

The City of Jerusalem



u-ru-sa-lim

(Amarna Letter, Berliner Museum)

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1. Introduction

Jerusalem is probably the most excavated city in the world with more than a hundred major excavations since the middle of the 19th century. In recent times, projects were directed by Kathleen Kenyon who dug at the southeastern hill known as City of David (1961-1967), Benjamin Mazar who worked south of the Temple Mount (1968-1978), Nahman Avigad who excavated the Jewish Quarter of the Old City (1969-1983), Yigal Shiloh who concentrated on the City of David (1978-1985), and the Ronny Reich / Eli Shukron team who unearthed much around the Gihon Spring (1995-ongoing). Unfortunately, Kenyon and Shiloh passed away before publishing their final reports. Margreet Steiner (for Kenyon's material) and Jane Cahill (for Shiloh's evidence) were appointed to finish the important post-excavation work.

From the beginning, many archaeologists excavated near the Gihon Spring, Jerusalem's only water source, where ancient settlements could reasonably be expected. However, it is said that relatively little has been uncovered and the significance of the findings is hotly debated. What is even more debated is the so-called argument from silence, the lack of evidence about certain periods in Jerusalem's history.

Reasons for the 'paucity' of finds have been provided. For example, the Temple Mount cannot be excavated, which is most likely the location where public buildings and monuments were built during the monarchical periods. In addition, "...much of

the City of David, almost the entire top of the ridge, remains unexcavated because modern houses stand upon it”¹ and “most of the land ... is privately owned.”²

Furthermore, Shiloh observed that “the builders in each stratum sought to found their structures directly on bedrock, and thus often damaged earlier strata, which occasionally were even destroyed altogether.”³ Kenyon already noted that Roman and Byzantine quarrying at the hill called City of David destroyed earlier structures.⁴

Finally and most sadly, the discussion is hindered by limited professionalism in the archaeological work and publications. Kenyon simply threw out much of the pottery, her records are sometimes hard to follow, and the conclusions reached by both Kenyon and (even more) by Steiner appear to be premature.⁵

Another important question points to the dating of the archaeological evidence. In short, the absolute dates for the Late Bronze and the Iron Ages are debated.⁶

¹ Hershel Shanks, “The Mistress of Stratigraphy Had Clay Feet,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 29:03 (May/June 2003) [CD-Rom], p. 5.

² Yigal Shiloh and Mendel Kaplan, “Digging in the City of David,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 05:04 (July/August 1979) [CD-Rom], p. 2.

³ Cited by Hershel Shanks, “The City of David After Five Years of Digging,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 11:06 (November/December 1985) [CD-Rom], p. 1.

⁴ Kenyon is cited by Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 30:06 (November/December 2004) [CD-Rom], p. 4.

⁵ See Hershel Shanks, “The Mistress of Stratigraphy Had Clay Feet,” 2; Jane Cahill, “It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 24:04 (July/August 1998) [CD-Rom], p. 1-6; see also Magen Broshi, “Digging Up Jerusalem’ – A Critique,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 01:03 (September 1975) [CD-Rom].

⁶ John J. Bimson, “Iron Age Palestine: The Need for Chronological Revision,”

Roughly two dating schemes have been suggested:

	Conventional Chronology	Revised Chronology
Late Bronze Age	1550 – 1200 BC	1400/1250 – ca. 900 BC
Iron Age	1200 – 587 BC	ca. 900 – 587 BC

Though we will not solve the chronological question, it should be noted here that archaeological dates are not the same as absolute dates.

Despite all such restrictions and open questions, this essay will introduce more than enough evidence excavated in the last decades to show that the biblical account about Jerusalem is based on history and not legend. Along the chronological timescale a historical survey related to the biblical witness will be given first in each chapter, followed by a presentation of relevant archaeological findings. Some issues refer to more than one chapter since dates are debated but also because structures of the earlier ages are integrated in later works. The author will try to simplify the introduced complexity, using pictures and drawings for better illustration.

Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum 8 (1999): 57-65; Robert M. Porter, “The Iron Age and the New Chronology,” *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum* 8 (1999): 66-77; Peter van der Veen, “A Revised Chronology and Iron Age Archaeology – an Update,” *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum* 10 (2006): 49-51, 56; Robert M. Porter, “The Finkelstein Debate on Iron Age Israel,” *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum* 10 (2006): 52-56.

