiah 19:4–5, God’s punishment, verse 9). These above ground sepulchers were moved during the time of Simon the Hasmonean when he demolished and moved all the buildings above bedrock.

Which Wall?

It is obvious to ask the question, which wall separated the Sanctuary of the Temple from the Tombs (**“carcasses”**) of the kings of Judah referred to by Ezekiel? It was the southern wall of the Temple Sanctuary. How can we know? We can know by historical evidence. Sepulchers and graves were not allowed under the greater Temple Sanctuary. Great care was taken to ensure that the Temple Sanctuary was not placed over graves. This is clear from the Mishnah:

“Beneath both the Temple Mount and the courts of the Temple was a hollowed space for fear of any grave down in the depths.”

• *Mishnah Parah 3.2*

The Temple of Solomon was 150 feet wide (north to south) and 500 feet long (east to west) (Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.198). Simon doubled the dimensions by expanding the Sanctuary to the north and to the west, and added a porch. Herod doubled the

area of the Sanctuary (Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 1.401), again expanding to the north and to the west resulting in a square platform 600 feet by 600 feet. ²⁸

The wall that was not moved but merely lengthened was the southern wall. The eastern wall did not move either; it was already “into” the Kedron Valley and could go no further. The placement of that wall was not changed because the Tombs of David were located on the other side of that wall, deep in bedrock.

Nehemiah and the Sepulchers of David

At the beginning of this article I related Dr. Martin’s understanding of the Tombs of David based on indications from Nehemiah 3:15–16, but there are also indications from Nehemiah 12:37 which is a mirror image of the 3:15–16 passage. ²⁹ Putting these verses together shows there is no doubt that the **“house of David”** equates with the **“graves of David”** in these two passages written 12 years apart. The same scene is being described from two different perspectives (Young’s Literal Translation):

Nehemiah 3:15–16	Nehemiah 12:37 (12 yrs later)
<p>“The gate of the fountain has Shallum ..., strengthened: ...</p> <p>and unto the steps that</p> <p>are going down from <i>the city of David</i>.</p> <p>After him has Nehemiah ..., strengthened,</p> <p>unto over-against the graves of David.”</p>	<p>“... by the gate of the fountain, ... they have gone up</p> <p>by the steps of <i>the city of David</i>,</p> <p>at the going up of the wall, beyond</p> <p>the house of David, and unto the water gate eastward.”</p>

“Graves of David” = “house of David.” This fits with Zechariah chapter 12 above which contrasts David with **“him who they have pierced”** which was Jesus (Zechariah 12:10, John 19:37).

House of David in Zechariah?

The last 6 chapters of Zechariah were prophecies given by Jeremiah, even though it is found in the Book of Zechariah. ³⁰ Zechariah chapters 12–14 is a single continuous prophecy. Chapter 12 tells Israel’s future victory over its enemies and then mourning over the one pierced. Chapter 13 tells about how idolatry shall end in Israel and how the shepherd is struck and the flock scattered. Chapter 14 tells about future war and ultimate victory. In these three chapters of Zechariah there is a recurring phrase, **“in that day”** that occurs 19 times like a drumbeat throughout the prophecy. Another

important phrase, **“house of David”** occurs five times between Zechariah 12:7 and 13:1. The reference is not to the royal descendants of David. Every instance of those five occurrences of **“house of David”** refers to a physical structure, and indicates the sepulchers of David.

Zechariah 12:1 introduces the theme which is the burden of Israel. In verses 2 and 3 we find that Jerusalem shall become a problem to **“all the people round about”** so that eventually all nations will gather against the city. Jerusalem shall be a problem to all the peoples and nations of the earth. God shall intervene. The people shall depend upon God to save them, and He does:

“The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.”

- ***Zechariah 12:7***

First notice that the tents of Judah will be saved first, then the **“house of David”** is counterposed, again, with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Most commentaries tell you that they both refer to people, the inhabitants of the city and the descendants of David. This is incorrect. The house of David refers to the sepulchers of David. The next verse says something remarkable about that house of David:

“In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

- ***Zechariah 12:8–9***

In the future the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be defended (somehow) by God who will make even the weakest will seem like King David at the height of his power, that is, almost invincible. The next sentence about the **“house of David”** seems to inflate that power of that “house” to outrageous proportions. Yet it all makes sense if the **“house of David”** is a physical structure having something inside it so wondrous that people will think God Himself is communicating with them, as if God’s personal messenger has come to them, the **“angel of the Lord before them.”**

This is not a hyperbolic poetic comparison about the power of the **“inhabitants of Jerusalem”** vis-à-vis the descendants of King David. God will defend the inhabitants (verse 8) and destroy the attackers (verse 9). Something about the **“house of David”** will be involved to make the **“inhabitants of Jerusalem”** be protected and have God intervene to destroy the attackers.

Something about the **“house of David”** shall lead the **“inhabitants of Jerusalem”** to recognize Jesus as their Messiah as understood in John 19:34, 27 and Revelation 1:7:

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they [the inhabitants] shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.”

- ***Zechariah 12:10–11***

In the following verse it is impossible to claim that **“house of David”** refers to anything but a group of people just like the other groups. However, the grouping is peculiar ...

“And the land shall mourn, every family apart;

**the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart;
the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;
The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart;
the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;**

All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.”

- ***Zechariah 12:12–14***

Some facts must be explained at this point. Nathan was a son of David (2 Samuel 5:14; 1 Chronicles 3:5, 14:4), a direct ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:31). Nathan was an older brother of Solomon, yet Solomon was chosen by God to succeed David to the throne. Shimei was a common name among those descended from Levi, but the closest is a grandson. If these four groups would be buried in the Tombs, different chambers for each family group, this obscure verse would make a great deal of sense. The next verse:

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”

- ***Zechariah 13:1–2***

Do groups of people have fountains or springs opened to them? Do structures have fountains opened to them. Yes, if they are located near a spring such as the Gihon, which is the location of the House of David, the tombs of David. God is the fountain of living waters (Jeremiah 17:13). His living waters are healing. To ignore them is a great evil. (Remember that Jeremiah also wrote the Zechariah passages we just considered):

“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

- *Jeremiah 2:13*

Sepulchers of David in Josephus

Josephus tells of an event that took place during the reign of John Hyrcanus, King of Judah, son and heir of Simon the Hasmonean. Hyrcanus **“opened one room of David’s sepulchre, and took out three thousand talents”** (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 7:393). Josephus indicates there are more rooms than the one room Hyrcanus entered and took treasure from. Elsewhere Josephus gives a bit more information: **“But Hyrcanus opened the sepulchre of David, who excelled all other kings in riches, and took out of it three thousand talents”** (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13:249). This passage tells us that there were probably more riches in other rooms of David’s sepulcher, and indeed that was the case. The location of the sepulcher of David was known to John Hyrcanus, and also others. Josephus later tells a fascinating story of when King Herod the Great tried to enter David’s sepulcher:

“As for Herod, he had spent vast sums on the cities, both outside and inside his own kingdom; and because he had before heard that Hyrcanus, who had been king before him, had opened David’s sepulchre, and taken out of it three thousand talents of silver, and that there was a much greater number left behind, and, indeed, enough to suffice all his wants[i.e. great wealth remained in the sepulcher], he had a great while an intention to make the attempt; and at this time he opened that sepulchre by night, and went into it, and endeavored that it should not be at all known in the city, but took only his most faithful friends with him. As for any money, he found none, as Hyrcanus had done, but that furniture of gold, and those precious goods that were laid up there; all which he took away.

However, he had a great desire to make a more diligent search, and to go farther in, even as far as the very bodies of David and Solomon, where two of his guards were slain, by a flame that burst out upon those who went in, as the report was. So he was terribly frightened, and went out, and built a propitiatory monument of that fright he had been in; and this of white stone, at the mouth of the sepulchre, and that at great expense also.”

- *Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 16:179–182*

Herod’s episode gives us more useful information. Herod’s suspicions were correct and he knew the precise location of David’s sepulcher, but entering it was the problem. He expected more treasure to be in the tomb than what Hyrcanus had already taken away, and he was correct. He took furniture of gold (gold leaf on wood),

and other valuable objects, but no money. Josephus specifically says that Hyrcanus and Herod were both unsuccessful getting to the bodies of David and Solomon, but implies that the bodies were there. Indeed we shall see below that David's body was indeed in the Tomb. Josephus has more information.

“Herod, the king opened another room, and took away a great deal of money, and yet neither of them came at the coffins of the kings themselves, for their bodies were buried under the earth so artfully, that they did not appear to even those who entered into their monuments; but so much shall suffice us to have said concerning these matters.”

- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 7:394**

The Greek word “money” in these two passages frequently means simply possessions or wealth. In *Antiquities* 16:180 it says Herod found no money, and in *Antiquities* 7:394 it says he did. This cannot be reconciled. In any case Josephus relates that Herod became frightened because of fire killing his fellow grave robbers and he never entered the Tombs again so far as we know. ³¹ Although the bodies (plural) of David and Solomon and others were unattainable to both Hyrcanus and Herod, they expected to find the bodies. Remember Isaiah 22:22 about the opening and shutting, shutting and opening.

“So he [Herod] was terribly frightened, and went out, and built a propitiatory monument of that fright he had been in; and this of white stone, at the mouth of the sepulchre, and that at great expense also.”

- ***Antiquities of the Jews* 16:182**

The **“propitiatory monument”** that Herod constructed would not have been placed at a newly moved tomb, but it makes sense that the monument would be at **“the mouth of the sepulchre”** of a cave-like structure.

I propose that the sepulchers of David and Solomon were not moved by Simon the Hasmonean for two reasons: **(1)** they contained the bodies of righteous kings whose Tombs did not defile the sanctuary (Ezekiel 43:7–9), and more importantly **(2)** their sepulchers were far underground in bedrock. Simon reduced the hill where the Temple was located downto bedrock; he did not carve into the bedrock. The sources Dr. Martin cites in his book *The Temples That Jerusalem Forgot*, p. 343, make this abundantly clear.

David and Jesus

King David and Jesus were associated by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost after Jesus ascension. Speaking from Jerusalem Peter writes.

“I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. ...

For David ascended not into the heavens: but he [David] said himself, ‘The Lord said unto my Lord, “Sit you on my right hand, till I make your enemies the footstool of your feet”’.”

• *Acts 2:29, 34–35*
(quoting from Psalm 110)

Reading the text of Acts 2:29 critically, Peter knew where David’s tomb was, it seems to be visible to Peter and his audience, almost as if Peter was gesturing to it while he was speaking. Peter understood David’s body to be in the Tomb. If David is dead, buried, and his tomb is still with us, then the body should be there also. That phrase **“his tomb is still with us unto this day”** is meaningful if one remembers that many of the tombs of the kings of Judah were moved by Simon the Hasmonean. Peter is saying that David’s tomb was not put elsewhere, but that the body of David is in the original tomb. David’s sepulchre would be south of the Temple, at God’s right hand, just as Psalm 110 states (Acts 2:35).

The apostle Paul later spoke (as Peter did) about King David and transitioned to talk about David’s seed, Jesus, (Acts 13:22–23) who he identifies as the Savior of Israel. Then Paul told of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and contrasted David with Jesus. David saw corruption in the grave, while Jesus did not:

“And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, ‘I will give you the sure mercies of David [Psalm 55:3].’ Wherefore he says also in another psalm, ‘You shall not suffer your Holy One to see corruption [Psalm 16:16].’ For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.”

• *Acts 13:34–37*

Note how Peter and Paul both begin talking about David and then transition to talking about Jesus? This is intentional in both instances. The same thing was done in Zechariah chapter 12. That prophecy relates to the House of David and then changes to talk about him **“whom they have pierced”** (Zechariah 12:10). The apostle John states that prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus at His crucifixion (John 19:37).

Rabbi Akiba (b.40 C.E. and d.135) wrote this intriguing item after the destruction of the Temple about the burials and tombs within the city of David. He refers to the clearing away of the sepulchers, likely meaning the sepulchers of the kings of Judah discussed above.

“In Jerusalem it was not permitted to leave tombs [within the city] with the exception of those of the house of David and that of the prophetess Hulda. ...

All sepulchers should be cleared away, except the sepulcher of a king and the sepulcher of a prophet. Rabbi Akiba says: ‘Even the sepulcher of a king and the sepulcher of a prophet should be cleared away.’

He was told, ‘But there were at Jerusalem the sepulchers [plural] of the House of David and the sepulcher [singular] of Huldah the prophetess and nobody ever touched them’: to which he [R. Akiba] replied: ‘Do you adduce these as evidence? There was a tunnel in them through which the uncleanness went forth to the Valley of Kidron.’”

- *Tosefta, Baba Bathra 1:2, 11–12*

First notice what Rabbi Akiba was told. He was told about **“the sepulchers of the house of David.”** It is easy to see how “house of David” could come to mean the “sepulchers of David.” Second, note that there was a tunnel of uncleanness close to the sepulchres of the house of David and the sepulcher of Huldah. The term “uncleanness” is a direct reference to Zechariah 13:1–2 above.

Third is a most significant point. Nobody ever touched those two sepulchers. That means that according to this author, who wrote after the destruction of the Temple, the expectation was that the bodies of David’s family and Huldah the prophetess should still be inside intact sepulchers. This means that the Romans did not enter the sepulchers, even though Josephus, a friend to Rome, apparently knew where the sepulchers were. That means that the Romans, with all the time and resources in the world after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., were not able to access those sepulchers.

Chain of Evidence

Remember from Ezekiel 43:8–9 that the carcasses of the kings had just a wall of separation between them and the sanctuary of the Temple. I showed that was the south wall of the sanctuary. Most all of the sepulchers were moved by Simon the Hasmonean as per Rabbi Akiba. Two groups of sepulchers were not moved. Those were the sepulchers of the house of David and the sepulchers of Huldah the prophetess.

“There were five gates to the Temple enclosure: the two gates of Huldah from the south, which served for entrance and for exit”

- *Mishna Middoth 1.3, Danby Translation*

There was only one set of gates in the southern wall of the Temple enclosure. They were named the **“gates of Huldah”** because they pointed to a location in the direction leading from the Temple through that gate. I propose that the significant location was the sepulcher of Huldah, just where it should be located.

“R. Phinehas in the name of R. Huna of Sepphoris said:

‘The spring that issues from the Holy of Holies in its beginning resembles the antennae of locusts; as it reaches the entrance to the Sanctuary it becomes as the thread of the warp; as it reaches the Ulam, it becomes as the thread of the woof [slightly larger]; as it reaches the entrance to the [Temple] court, it [the channel] becomes as large as the mouth of a small flask [other feeder pipes for drainage increased its volume], that is meant by what we learned:

R. Eliezer b. Jacob said:

‘[Hence] go forth the waters which will bubble forth from under the threshold of the Sanctuary. From there onwards it becomes bigger, rising higher and higher, until it reaches the entrance to the House of David [at the bottom of the Ophel slope where David pitched his “House” (Tabernacle) for the Ark at the Gihon Spring]. As soon as it reaches the entrance to the house of David [at the Gihon Spring], it becomes even as a swiftly running brook, in which men and **women afflicted with gonorrhea, menstruating women, and women after childbirth bathe, as it is said:**

‘In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for purification and for sprinkling’ [Zechariah 13:1].”

- ***Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 77b–78a*** ³²

Ezekiel 43:7–9 gave the final key to the location of the sepulchers of David, the **“house of David.”** Everything fit into place with that piece of the puzzle. After all, who would have the closest, best location for their sepulcher? David would have. After all, God “made” David’s sepulcher for him and probably all of the chambers for David’s family, which David then had craftsmen “finish.” David’s tomb would have been the best location, chosen by God, decades before the Temple was constructed and even before Solomon was born. It is not by chance that, with God facing east from the Temple, if David’s sepulcher was to the south, then David would be at God’s right hand, awaiting the resurrection from the dead (Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:42; Acts 2:34–35).

- The tombs are an underground structure or series of chambers. (God made them, 2 Samuel 7.)

They are hidden (Josephus), but locked (Isaiah 22:22); known but inaccessible (Acts 2:29, 34–35, Josephus).

They are up high on the hill (Isaiah 22:22, Ezekiel 43:7–9), but in the bedrock.

- There are several chambers in the sepulchers (2 Chronicles and Josephus).
- They are on the other side of the southern wall of the Temple sanctuary (Ezekiel 43:7–9).
- There was apparently one entrance down near the water outlet from the Temple into the Kedron Valley (Babylonian Talmud).
- Attempts were made to enter the sepulchers by Hyrcanus (Josephus) and Herod (Josephus).
- The body and tomb of David were intact at Pentecost in 30 C.E. (apostle Peter) and soon after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (R. Akiba).
- If David's sepulchers are immediately south of the southern Temple wall, figuratively David would be at God's right hand (Acts 2:34–35).