2. City of David and Before

Historical Survey – The Bible’s first mention of Jerusalem is implied in the reference to Melchizedek, king of ‘Salem’ (= Jerusalem) who lived in Abraham’s time around 2000 BC. (cf. Gen 14:18) Shortly before the formation of the Israel state, Joshua attacked the city (Judg 1:8) but “did not dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem.” (Josh 15:63) Around 993 BC David eventually conquered the Jebusites, captured Jerusalem for his residence, and “built up the area around it, from the *Millo* inward.” (2 Sam 5:9) Since “David captured the fortress of Zion” (2 Sam 5:7; 1 Chr 11:5), Jerusalem must have been fortified even before his time. Victory was gained through David’s officer Joab who used the *tsinnor* to penetrate the city. (2 Sam 5:8; 1 Chr 11:6) According to the Bible, the palace of David was later built by Hiram, king of Tyre. (2 Sam 5:11; 1 Chr 14:1)

Archaeological Evidence – Pottery evidence reveals that Jerusalem was first settled in the Chalcolithic period (3500-3000 BC) long before Joshua and David arrived. Some unearthed structural remains belong to the Early Bronze Age (3000-2800 BC). One of the significant findings dated to the Middle Bronze Age (II) is the massive, solid (not: casemate) wall at the eastern slope of the City of David found by Kenyon and Shiloh.⁷ The wall indicates that Jerusalem was fortified when David arrived.

⁷ Hershel Shanks, “The City of David After Five Years of Digging,” 1.

Whereas the biblical ‘fortress of Zion’ is probably located at the top of the hill that cannot be excavated, stone terraces dated to the Late Bronze Age (II) were found which probably formed the substructure of the citadel.⁸ Above the terraces, the Stepped-Stone Structure was added (most likely at the same time as Cahill⁹ argues and not later as Steiner¹⁰ maintains) which still covers the slope today (see picture below.)¹¹ The whole area is ‘filled’ with stones (and sherds from the MBA and LBA period)¹², so it is reasonable to identify the structure with the biblical ‘Millo’. Its preserved part is more than 40 feet high. Such a huge supporting wall for David’s citadel rising at the top of the eastern slope must have been an impressive sight indeed.



The Stepped-Stone Structure is commonly associated with the biblical ‘Millo’, which is the Hebrew word for ‘filling’. (2 Sam 5:9; 1 Chr 11:8; 1 Ki 9:15; 2 Chr 32:5)

⁸ Ibid, 2; Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time,” 3; Kathleen M. Kenyon, “Excavations in Jerusalem,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 27 (May 1964): 43.

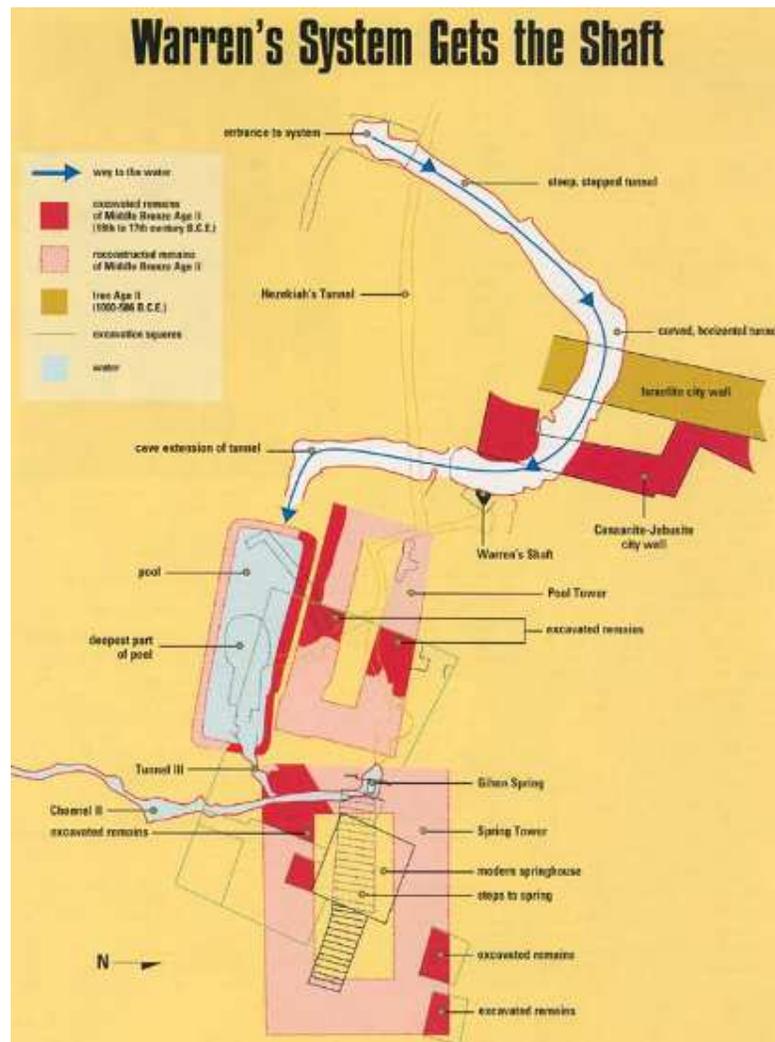
⁹ Jane Cahill, “It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It,” 4f.

¹⁰ Margreet Steiner, “It’s Not There: Archaeology Proves a Negative,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 24:04 (July/August 1998) [CD-Rom], p. 4.

¹¹ From Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time.”

¹² Jane Cahill, “It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It,” 2.

Part of this early fortification system were also the ‘Spring Tower’ and the ‘Pool Tower’ (see drawing below) built to defend the Gihon Spring and its nearby pool, beside the city wall higher up on the slope. It is important to note here that the MBA structures were also used in later periods.¹³ David did not necessarily destroy the city, and it is debated whether he lived in the LBA or Iron Age period (see introduction).

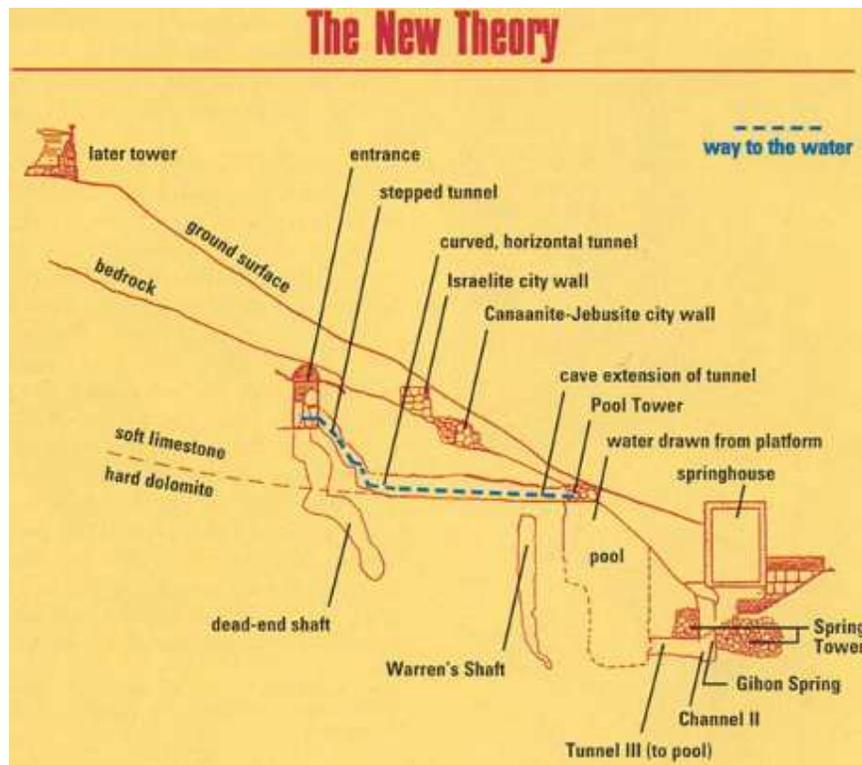


The drawing shows the MBA towers and wall near the Gihon Spring.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid.; Kathleen M. Kenyon, “Excavations in Jerusalem,” 39.

¹⁴ Inserted from Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, “Light at the End of the Tun-

For a long time it has been suggested that the water system in use at those times centered on the so-called Warren's Shaft discovered in 1867 by Charles Warren.¹⁵ However, recently Reich and Shukron proved that the shaft was never used to draw water. Rather, it was accidentally discovered when the tunnel (blue broken line in the drawing below) was enlarged by man some centuries later. The whole system was based on natural, "continuous natural karstic fissures ..., including the shaft."¹⁶



Reich and Shukron show the early water system that did not use Warren's Shaft.¹⁷

nel," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 25:01 (January/February 1999) [CD-Rom].

¹⁵ For example, see Yigal Shiloh, "Jerusalem's Water Supply During Siege – The Rediscovery of Warren's Shaft," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 07:04 (July/August 1981) [CD-Rom].

¹⁶ Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, "Light at the End of the Tunnel," 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Instead of using the shaft, the actual ancient water system was based on Channel II and III that led the water to the pool and the tunnel (blue arrows in the first drawing above, p.7) that bypasses Warren's Shaft and continues toward the fortified pool, where water from the Gihon Spring collected. Since the Siloam Channel (or Channel II) is covered by the southern wall of the MBA Spring Tower, this water system must have been built even before.¹⁸ Some say Channel II was also used for irrigation along the city wall (with reference to the 'gently flowing waters of Shiloah', cf. Isaiah 8:6)¹⁹, but Reich and Shukron note that they did not find the constructed 'windows' of the channel.²⁰ However, the channel passes the pool southwards and probably "carried the water to reservoirs at the southern end of the City of David."²¹

The old theory also suggested that Warren's Shaft would be the biblical *tsinnor*, but this can no longer be maintained with certainty.²² Nonetheless Joab most likely climbed up another (?) 'water-shaft', which is the probable translation for *tsinnor*.²³

In sum, Jerusalem's early fortification system was already well developed, including

¹⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹⁹ Cf. Hershel Shanks, "The City of David After Five Years of Digging," 6.