Speculations: What Could Be in the Tombs?

Josephus mentions silver, other money or valuables, gilded furniture, and **“precious goods”** (*Antiquities* 16:181) in the sepulcher of David, along with the bodies. There is good reason to believe there might be other valuable items inside as well. Let us examine these and other possibilities of what might be in the Tombs. The possibilities are fascinating but keep in mind that they are speculative.

Gold and Silver?

The raw materials that David gathered as King of Israel and Judah for the Temple are discussed in 1 Chronicles 29:2. David contributed a substantial quantity of his own personal wealth to the project (verses 29:3–5). He then challenged the leaders of Israel to contribute materials for the Temple, and they responded generously (verses 29:5–8). Finally the people gave an unspecified amount (verse 29:9). According to the Jewish historian Josephus, King David collected for God's Temple as much as 10,000 talents of gold and 100,000 talents of silver (*Antiquities of the Jews* 7.340), and that is at a conservative understanding of 48pounds per talent. Solomon did not use all that gold and silver. A great deal of it was buried with David, as Josephus relates:

“He [David] also left behind him greater wealth than any other king, either of the Hebrews or of other nations, ever did. ...

moreover he [David] had great and immense wealth buried with him, the vastness of which may be easily conjectured at by what I shall now say; for a 1,300 years afterward, Hyrcanus the High Priest, when he was besieged by Antiochus, ... opened one room of David’s sepulchre, and took out 3,000 talents, and gave part of that sum to Antiochus.”

- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 7:391–392**

David was buried with more wealth than any other king in history, up to that time. Hyrcanus took out 3,000 talents of silver (again, at 48 pounds per talent). Herod the Great also took “treasure” from the Tomb of David, although he did not reach the chamber with the bodies (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 7:394). There was much more still in the Tomb. Analysis done by Gary Arvidson shows there should be a considerable amount of gold and silver remaining in the Tomb of David, perhaps billions of dollars worth. ³³ Everyone should understand, however, that the gold and silver is YHWH’s, given through David, and it would be the property of the government of Israel. However, there would be no possibility or concern about the tomb being raided by poachers. Hyrcanus and Herod both failed to reach the bodies, and they had the resources of their empires at their disposal.

The Tabernacle of David?

David constructed a Tabernacle to house the Ark of the Covenant (brought from the town of Baale, 2 Samuel 6:2, 17) until the Temple would be built. The Tabernacle was constructed in Zion, the City of David (2 Chronicles 5:2), down by the Gihon Springs (1 Kings 1:33–45). Services and sacrifices were conducted there by David and the Levites. There is a messianic prophecy about this tabernacle and the throne in the Book of Isaiah:

“And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.”

- ***Isaiah 16:5***

All are present: Zion, a throne, the Tabernacle of David, judgment and righteous. A contemporary, the prophet Amos, also prophesied during the time of King Uzziah of Judah about the Tabernacle of David:

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of

old [during David's time]. That they may possess the remnant of Edom [adam, mankind], ³⁴ and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, says the Lord that does this."

- *Amos 9:11-12*

"In that day" refers to the time before the Second Coming of Christ. This is what James, the brother of Jesus, believed when he quoted Amos 9:11-12 in the Book of Acts. This prophetic verse came to James' mind when the council met in Jerusalem about requirements for Gentile believers from Paul's missions to present the Gospel (under New Covenant authority) to the Gentiles, James quoted Amos 9:11-12:

"After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men [anthropos] might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, says the Lord, who does all these things."

- *Acts 15:16-17*

It is not said that the Tabernacle of Moses would be reconstructed, but that the tabernacle of David would be raised again. The Tabernacle of David was constructed before the Temple was built, and lasted until the Temple was completed and dedicated by Solomon. Note also that the result of this rebuilding of the Tabernacle, rebuilding of the ruins, and the setting up all occurs, the Gentiles will seek after YHWH.

The question arises, after the Temple was built, what happened to the physical Tabernacle of David? It was taken down, certainly, but how can it be rebuilt? Is the Tabernacle of David folded up and placed within David's Tomb? If so, it seems impossible, under normal circumstances, that it would be usable again, but the prophecies seem to say that something called the Tabernacle of David will be built again. ³⁵

Physical "Throne of David"?

David's son Solomon sat on the throne of David: **"Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly"** (1 Kings 2:12). There is no doubt he did this literally (1 Kings 2:19). Solomon performed this act to show his physical occupation of the chair, the throne, but also to show that Solomon ruled in place of David. Later Solomon had his own physical throne constructed. He used it instead of David's throne. The throne is described in detail:

"Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there

were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom."

- *1 Kings 10:18–20*

Solomon put his throne in his palace and built a raised porch to put the throne upon (1 Kings 7:1–7). The question must be asked: if Solomon had a new physical throne built for himself, with great glory and splendor, what then was done with David's physical throne? Would it have been destroyed? Would it have been thrown in the trash? Would it have been used like any other chair? No. David's physical throne likely would have been put in David's "house," his Tomb. A psalm of David included into the Book of Psalms by Hezekiah, Psalm 122, specifically states that there are multiple "thrones" of the house of David.

"I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.' ... For there are set thrones [plural] of judgment, the thrones [plural] of the house of David."

- *Psalm 122:1, 5*

That throne is in the House of David. It is within the sepulcher of David.

Read all of Psalm 122 where there is an interconnection of **"the House of the Lord"** (verses 1, 9); the **"gates"** (verse 2), **"walls"** (verse 7), and **"palaces"** (verse 7) of the City of Jerusalem (verses 3, 6); and **"the thrones of the House of David"** which are **"thrones of judgment"** (verse 5). All are physical structures. All are contained within the city of Jerusalem **"as a city that is compact together"** (verse 3). While **"thrones"** is plural in both occurrences of the word, the usage may be a plural of majesty, indicating the one seated on that throne has many dominions. There is also the intriguing verse:

"And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord for ever [olam, for the age]."

- *1 Kings 2:45*

Christ shall sit on that throne of David as prophesied in Isaiah, just as the angel told Mary:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: ... Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever [olam, for the age]."

- *Isaiah 9:6–7*

“And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever [*aion*, for the age]; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

- *Luke 1:31–33*

The Bodies of David, Bathsheba, Solomon, et al.?

If the body of King David was present within the Tomb, forensic scientists could show the world, using computer modeling, a very close approximation of what King David of Israel looked like. We would be able to put a face to the bones in the Tombs. (Of course, you and I will meet David face to face soon in the resurrection.)

It might be possible to obtain DNA samples from David’s body. If the bodies of David, Bathsheba, and Solomon are present (or other family of David), then it is possible that the entire DNA structure of the Davidic kingly line could be determined. That would mean that any Jewish male could test his DNA to see if he were directly descended from King David. If so, that person (or persons) may in fact be heir to the throne of Judah.

In addition, David and Solomon are two of the last twelve prophets of Islam. Such a find would be considered by Muslims as highly significant and miraculous. Many would feel compelled to read everything that David and Solomon wrote. More importantly, they would inevitably make the associations between David and Jesus throughout the New Testament. This could lead to many accepting Jesus as their Messiah and Savior, especially to those in Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:10–11):

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.”

- *Zechariah 12:10–11*

“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, ‘A bone of him shall not be broken.’ And again another scripture says, ‘They shall look on him whom they pierced.’”

- *John 19:36–37, citing Zechariah 12:10*

Writings?

The discovery of written documents, whether on tablets or more perishable material, is the greatest aspiration of every archaeologist. Any find of written documents from the time of King David contained within the Tombs would be a discovery of the highest order. Very few written documents of any size from ancient Palestine exist anywhere, outside of those preserved in the Holy Scriptures. A major find of documents would increase considerably our vocabulary of ancient Hebrew. There are a surprising number of Hebrew words in Scripture that occur only once. When that is the case, translators of the Old Testament simply have insufficient context to determine the true meaning of those once-used words. This is because the meaning of a word is determined by the words around it. The more words occur, the more context there is to determine the precise meaning of a word. Those translations of once-used words are speculative at best, and may be completely wrong, even when hints and suggestions that can be gleaned from later Jewish writings and the Greek Old Testament (the LXX). These hints were themselves written sometimes a thousand years after the original was written. Job and the Song of Songs have the largest number of words used only once in Scripture. This means that portions of the texts of those books may be misinterpreted.