²⁰ Hershel Shanks, "Everything You Ever Knew About Jerusalem Is Wrong (Well, Almost)," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 25:06 (November/December 1999) [CD-Rom].

²¹ Hershel Shanks, "The City of David After Five Years of Digging," 5.

²² Id., "I climbed Warren's Shaft (But Joab Never Did)," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 25:06 (November/December 1999) [CD-Rom].

²³ Terence Kleven, "Up the Waterspout: How David's General Joab Got Inside Jerusalem," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20:04 (July/August 1994) [CD-Rom], p. 1f.

walls, towers and tunnels. The system surely had been used by the Jebusites and was probably reused or at least integrated later by King David himself.

Much more evidence for the existence of a LBA Jerusalem city has been found, e.g. tombs located around the city²⁴ and stratified pottery remains found by Kenyon and Shiloh in various areas distant from each other.²⁵ Some artefacts indicate that an Egyptian temple was located north of Jerusalem. Barklay dates this temple to the Egyptian 19th dynasty period. He also refers to the Amarna letters written by the king of Jerusalem and addressed to Amenhotep III and IV (18th dynasty) that testify about an Egyptian presence in the city.²⁶ The letters are Na'aman's main argument for the existence of an established city of Jerusalem.²⁷ Reference to Egypt is always related to the chronological question. Some date the 18th and 19th dynasties to later periods.

A suggestion for the location of David's palace has also been made. Based on

²⁴ For further references see Hershel Shanks, "The Missing Millennium in Jerusalem's Archaeology," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 26:05 (September/October 2000) [CD-Rom], p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2; Jane Cahill, "It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It," 1f.; for a detailed analysis of Jerusalem's pottery evidence see Jane Cahill, "Jerusalem at the Time of the United Monarchy: The Archaeological Evidence," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology*, ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 13-80.

²⁶ Gabriel Barkay, "What's an Egyptian Temple Doing in Jerusalem?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 26:03 (May/June 2000) [CD-Rom], 3f.

²⁷ Nadav Na'aman, "It Is There: Ancient Texts Prove It," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 24:04 (July/August 1998) [CD-Rom]; *id.*, "Cow Town or Royal Capital?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23:04 (July/August 1997) [CD-Rom].

biblical references, Eilat Mazar theorizes that the building is to be found north of the citadel (outside the city wall; Kenyon's Site H). An excavated 'royal capital' (see chapter 4 below) is commonly dated later but might belong to this palace. Nearby Kenyon also found the enclosure wall or corner of "a very important building."²⁸

3. Solomon's Golden Age

Historical Survey – The time of Solomon is portrayed in the Bible as a time of prosperity and peace. His reign was marked by fame and wealth. (1 Ki 4:21; 10:14) He directed a navy, chariots and horsemen. (1 Ki 9:26; 10:26) More significant for archaeologists, he carried on extensive building projects in cities like Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer. (1 Ki 9:15) Apart from the city wall Solomon built his palace and the famous Temple somewhere on the Temple Mount. (1 Ki 3:1; 5-7; 2 Chr 2-4) Overall, Israel's architecture was influenced by Phoenician skills due to his treaty relationship with Tyre. (cf. 1 Ki 5)

Archaeological Evidence – Scholars are divided on how to evaluate the archaeological evidence pertaining to Solomon's reign. Hershel Shanks assumes: "That the Jerusalem of the United Monarchy was not as grand or glorious as the Bible implies is

²⁸ Eliat Mazar, "Excavate King David's Palace," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23:01 (January/February 1997) [CD-Rom], p. 2-4.

almost surely true.”²⁹ In comparison, Merrill F. Unger claims that “Archaeology has furnished testimony that Solomon’s building and industrial activities were even more extensive than might be concluded from the vivid account in the book of Kings.”³⁰

Unger refers to sites like Megiddo, Samaria, Shechem and Moab and points to the common Syro-Phoenician architectural style.³¹ In regard to the Temple, Unger says:

Despite the fact that no architectural or constructional remains found in Jerusalem can be attributed to Solomon, numerous archaeological finds in the ancient Near East have cast a great deal of indirect light upon the construction of the temple. It is now known that the plan of the edifice was characteristically Phoenician, as would be expected, since it was built by a Tyrian architect (1 Kings 7:13-15). Similar ground-plans of sanctuaries of the general period 1200-900 BC have been excavated in Northern Syria ... demonstrating that the specifications of the Solomonic structure outlined in 1 Kings 6-7 are pre-Greek and authentic for the tenth century BC...³²

We recall that the Temple Mount is not accessible for excavation, so evidence from silence is really no evidence at all in this case. The same is true for the palace.