Writings found within the Tomb of David would increase and perhaps multiply our understanding of ancient Hebrew, and ultimately the meaning of important Scriptures, particularly prophetic Scriptures. God communicates to His people through His word and it is important — especially in the decades before Christ returns — that we understand His words and His message. Let us inquire about the possible writings that may be in the Tombs of King David.

Psalms of David?

The Psalms of David were important to the life of Israel and to the Temple. David himself composed much of the prose of the Psalms. Many of the Psalms were set to music that he may have written, and he established the procedures for the music for the Temple rituals, particularly for the feast days when Israel would gather. These were followed by Solomon.

Would the original compositions of those Psalms and procedures be discarded? Perhaps they were kept in the Temple, but just maybe they were buried with the composer and writer. We know that music was very important to David. There may be instruments and documents that give clues help us understand the music of the ancient Israelite kingdom, information that could be useful in the Temple to be constructed before Christ's return.

Songs of Solomon?

If Solomon is buried with David as Josephus indicates, and if there are written documents in with the Tombs of David, then there likely will be writings of Solomon also.

“And he spoke three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springs out of the wall: he spoke also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.”

- ***1 Kings 4:32–33***

Of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs, not all are contained in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Of the 1,005 songs he is reported to have written, we have only one (Song of Songs 1:1). Solomon’s proverbs, songs, and writings of natural observation, that today we call science, might also be in the Tombs with Solomon.

The “Pattern” of the Temple?

David was given a pattern of the Temple by God Himself. That pattern was given in writing. Again, refer to my article “The Pattern of the Temple” at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t031102.htm>.

“‘All this,’ said David, ‘the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.’”

- ***1 Chronicles 28:19***

That writing was the pattern of the Temple as described in 1 Chronicles 28:11–19. What happened to that pattern after the Temple was constructed by Solomon? What would you do with an object given to Israel by God Himself, in His own handwriting?

Such a document similar in importance to the tables of stone given to Moses. They also were written by the hand of God (Exodus 24:12, 31:18, 32:15–16; Deuteronomy 5:22; Hebrews 8:5), and placed within the Ark of the Covenant. Is it reasonable to think that the “pattern” of the Temple would have been buried with the man who received it, after its usefulness was done?

The impact of this discovery of the pattern of the Temple (whatever that “pattern” might be), would be incredible, even for those who would not believe it was written by God Himself. It would give to scholars and all believers in God important details — in writing — about the Temple and the Israelite kingdom.

Court Histories and Records?

In King David's court detailed records were kept by officials of David's kingdom (Solomon's also ³⁶). The existence of those detailed records is recorded for us in Scripture. The books are named with titles and the subjects within them are indicated. I have set out the verse in an outline manner for clarity:

"Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book [history] of Samuel the seer, and in the book [history] of Nathan the prophet, With all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries."

- **1 Chronicles 29:29–30**

The Hebrew term *dabar* in Hebrew means "word," but it also can mean "book" and even "history," and it is translated that way in many versions. Certainly a compiled set of records could be called by either of the latter terms. The books by the three authors contain information about David's acts during his 40 years reign as king. They also tell about the great deeds, ("**his might**") that he did whether personally or as the leader of Israel and Judah, probably during his entire life. For example, the song about Saul and David may be contained in those writings (1 Samuel 18:6–7).

The books also relate about what happened *when* ("**the time that went**") in history. This likely means that the accounts in the books give the events in sequence and how those events relate to other kingdoms, nations, and peoples. This means that chronologies of ancient history up to the death of King David could be understood with precision. This is important because little is known outside of Scripture about the world outside Israel and Judah during this period of the United Kingdom. This has implications for the kingdoms of Hatti (the Hittites), Assyria, and even Babylon which were not yet powerful.

Egyptian history could be coordinated with the Bible. That is not the case at present. As Dr. Martin wrote in his 1981 article "The Importance of Egyptian History":

"The way to come to a proper knowledge of the history of Egypt, in my view, is to first of all to be certain that we understand what was happening in Palestine, in the land of Canaan from the time of the flood of Noah right on through until historical times come along which we can be pretty well assured of. If you can understand the history of central Palestine, and Isaiah said Israel is placed in the middle of everything, then we should be able to understand what is happening on the flanks of Israel." ³⁷

The mention in such documents of the Hebrew name of just one pharaoh (and there should be several mentioned) that could be identified from the Egyptian dynastic lists

would revolutionize Egyptian and all of ancient history. At present there is a 400 to 600 year mismatch between biblical history and Egyptian history that has evaded any attempts to reconcile the two, according to accepted traditional scholarship. It is my belief that “suddenly” the misunderstood Egyptian chronology and history would coordinate positively to the biblical record. Ancient history would suddenly “make sense” to scholars around the world. Events in one kingdom could be understood as having an impact upon another kingdom. A drought in one place would have an impact upon another place.

Finding these books within the Tomb of David would be a major breakthrough in understanding what the events in Palestine at that period of history. Even more important, as we approach the end times, it is vital that we have an accurate grasp of ancient history, to better understand the prophecies in the Bible in the time of David. Such knowledge would be informative for the great and sweeping prophecies that come after David. Such a discovery would show that the Bible is the basis for history of the ancient world, and that it is the standard to which all historical writings of the ancient world must compare. The Bible is accurate.

David's Book of the Law

Finally, we come to the most amazing possible discovery of all. A passage in Deuteronomy chapter 17 talks about the Torah being copied (written down) by each new king:

“When he [a new king] sits upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law [torah] in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: ... to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom,” ³⁸ **he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”**

- *Deuteronomy 17:18–20*

This means the first five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It is conjecture whether this unbelievably valuable writing is even in the Tomb of David, but there is reason for the speculation: If each new king was instructed to write out a copy of the law, can we expect that such a command would be followed by the righteous kings of Judah? Yes. Would David have followed this command of Deuteronomy? Again the answer is yes. David took the Law of the Lord very seriously ³⁹ :

“Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law does he meditate day and night.”

- *Psalm 1:1–2*

“The law [torah] of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

- *Psalm 19:7–8*

I ask the question: If David did copy the Law given to him by **“the priests, the Levites”** (cf. Deuteronomy 31:9, 25–26), **what happened to that copy after David died?** Would it have been thrown in the trash? Or, just maybe, would that copy of the Law that David loved, written by David himself, be placed with his body in the “house” made by God — waiting — within the Tomb of David to be discovered?

The Mishnah (the book of Jewish oral tradition and ritual, written down post-70 C.E.) states that no Scriptures can be thrown away or burned, they must be stored or hidden (Mishnah Shabbath 9.6, 16.1). Does this tradition date far back to David’s time, or did it even originate with David? We cannot know. However, burial of the king’s personal copy of the Law would be an excellent solution.

The Importance of this Discovery

If David’s personal copy of the Law would be in the Tomb of David, it would be the single most remarkable historical event this side of the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Can you imagine the impact on the world? The discovery of a genuine copy of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy all written in the old Hebrew text. ⁴⁰ And the words would be written in King David’s own hand.

I would think such a document would be “self authenticating,” although this too is speculation. David would be proud of his work and like anyone he would, in some manner, “sign” or identify his book to indicate that it was his copy of the Torah.

Keep in mind that such a document would have been written some 200 years before Elijah the Prophet was born, and even longer before Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and all of the Minor Prophets appeared on the scene. It might have been written before Solomon was born. The world would recognize and pay attention to the fact that the Law would be coming forth **“out of Zion”** (Isaiah 2:3, Micah 4:2). Most all Jews, Christians, and Muslims would rejoice at such a discovery! It could lead directly to the prophesied conversion of Israel beginning at Jerusalem (Zechariah chapters 12–14).

The Law out of Zion

We can now begin to understand this Zechariah passage:

“In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

- *Zechariah 12:8–9*

A discovery of a “genuine” Book of the Law would have a tremendous emotional impact upon the entire world, but particularly for those in Jerusalem, and the entire discovery would be due to God’s sovereign act!

“And many people shall go and say, ‘Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths:

for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

- *Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2*

Did you catch that? The Law will go forth **“out of Zion,”** while the Word of the Lord comes from Jerusalem. Isaiah and Micah were contemporaries and this was a prophecy for a time future to them. As Christians we understand that this prophecy was fulfilled through Christ, who was the Word of God and the fulfillment of God’s law. But look at verses that say similar things, keeping in mind that Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2 and these other verses deal with Israel and not Gentiles: Deuteronomy 6:1; Isaiah 51:4; Jeremiah 31:6, 50:4–5; Zechariah 8:20–23, Psalm 25:8–9; Luke 24:27.