However, an eloquent object has been discovered in an antiquities shop in Jerusalem by Andre Lemaire which most likely was used in Solomon’s First Temple³³

²⁹ Hershel Shanks, “The Missing Millennium in Jerusalem’s Archaeology,” 2.

³⁰ Merrill F. Unger, “Archaeology and Solomon’s Empire,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 111 (April 1954): 119.

³¹ See also Howard F. Vos, “The Glories of the Reign of Solomon,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 110 (October 1953): 322ff.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Andre Lemaire, “Probable Head of Priestly Scepter from Solomon’s Temple Surfaces in Jerusalem,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 10:01 (January/February 1984) [CD-Rom]; Bryant G. Wood, “Object From Solomon’s Temple Recovered,” *Bible and*

(though probably at Hezekiah's time).³⁴ The ivory pomegranate

(see picture)³⁵ is 43 mm high and 21 mm in diameter and was

most likely the head of a small (ivory) sceptre. It bears the paleo-

Hebrew inscription "Belonging to the Temple of the Lord Yah-

weh, holy to the priests." While its genuineness has also been questioned, it was

proved to be authentic.³⁶ The Israel Museum bought the object for \$550,000!



Solomon extended the city further north to the Temple area and fortified the city.

Laperrousaz convincingly shows that part of Solomon's eastern wall of the Temple



Mount has been integrated in later res-

torations and is thus preserved until

today.³⁷ Left of the 'straight joint'

Herod extended the wall southwards,

but to the right of the joint ten courses

constitute Solomon's wall (cf. picture).³⁸ The part above is a later reconstruction.

Spade 4 (Spring 1991): 36-39.

³⁴ Leen and Kathleen Ritmeyer, "Thy Servants Take Pleasure In Her Stones' – Archaeological Discoveries In Jerusalem," *Bible and Spade* 10 (Winter 1997): 18.

³⁵ From "Update: Finds or Fakes?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 30:04 (July/August 2004) [CD-Rom].

³⁶ See *ibid.*

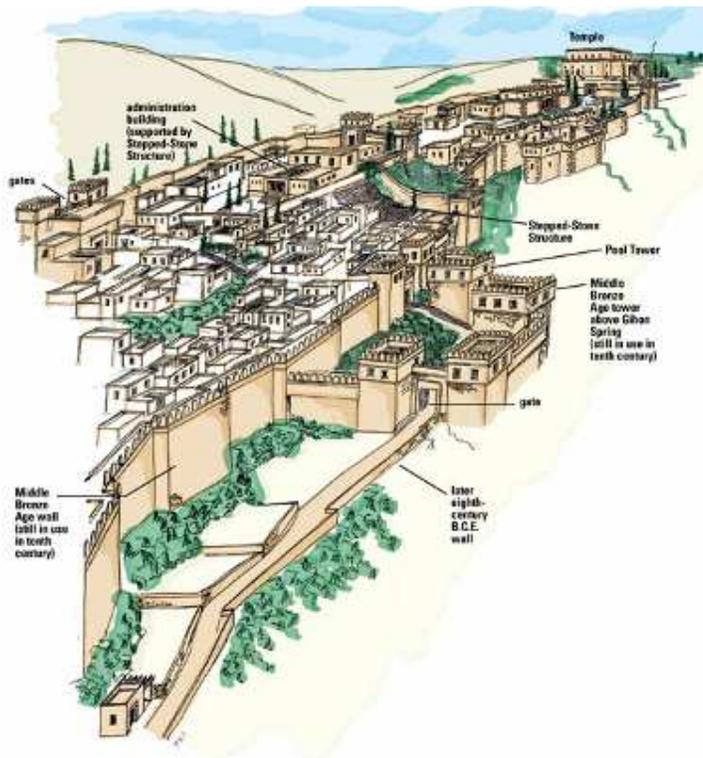
³⁷ Ernest-Marie Laperrousaz, "King Solomon's Wall Still Supports the Temple Mount," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 13:03 (May/June 1987) [CD-Rom].

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Finally, Shiloh recovered pottery ascribed to the Iron Age I and II periods when he excavated soil fills covering the Stepped-Stone structure. On the earliest floor surfaces of this structure Shiloh found hand-burnished sherds traditionally (!) dated to the 10th century BC. Thus Cahill concludes that “the Stepped-Stone Structure was intentionally cut and partially dismantled ... to accommodate new construction.”³⁹

Overall, Jane Cahill suggests the following shape of Jerusalem at (David’s and) Solomon’s time, including new buildings like the famous Temple and Solomon’s palace as well as old structures like the fortification walls and towers (see below).⁴⁰

Hezekiah later added the ‘outer wall’ (cf. next chapter).