Most people read the phrase **“the house of David shall be as God,”** and **“as the angel of the Lord before them”** and believe it refers to a situation similar to Joshua 23:10 where it is promised that if Israel is faithful to God, He shall assist them in their battles and **“one of you shall chase a thousand.”** However, Zechariah 12:8–9 specifically states that God **“will seek to destroy all the nations,”** not the House of David or the inhabitants of Jerusalem or the people of Israel.

“In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel [a messenger] of the Lord before them[the inhabitants].”

- *Zechariah 12:8*

If we understand the House of David to be a physical structure, the sepulchers of David, and if the sepulchers can be located, and if the Torah would be within the sepulchers, then it is easy to understand how **“the House of David shall be as God, as the angel [a messenger] of the Lord before them.”**

Many would consider the amazing discovery of the Tombs of David as a miraculous act of God, and they would be correct! Many would feel that God was sending them a message to change their lives, that He will soon be active in the world, and that God is revealing His Word to them after 3,000 years, starting with the Law of Moses. The contents of the House of David might contain such wondrous things (primarily writings confirming Scripture) that the world would suddenly seek God and a no-nonsense, truthful Gospel preached about Him. No one would doubt the authenticity of artifacts within the Tomb. Those most in awe would be the archaeologists, scientists, and scholars themselves! An original copy of the Law of Moses buried for 3,000 years waiting to be discovered intact with David's body, which would be preserved but with corruption (Acts 13:36).

A Torah in the ancient Hebrew letters could be easily compared to the current text of the Torah that the Jews use today. The world will be able to judge whether the Jews, as keepers of the oracles of God (Deuteronomy 4:8; Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2), have faithfully carried out that commission. What interesting discussions those would be! Imagine Scripture being discussed seriously over every major media! Thousands of textual and biblical scholars (Jew and Gentile) would leap to the task of analysis.

Problems with this Discovery

Of course, discipline would be needed not to turn any of these "artifacts" into idols, whether that would be the bodies of David or Solomon, the "throne of David," the pattern of the Temple, or other marvelous things that may be in the Tombs (Goliath's sword and armor perhaps?). Also, the historical writings that may be in the Tombs must not supersede in our minds the canonical Scripture as we have today. Even though such a discovery would be seen as a miracle from God, such works would be for historical purposes and not to be considered Scripture. Most likely the Mystery would be diminished and discarded by most people in preference to following the Torah, forgetting that Christ has fulfilled all of those requirements.

The Gospel at the Time of the End

Often the small things are misplaced. It is interesting that one small fact has been forgotten by most students of prophecy. The preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in the period before Christ's Second Coming shall follow the same process as it did in the 1st century C.E. The final and future preaching of the Gospel will not begin in America, or England, or continental Europe. It will not begin from the evangelical churches of those nations or churches from East Asia or Africa. The final preaching of the Gospel at the end of the age shall begin where it began in the time of the apostles — from Jerusalem:

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world [*aion*, the age]?’” ... And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.”

- *Matthew 24:3, 14*

“Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled? ... And the gospel must first be published among all nations.”

- *Mark 13:4, 10*

These verses are well understood. But where did it all begin? Where did the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom begin? At the time of the apostles, the preaching of repentance and remission of sins began from Jerusalem, and then expanded to the entire world. This is what Christ told the apostles immediately before His ascension into heaven:

“And said unto them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations,beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.’”

- *Luke 24:46–48*

“But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both [1] in Jerusalem, and [2] in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and [3] unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

- *Acts 1:8*

It makes sense, of course, because Jerusalem is where the preaching should begin. That is where the apostles were located. They were instructed to remain in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49–53; Acts 1:4–5), and they did so. The preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God began from Jerusalem after the grace of God’s Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles and many, many of the people.

The final preaching of repentance and remission of sins shall also begin from Jerusalem. Remember that the law shall proceed from Jerusalem: **“... for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”** (Micah 4:2), and **“for out of [from] Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from”**

Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3), exactly from where the apostles began their ministry after that most important Pentecost of 30 C.E.

Here is an accurate description from Hosea of Israel's situation at our present moment:

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim [this describes Israel today]:

Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and [seek] David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

- ***Hosea 3:4–5***

The Gospel that will be preached shall proceed from Jerusalem shall be accomplished mostly by Jews who will accept Jesus as their Messiah, the Christ.

- The children of Israel shall return.
- The children of Israel shall seek the Lord their God.
- The children of Israel shall seek David their king.
- But through God's grace, the children of Israel shall find Jesus their Messiah!

Our job will be to ensure that they understand and have available to them the biblical knowledge of the reconciliation of all to the Father and Christ, and most importantly that they understand the Mystery of God as revealed to Paul and others in 63 C.E. This will be the toughest part because remember, most all believers in the 1st century rejected the Mystery, and even rejected the apostle Paul himself (2 Timothy 1:15).

The Process for Access to the Tombs

Although the location of the Tombs can be known biblically and historically, unfortunately the exact position of any of the chambers (and discovery of one will lead to all others) cannot yet be determined. This is due to several factors. First, the tomb chambers are within 75–100 feet of limestone bedrock above and west of the Gihon Springs, just south of the position where the southern Temple wall once stood. Second, the slope of the hillside containing the tomb chambers is about 60°, which makes tasks very difficult, but not impossible. Third, there are houses at the top of the hill and across the valley at the town of Silwan which would require a minimum of disturbance for such an endeavor. Fourth, while the proposed area is small geographically, we do not know how to precisely locate any one of the several Tomb chambers.

The problem is one of technology, not evidence. At present the technology does not exist, so far as I have been able to determine. God must intervene, whether through technology (new or old) or through His direct act to reveal exactly where any one of the chambers is located. If we find one chamber we can find all of them, just as in Egyptian archaeology. Certain of the tombs of the Pharaohs are family tombs with several (if not dozens) of interconnected chambers. All the chambers of the David's Tomb complex are connected, or were so connected in the past.

Here is one process on how to proceed, once any one of the chambers is precisely located. It is acknowledged to be valid by professional archaeologists, geologists and other scientists. If a "fix" could be made on a chamber, the technique to "look inside" that chamber is easy and "off the shelf." Of course the Israeli government, through the Israeli Antiquities Authority, would authorize and monitor all archaeological events.

Funding would come from any one of several archaeological foundations. Everyone in the field will want to be part of such a project with a low risk, great reward ratio — once a sepulcher chamber is located.

Step by Step, by the Numbers

First, a one or two inch borehole would be drilled down to the sepulcher chamber. Then a plumber's camera would be sent into the chamber. The camera would have its own source of light. Video from the camera would yield a 360°, color computer image of the interior of the chamber.

After the image has been recorded, the camera would be extracted. Nitrogen (an inert gas) would be pumped into the chamber to force out oxygen that may have entered through the borehole. Oxidation is a great enemy to ancient artifacts and extremely destructive, particularly to written documents, until they are properly preserved. The borehole would then be sealed.

From the video recording it is technologically easy (or so I am told) to produce a 3-dimensional image of the contents within the chamber. I have seen such a computer model of the Temple both in Jerusalem at the Davidson Center and in Los Angeles where the Temple computer model was developed on the UCLA supercomputer. A computer model of the "inside" of the chamber would be produced and analyzed. This model would reveal most of the important objects within the chamber, what they are and where they are.

From analysis of the video data, specialists from around the world would be consulted. Archaeologists, geologists, and document preservation experts would determine the best method and direction of approach to excavate and enter the chamber, whether from the top, from the side, or from one of the connecting doorways. Remember, all of the chambers (now blocked after 3,000 years (Isaiah 22:22)

were at one time connected either to other chambers or to passages to other chambers. By nature of this fact, discovery of one chamber would eventually lead to discovery of them all.

Disappointment

I have communicated with experts around the world regarding how to locate a chamber 75 to 100 feet within limestone bedrock. I have looked into remote satellite scanning from space, remote scanning from the surface using radar, sound, magnetics, atomic resonance and other methods, all of which have been examined and debated. Techniques for deep mineral testing (used to discover coal, copper, and other such resources) could not yield results. Seismic testing as used in oil exploration is not suitable because it seeks information much deeper than we are seeking, and it is intrusive for the people living on the top of the hill and for the people across the Kedron Valley at Silwan.

For quite a while I pursued contact with one company that seemed to have a non-intrusive deep scanning radar technology that could effectively “look” down to the required depth. When first approached, the president of the company indicated interest and agreed to a meeting. When I was close to their city I phoned to confirm the time, but he refused to meet. He said that although the David’s Tomb project was interesting, it did not interest him enough, so he did not want to meet, their company was moving on to other income streams. Quite disappointing, but it is probably for the best because other scanning experts had told me that the company’s claims would violate the laws of physics. Who knows?

At this time I am very well informed regarding archaeologists, their activities, and events in Israel through sources in Jerusalem and elsewhere in that small country. Of course, I monitor events very closely regarding the goings-on in the City of David. At present there are no archaeological digs either at the site of the Temples (as indicated by Dr. Martin’s evidence) or over the general area of the tomb chambers. There should be no reason to dig in either location because they will not find anything — unless they want to carve through 75 feet of limestone. Remember, the Herodian Temple had every stone upon another removed (Matthew 24:1–2; Mark 13:1–2; Luke 21:5–6). The only artifacts that might remain would be from the later attempted reconstructions during the reigns of Roman emperors Constantine and Julian the Apostate. And no one is going to dig down through the limestone bedrock unless they already have a precise location (within feet) of where to put the borehole. Another alternative is to drill 50 or 75 or 100 boreholes in a search pattern on a 60° slope, but that is unreasonable.

So, along the way there have been bumps in the road. The deep scanner letdown was a disappointment. I had hoped that events would move along with a pace based on

technology but God would not have it be so. And then there have been people along the way who have claimed to have contacts (particularly in Israel) but those “contacts” did not even know them. All this is a part of life.

To me personally it matters a great deal that Dr. Martin receive the credit he deserves regarding his Temple research. My purpose in publishing at this time (October 2006) is to put out this information to the world so others can add to or correct the information I put forth here, all of which demands an understanding of the correct Temple location based on evidence from Dr. Ernest L. Martin’s research.

Although I would like to participate in the process of discovery (as we all would), ego aside, in the end it does not matter who “discovers” what God has hidden to be revealed at the proper time (Isaiah 22:22). As Solomon wrote (Proverbs 25:1):

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.”

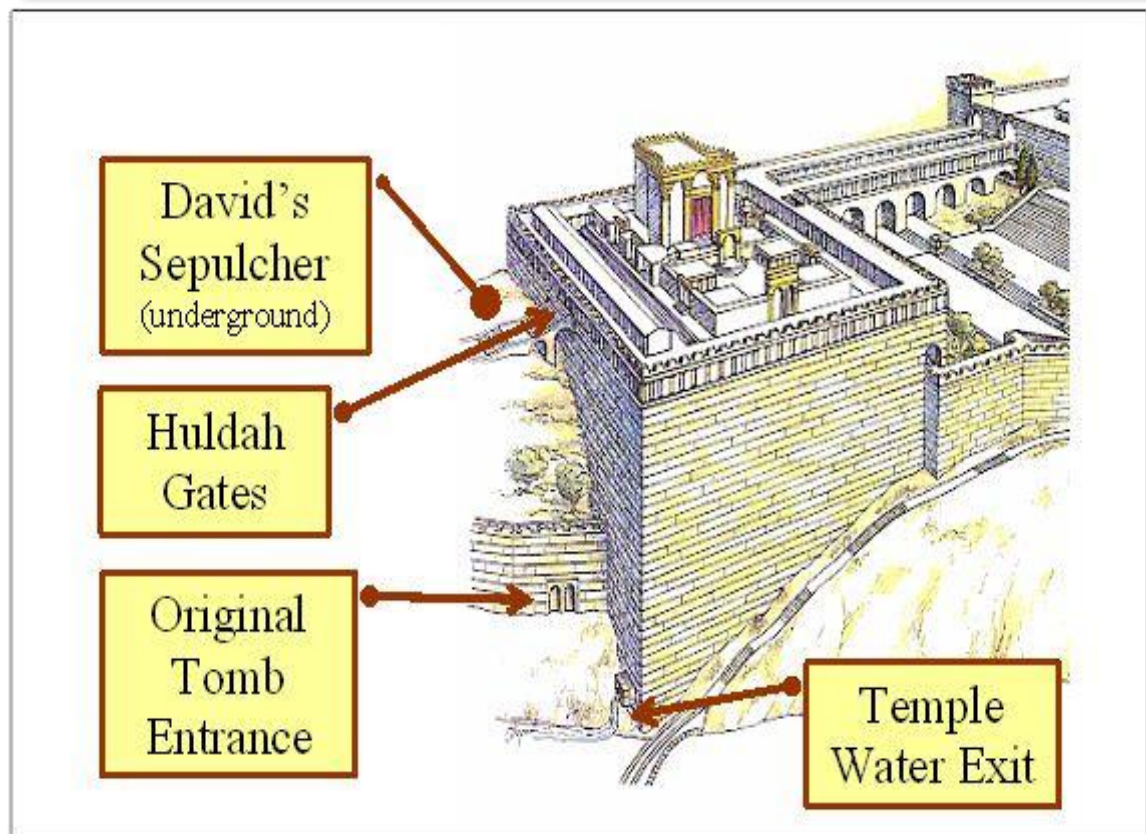
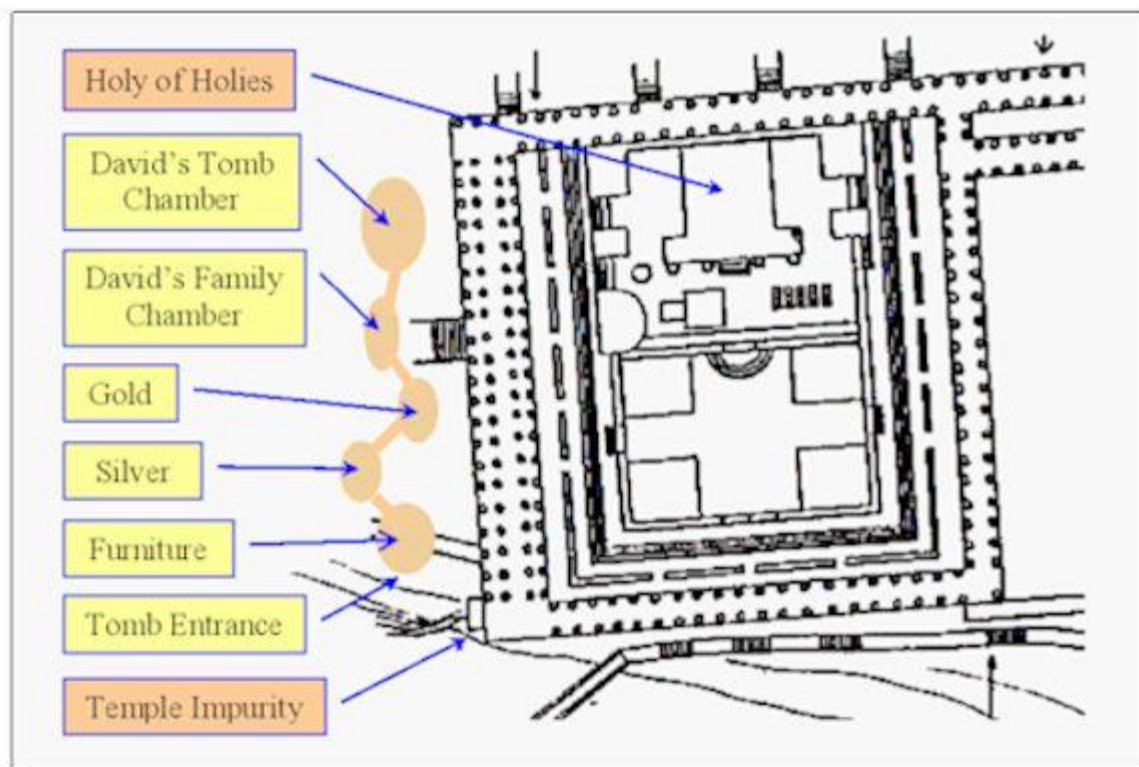
• *Proverbs 25:2*

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

• *Deuteronomy 29:29*

We who are children of God are much more than kings. We perform and **“do all the words of this law,”** through Christ, the Messiah, who performed all the words of the law (without exception) for us! Whether or not the discovery of David’s Tomb will be made (and I think it shall be so), what matters is that the truths of the biblical record be put out to the world — to the glory of God the Father. This time the world will pay attention and listen.