Jane Cahill says “Jerusalem really was a major city in the tenth century B.C.E.”

³⁹ Jane Cahill, “It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It,” 4.

⁴⁰ From Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time.”

4. The Divided Kingdom

Historical Survey – The period of the Divided Monarchy covers a time span of almost 350 years, from the end of Solomon’s reign (931 BC) to the Fall of Jerusalem (587 BC), including the roughly 135 years when the southern kingdom existed without its northern brother since the Fall of Samaria (722 BC). The era was marked by oppression especially from the North. Battles with Syria were followed by Assyrian expansion first and then by the Babylonian supremacy. When the northern kingdom was defeated, some people moved southwards to live in Judean cities like Jerusalem. In preparation of the Assyrian threat and due to the population increase, the people enlarged and fortified the city. For example, Hezekiah built an ‘outer wall’ (2 Chr 32:5) and the tunnel named after him. (2 Ki 20:20; 2 Chr 32:2-4.30)

Archaeological Evidence – Hezekiah’s 533 meter-long tunnel can still be visited today. He directed the water from the Gihon spring east of the city to the southwestern area into the (new-built) Pool of Siloam. Two teams of tunnelers began at opposite ends and met in the middle, as an inscription carved in the tunnel reveals:

...the tunnelers wielded the pick-axe, each man toward his fellow. While there was still three cubits to be cut, on the other side there was heard a man’s voice calling to his fellow ... at the end of the tunneling, the tunnelers hacked each man toward his fellow.⁴¹

⁴¹ Translation by Yigal Shiloh, “Jerusalem’s Water Supply During Siege,” 4; similarly Simon B. Parker, “Siloam Inscription Memorializes Engineering Achievement,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 20:04 (July/August 1994) [CD-Rom], p.1.

Radiocarbon dating confirmed that the tunnel was hewn by Hezekiah (~700 BC).⁴²

While constructing the new tunnel and pool, Hezekiah possibly abandoned the old MBA water system (see chapter 2) according to 2 Chr 32:3f.⁴³

The ‘outer wall’ (see picture)⁴⁴ was built to protect the Gihon Spring and an expanded Jerusalem in the East. Since “one floor surface from the end of the Iron Age built up to the exterior wall of one of the Middle Bronze Age towers”⁴⁵



was found, the two MBA towers (discovered by Reich and Shukron, see above in chapter 2) were apparently integrated in Hezekiah’s wall.⁴⁶

The Bible indicates that Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem twice, first in 701 BC and then in 688 BC.⁴⁷ After Hezekiah paid tribute at first, he had time to prepare for the next siege. He not only built the tunnel and the outer wall but also thickened the old MBA wall up to 16 feet, found preserved up to a height of 10 feet.⁴⁸

⁴² “King Hezekiah did build the tunnel: scientific tests substantiate biblical account,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 29:06 (November/December 2003) [CD-Rom].

⁴³ Cf. Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, “Light at the End of the Tunnel,” 5.

⁴⁴ From Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time.”

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁶ See also Hershel Shanks, “Everything You Ever Knew About Jerusalem Is Wrong (Well, Almost),” 1f.

⁴⁷ William H. Shea, “Jerusalem Under Siege,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 25:06 (November/December 1999) [CD-Rom].

⁴⁸ Hershel Shanks, “The City of David After Five Years of Digging,” 5; cf. Yi-

That eastern Jerusalem expanded can also be seen from excavations below the Stepped-Stone Structure (cf. picture in chapter 2). Additional stone terraces were built for new constructions like ‘Ahiel’s House’ or the ‘Burnt Room’ (both dated to the Iron Age), the latter so named since it was found being burned during the Babylonian destruction of 587 BC. Multiple floors indicate that the houses were occupied during several periods, the earliest dated by Cahill to the time of the United Monarchy based on Iron Age II pottery.⁴⁹ New chronologists would date the pottery later. However, in regard to the later Babylonian destruction Shiloh concludes that “the evidence in the Bible (2 Kings 25:8–10; Jeremiah 39:1–8; 2 Chronicles 36:18–19) is complemented by the clear-cut archaeological evidence: the total destruction of the various structures, and a conflagration which consumed the various wooden parts of the houses.”⁵⁰

On the lower terrace below the Stepped-Stone Structure Reich and Shukron excavated the ‘House of the Bullae’ where 51 bullae were found with inscriptions “Belonging to X son of Y”, bearing names that are also known from the Bible. The most famous one is from ‘Gemaryahu son of Shaphan’, mentioned in Jer 36:10-12, 25. Besides, Iron and bronze arrowheads were found throughout the area and inside the

gal Shiloh, “The City of David Archaeological Project: The Third Season -1980,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 44.3 (Summer 1981): 162.