**Representations of David's Sepulcher Chambers According to Dr. Martin's
Temple Illustration**



¹ Portland, OR: ASK Publications, 2000.

² Referencing Nehemiah 3:15–16.

³ Martin, *Temples Jerusalem Forgot*, p. 343–344.

⁴ See Dr. Martin's article "The Coming Revolution in Knowledge" at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p060301.htm>, and two articles by me "The Restitution of All Things, What to Expect" at <http://www.askelm.com/news/n030621.htm> and "Changes and the Knowledge Revolution" at <http://www.askelm.com/news/n060301.htm>.

⁵ In *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 7:30 (Jan–Oct): 30–45. See also Nadav Na'aman's article, "Death Formulae and the Burial Place of the Kings of the House of David" in *Biblica*, Vol. 85 (2004), pp. 245–254. This entire article is available online at <http://www.bsw.org/project/biblica/bibl85/Ani08.html>.

⁶ Yeivin cites Jeremiah 8:1ff and 22:18ff. It was also important in ancient times the burial sites be maintained. This is made clear when Nehemiah approached the King of Persia with a special request **"the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lies waste, ... send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it"** (Nehemiah 2:3, 5).

⁷ See my article "A Name for the Temple of God" at <http://www.askelm.com/news/n020921.htm>. The Temple was where God placed His name. In Psalm 132 the Psalmist (apparently not David), records David's thinking about his desire to build a Temple.

⁸ Outside of 2 Samuel chapter 7 the phrase "House of David" does often refer to David's descendants. See my article "House of David" at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t040801.htm>. Context determines how and where "House of David" is used, whether to mean a structure or descendants.

⁹ See my article "House of David," and Lyle Eslinger, *House of David or House of God: Rhetoric of 2 Samuel 7*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 164 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994). In communication with Professor Eslinger, he says that I have understood and used his analysis correctly, although in a surprising manner beyond what he foresaw when he wrote his technical analysis book on the single chapter of 2 Samuel 7. Professor Eslinger did not foresee that the "house" that God built for David might be a structure to last for the age of undetermined length. Even though David was a man after God's own heart (1 Kings 11:38, 15:5; Acts

13:22), Eslinger puts forth the idea that David's desire to build a Temple to YHWH was in part self serving and was intended to consolidate his rule, centralizing all aspects of power in Israel under David's personal control. Eslinger concludes this was God's reason for rejecting David as builder of the Temple.

10 The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that there were **"sepulchral caverns of the kings"** (*Jewish Wars* 5.147). It is unclear which kings Josephus is referring to; they were likely some of the later Hasmonean kings.

11 Both the house and the kingdom (seed) will continue "unto the age" (2 Samuel 7:11–12). There is no reason to believe that the length of the "age" will be the same for both the house and the kingdom. Indeed we know that the kingdom ended with the Babylonian exile. The "house" of David continues to the present day as we shall see from additional and later Scripture. In fact, one could make an excellent case that three separate predictions "unto the age" are made in 2 Samuel chapter 7:

1. The house that God would build for David, verse 7:11. This structure would be the Tombs of David.
2. The seed of David's descendants, verse 7:12. These would be the Kings of Judah (cf. Psalm 132:11–12).
3. **"... the throne of his kingdom,"** verse 7:13. This throne is occupied by the resurrected Christ today (Luke 1:32, citing Isaiah 9:7). It also refers to David's descendants who also occupied the **"throne of David"** between the time of David and Christ, as in Psalm 132:11–12; Jeremiah 17:25, 22:2–4, 30, 29:16, 33:17, 21, 36:30.

12 See 1 Chronicles 28:11–19 and my article "The Pattern of the Temple" at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t031102.htm> regarding additional biblical evidence.

13 2 Samuel 7:18–29. David goes before God at the tabernacle that held the Ark of the Covenant. This was not the tabernacle of Moses, which was still at Gibeon (2 Chronicles 1:13). This was the tabernacle of David (2 Samuel 6:17; Isaiah 16:5; Amos 9:11–12; and Acts 15:16–17).

14 In 2 Samuel 7:11 God will "make" (*asah*, to do or make) a house for David. In 1 Chronicles 17:10 God will "build" (*banah*, to build) a house for David. God fulfilled His purpose. Compare 2 Samuel chapter 7 is 1 Chronicles 17:10–27 side by side.

- [15](#) An example of “finishing” a tomb would be King Tut’s tomb, which was richly adorned with art and implements, including furniture. This is exactly what the Jewish historian Josephus tells us was inside David’s Tomb.
- [16](#) An analysis of Psalm 30 is my article “The House of David” at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t040801.htm>. Some think that “house” in Psalm 30 refers to the Temple and that this Psalm is David’s posthumous dedication to it. This is not possible. The topics of Psalm 30 are death, burial, the pit, the grave, glory and implied resurrection, very unlikely topics for a joyous dedication of a Temple. However, those topics they fit perfectly if the “house” is a sepulcher.
- [17](#) Basically the Hebrew word “house” (*bayeth* or *beyt*) means one of two things. First, it can indicate a structure, a physical construction of some kind. A tomb or sepulcher would fit within this meaning of “house.” Second, it can mean descendants, such as the House of Jacob referring to Jacob’s descendants. **“House of David”** is used to convey both meanings in different contexts.
- [18](#) Shebna held a high position in the court of King Hezekiah of Judah. He was treasurer (or steward) in charge of the king’s household. He was to be punished for his pride and crimes (Isaiah 22:17–19, which likely caused the situation described earlier in Isaiah 22:1–14). Shebna was arrogantly constructing for himself a sepulcher worthy of a king.
- [19](#) Eliakim assumed all Shebna’s authority and accouterments that accompany that role, administering the government for Hezekiah, much like Joseph administered Egypt for Pharaoh. Eliakim was to be beneficent, like a father to those who live in Jerusalem and Judah. The name “Eliakim” means “God raises” or “God sets up.” This and other factors show that Isaiah 22:22 has a direct messianic reference as used in Revelation 3:7 where verse 22:22 is almost directly quoted, with an important modification, in the message to the *ekklesia* of Philadelphia where it refers specifically to Christ.
- [20](#) Why is the phrase **“house of”** missing? Perhaps because the **“house of”** portion may no longer be relevant when the prophecy of Revelation 3:7 is fulfilled. At that time the words, **“the house of”** David may already have been discovered. The **“key of David”** refers to the work of Christ to open and close a door for salvation (Revelation 3:7–8).
- [21](#) Here is a list of burials texts of David’s successors through Hezekiah: **Solomon**: 1 Kings 11:43; 2 Chronicles 9:31. **Rehoboam**: 1 Kings 14:31; 2 Chronicles 12:16 (buried in the **“sepulchres of the**

kings,” Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 8.264). **Abijam (Abijah):** 1 Kings 15:8; 2 Chronicles 14:1. **Asa:** 1 Kings 15:24; 2 Chronicles 16:13–14. **Jehoshaphat:** 1 Kings 22:50; 2 Chronicles 21:1. **Jehoram (Joram):** 2 Kings 8:24; 2 Chronicles 21:20. **Ahaziah:** 2 Kings 9:28; 2 Chronicles 22:9. **Jehoash (Joash):** 2 Kings 12:21; 2 Chronicles 24:25 (**“buried in the king’s sepulchres at Jerusalem,”** Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 9.166). **Amaziah:** 2 Kings 14:20; 2 Chronicles 25:28. **Azariah (Uzziah):** 2 Kings 15:7; 2 Chronicles 26:23. **Jotham:** 2 Kings 15:38; 2 Chronicles 27:9. **Ahaz:** 2 Kings 16:20; 2 Chronicles 28:27. **Hezekiah:** 2 Kings 20:21; 2 Chronicles 32:33.

[22](#) In fact, the **“chiefest”** is rendered by several translations by “highest” or “in the ascent” of the sepulchers of the son of David. After Hezekiah none of the kings of Judah were buried in the City of David. See Yeivin, “Sepulchers of the Kings,” p. 33 and Na’aman, “Death Formulae,” p. 245: **“The death formula changes in the histories of the kings from Hezekiah onward. The words ‘(was buried) with his ancestors in the City of David’ disappear.”** The phrase **“sons of David”** may refer to Davidic kings, or it may mean that Hezekiah was buried near or inside the chambers containing literal sons borne to David’s wives and concubines, including those who rebelled against David. A complete list of the sons of David is in 1 Chronicles 3:1–9.