⁴⁹ From Jane Cahill, “Jerusalem in David’s and Solomon’s time,” 3.

⁵⁰ Cited by Hershel Shanks, “The City of David After Five Years of Digging,” 3.

houses that testify about the past battles (see picture).⁵¹

Such arrowheads were also found by Avigad in the

Jewish Quarter.⁵²



Avigad provided evidence for the western expansion with the discovery of the ‘Broad Wall’ that was surely built by Hezekiah. (cf. Neh 3:8) Unearthed houses and pottery dating to the 8th and 7th centuries BC found at the wall’s site indicate that the West has been inhabited even before.⁵³ The Bible notes that Hezekiah “...tore down houses to strengthen the wall” (Is 22:10), which fits the archaeological picture. North of the Broad Wall Avigad also found a biblical tower (2 Chr 32:5) and a gatehouse commonly identified with the ‘Middle Gate’ (Jer 39:3).⁵⁴

A ‘royal capital’ (see picture⁵⁵; 4 feet long by 2 feet high by 1.5 feet thick) was found in debris resulting from the Babylonian destruction in 587 BC. Its style is com-



⁵¹ Ibid., 4.

⁵² Nitza Rosovsky, “A Thousand Years of History in Jerusalem’s Jewish Quarter,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 18:03 (May/June 1992) [CD-Rom], p. 3.

⁵³ Ibid., 2; Magen Broshi, “Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 04:02 (June 1978) [CD-Rom], p. 2.

⁵⁴ L. and K. Ritmeyer, “‘Thy Servants Take Pleasure In Her Stones’,” 21; Hillel Geva, “Western Jerusalem at the End of the First Temple Period in Light of the Excavations in the Jewish Quarter,” in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology*, ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 192-95.

⁵⁵ From Margreet Steiner, “It’s Not There: Archaeology Proves a Negative.”

parable with other Judahite palaces of the late seventh and early sixth centuries BC.⁵⁶

The evidence leads us to imagine the impressive ‘royal building’ as a whole. As noted above, E. Mazar associates the capital with David’s palace (see above, p. 10).

Many other findings testify about the Divided Monarchy and especially about Hezekiah’s time. In the southern Area D, Shiloh found “a number of walls from the end of the Iron Age, and a pit full of whole and broken vessels from the 8th century BC.”⁵⁷ He further excavated strips of complete house structures in Area E and G.⁵⁸ In sum, all such houses, structures, walls, bullae, sherds, and destruction layers convincingly testify about biblical Jerusalem – her expansion and destruction.

5. Second Temple Period (516 BC – 70 AD)

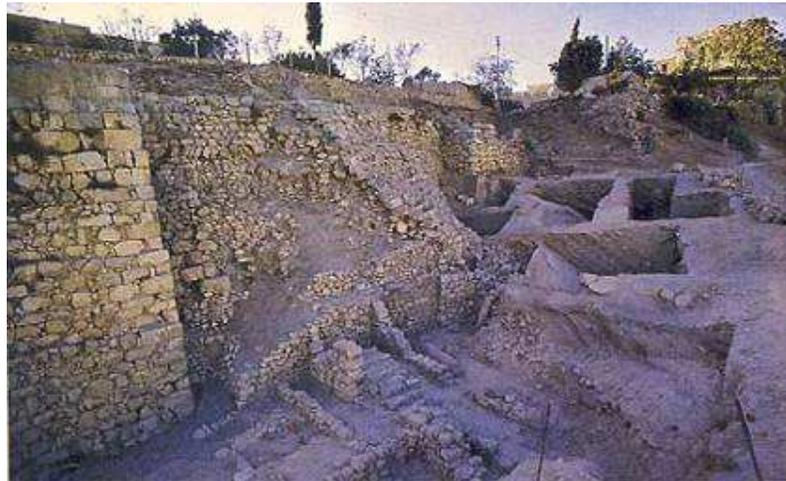
Historical Survey – Soon after the Babylonian exile the Temple was rebuilt and rededicated. Nehemiah came to the city around 445 BC and “built up the wall of Jerusalem.” (Neh 2:17) After the intertestamental period, Herod the Great rebuilt and enlarged the city. The Second Temple complex has been praised but its destruction also foretold. (Mt 24:1-2) Shortly before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, the city’s population increased up to 80.000 people (cf. appendix).

⁵⁶ Jane Cahill, “It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It,” 5.

⁵⁷ Yigal Shiloh and Mendel Kaplan, “Digging in the City of David,” 4.

⁵⁸ Yigal Shiloh, “The City of David Archaeological Project,” 163f.