[23](#) Here again we have reference to the place of the dead being in **“high places”** (Ezekiel 43:7) just like Shebna sought to construct for himself in Isaiah 22:16. Carcasses associated with high places are also referred to in Leviticus 26:30, indicating idolatry.

[24](#) Some might wonder about the use of the phrases **“children of Israel”** and **“house of Israel”** in verse 7 regarding God’s throne and presence. The kingdom of Israel ceased to exist and was exiled from their land over 120+ years before Ezekiel had this vision. The reference is not to the northern Kingdom of Israel. God never placed His presence in the northern kingdom or with the kings of Israel, who were buried in Samaria. However, God is speaking in this vision as ruler of greater Israel, meaning all of the 12 tribes. Most of the vision of Ezekiel chapters 40–48 refers to a time future to Ezekiel; only this small portion of Ezekiel 43:1–12 looks to the past. The exiles in Babylon represented all Israel.

[25](#) The Hebrew word in this verse is most often translated “door” rather than “threshold,” although the latter term is properly descriptive. “Posts” is always translated thus in the King James Version and most other translations.

[26](#) Martin, *Temples Jerusalem Forgot*, pp. 348–355.

[27](#) God's punishments fit the crimes. Read Leviticus 26:29–29. See particularly verses 29-30.

[28](#) Martin, *Temples Jerusalem Forgot*, pp. 402–405.

[29](#) I presented this in my “House of David” article, see note 8 above.

[30](#) Matthew 27:9 and see “The Land of Israel in Prophecy” at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p911201.htm>.

[31](#) Josephus further records that Herod's family troubles were the result of his evil act of trying to enter David's Tomb (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 16:188). In fact, after relating Herod's family troubles the very next subject is Herod's sudden desire to expand the Temple. One wonders if his night attempt to enter the sepulcher of David prompted guilt in Herod and in an attempt to do penance to God, he decided to glory God's Temple.

[32](#) Cited in “Water Management in Herod's Temple” at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t011113.htm>.

[33](#) Gary Arvidson, *In Search of King David's Lost Tomb & Treasure*, 2nd edition (Kings Mountain, NC: Gary Arvidson, 2001).

[34](#) This should actually not be translated Edom, but it should be translated *adam*, or mankind. We know this not only because the Greek Old Testament, the LXX, translates it so, but because James translates it as *adam* in Acts 15:17.

[35](#) Could the Ark of the Covenant be within the Tombs of David? It seems unlikely because Jeremiah states that the Ark shall not be spoken of, come to mind, remembered, visited, or done with anymore. The people shall appeal to the throne of God (Jeremiah 3:16–17). See also the generally reliable history of 2 Maccabees 2:1–19 which states that Jeremiah buried the Ark.

[36](#) Solomon had the same documentation prepared by his court officials: **“And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?”** (1 Kings 11:41). If Solomon is buried in the tombs of David, it is possible Solomon's records would be available also. After Solomon most every king, whether of Judah or Israel, has a formulaic statement like this: **“Now the rest of the acts of [X], and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of [Judah or Israel]”?**

[37](#) At <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p030701.htm>.

[38](#) During repairs made to the Temple during the reign of Josiah, King of Judah, a book of the law, a Torah, is discovered in the House of YHWH, the Temple, as told in 2 Kings 22:1–23:24. This discovery caused a repentance and a turn to righteousness in the kingdom of Judah by the people, the leaders, and the king. As a result God delayed His punishment upon Judah until the death of Josiah. By the nations and his repentance King Josiah did indeed **“prolong his days in his kingdom.”** They would have been prolonged even more if Josiah had obeyed God more carefully.

[39](#) We know David wrote a very private letter himself in 2 Samuel 11:14. We also know that David instructed the priests to **“minister before the Ark continually”** (1 Chronicles 16:37) in accordance with **“all that is written in the law of the Lord”** (1 Chronicles 16:40) after the Ark of the Covenant was moved to Jerusalem.

[40](#) Remember that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were changed by Ezra the priest upon the return of the Jews from Babylon. The Hebrew letters today are different from the ancient Hebrew letters that David would have written.

The Last Three Chapters of the Book of Zechariah

Zechariah 12-14 [KJ3]

1 ¶ The burden of the Word of Jehovah for Israel, a statement of Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens, and founds the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him.

2 Behold! I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the peoples round about, and it shall also be against Judah in the siege against Jerusalem.

3 And in that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all loading it cutting will be cut. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

4 In that day, a statement of Jehovah, I will strike every horse with panic and his rider with madness, says Jehovah. And I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and I will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

5 And the leaders of Judah shall say in their heart, Those living in Jerusalem shall be my strength in Jehovah of Hosts, their God.

6 In that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire among cut grain. And they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left hand. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her place, in Jerusalem.

7 Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the one living in Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.

8 In that day Jehovah shall defend around those living in Jerusalem. And it will be, he being feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of Jehovah before them.

9 ¶ And it shall be in that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour out on the house of David, and on those living in Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of prayers. And they shall look on Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they shall be bitter over Him, like the bitterness over the first-born.

11 In that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be great, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo.

12 And the land shall mourn, families by families being alone: the family of the house of **David** being alone, and their wives being alone; the family of the house of **Nathan** being alone, and their wives being alone;

13 the family of the house of **Levi** being alone, and their wives being alone; the family of **Shimei** being alone, and their wives being alone;

14 all the families who remain, family by family being alone, and their wives being alone.

Zechariah 13

1 ¶ In that day a fountain shall be opened to the house of David and to those living in Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

2 And it shall be in that day, a statement of Jehovah of Hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall not be remembered again. And I also will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

3 And it shall be when any shall prophesy again, and his father and his mother who gave him birth shall say to him then, You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of Jehovah. And his father and his mother who gave him birth shall pierce him when he prophesies.

4 And it shall be in that day, the prophets shall be ashamed, each man of his vision when he prophesies, and they shall not wear a hairy garment to deceive.

5 But he shall say, I am not a prophet; I am a man, a tiller of the ground, for a man caused me to possess it from my youth.

6 And one shall say to Him, What are these wounds between Your hands? And He shall answer, Those with which I was struck in the house of those who love Me.

7 ¶ O sword, awake against My Shepherd, and against the Man who is My Associate, a statement of Jehovah of Hosts. Strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. And I will turn My hand on the little ones.

8 And it shall be in all the land, a statement of Jehovah, two parts in it shall be cut off and perish, but the third shall be left in it.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined. And I will test them as gold is tested. They shall call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.

Zechariah 14

1 ¶ Behold, the day of Jehovah comes, and your plunder shall be divided in your midst.

2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem. And the city shall be captured, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished. And half the city shall go into exile and the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 And Jehovah shall go out and fight against those nations, like the day He fought in the day of battle.

4 And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall divide from its middle, from the east even to the west, a very great valley. And half of the mountain shall move north, and half of it south.

5 And you shall flee to the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. And Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with You.

6 And it will be in that day, there shall not be light; the holy ones will shrink.

7 And it will be one day which shall be known to Jehovah; not day and not night, but it will be, there will be light at evening time.

8 ¶ And it shall be in that day, living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and in winter it shall be.

9 And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Jehovah, and His name one.

10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. And it shall rise and dwell in its place, from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses.

11 And they shall live in it. And there shall not again be a shutting in, but Jerusalem shall dwell safely.

12 And this shall be the plague with which Jehovah will strike all the peoples who have fought against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.

13 And it shall be in that day, a great panic of Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall each man seize the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor.

14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of the surrounding nations shall be gathered, gold, and silver, and clothing, very much.

15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, the mule, the camel, and the ass, and all the cattle which shall be in those camps, like this plague.

16 ¶ And it shall be, everyone who is left from all the nations who came up against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths.

17 And it shall be, whoever will not go up from the families of the earth to Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts, even there shall be no rain on them.

18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up, and not come in, even not on them will be rain, but the plague with which Jehovah shall strike the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Booths.

19 This shall be Egypt's offense, and the offense of all nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Booths.

20 In that day there shall be on the bells of the horses, HOLY TO JEHOVAH. And the pots in the house of Jehovah shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 And every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy to Jehovah of Hosts. And all those who sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil in them. And in that day there shall not be a trader in the house of Jehovah of Hosts any more.

The last six chapters of Zechariah were written by Jeremiah.

In the first century, for every convert in the west of Jerusalem, there were ten in the East!