Archaeological Evidence – Nehemiah most likely rebuilt the wall only near the City of David and the Temple Mount but not on the western hill.⁵⁹ His wall was found higher on the eastern slope and inside the old Middle Bronze Age wall described in chapter 2.⁶⁰ Furthermore, nearby in Area E, “from this so-called Persian period (sixth to fourth centuries B.C.), the excavators found numerous *yhd* (*yehud*) seal impressions, the name by which Judah was known when it was a Persian satrapy”⁶¹, as well as Iron II jar handles bearing ‘belonging to the king.’⁶²



*Remains of Nehemiah's sixth century wall.*⁶³

In Area G at the Stepped-Stone Structure (see chapter 2), Shiloh found an impressive glacis (15-20 feet thick) which he dates to the Hasmonean period (2nd-1st cen-

⁵⁹ Nitza Rosovsky, “A Thousand Years of History,” 3.

⁶⁰ Hershel Shanks, “The City of David After Five Years of Digging,” 2 and 4; Kathleen M. Kenyon, “Excavations in Jerusalem,” 45.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶² Yigal Shiloh and Mendel Kaplan, “Digging in the City of David,” 5.

⁶³ Picture from *ibid.*

turies BC) and that covered an earlier stepped stone glacis from Nehemiah's time. They also found pottery dated to the 6th to 4th centuries BC⁶⁴, "a Persian-period ceramic layer within clear stratigraphical context – solid archaeological evidence for that resettlement of the Babylonian exiles in the City of David."⁶⁵

Excavations unearthed much more of this late period: "Most of the eastern slope of the City of David above the Gihon Spring is covered by a very thick fill of debris, gravel and pottery sherds dumped here in the Second Temple period (mainly the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E.)."⁶⁶ Magen Broshi excavated about 120 meter of the so-called 'First Wall' built by the Hasmoneans (~100 BC) and later used by Herod (and then by the Turks) to rebuilt the western wall.⁶⁷ "Avigad's excavation revealed the opulent houses of the Herodian period and the elaborate lifestyle its upper-class occupants enjoyed."⁶⁸ Benjamin Mazar's excavation to the west and south of the Temple Mount brought to light much of Herod's building activities including remains of the Second Temple complex such as the four entranceways at the western

⁶⁴ Yigal Shiloh and Mendel Kaplan, "Digging in the City of David," 3.

⁶⁵ Yigal Shiloh, "City of David – Excavation 1978," *Biblical Archaeologist* 42.3 (Summer 1979): 168.

⁶⁶ Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, "Light at the End of the Tunnel," 2.

⁶⁷ Magen Broshi, "Along Jerusalem's Walls," *Biblical Archaeologist* 40.1 (March 1977), 11f.

⁶⁸ Nitza Rosovsky, "A Thousand Years of History," 3; cf. L. and K. Ritmeyer, "'Thy Servants Take Pleasure In Her Stones'," 24.

wall noted by Josephus.⁶⁹ Finally, remains like an uncovered ‘Burnt House’ display the unhappy end of Jerusalem in 70 AD.⁷⁰

In sum, abundant archaeological evidence reveals how the exiles came back to Jerusalem and increased in population until Jesus’ time and beyond. Even parts of Nehemiah’s wall could be found. Hasmonean period walls, Herod’s buildings and the destruction layers from 70 AD end our survey about ancient Jerusalem.



Young woman caught in the fire in 70 AD.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 4; Nahman Avigad, “Jerusalem in Flames – The Burnt House Captures a Moment in Time,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 09:06 (November/December 1983) [CD-Rom].

⁷¹ Ibid.

6. Conclusion

The Bible has always been disputed. Critics will always ask for more and more evidence no matter how much they have seen so far. However, it is undeniable that archaeological evidence of Jerusalem has to a large extent confirmed the historicity of the biblical account. The reader is referred to the 'Millo', Hezekiah's building projects, Nehemiah's wall and many minor artefacts like the ivory pomegranate and some bullae with inscriptions of biblical names. Above all, the existence of the Jerusalem city throughout the periods Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age and Iron Age can hardly be questioned, yet scholars like Steiner deny the historical reality of Solomon's age.⁷² That such glorious buildings in Jerusalem like the Temple cannot be excavated is unfortunate but does not present evidence from silence. However, this author delights in those findings that *have* been uncovered and wishes to see them himself, one day.

⁷² Margreet Steiner, "It's Not There: Archaeology Proves a Negative."

Appendix – Jerusalem City Development⁷³

Period	Area	Population	Map
David (~1.000 BC)	12 acres	2.000-2.400	
Solomon (~930 BC)	32 acres	4.500-5.000	
Hezekiah (~700 BC)	125 acres	~25.000	
Nehemiah (4 th cent. BC)	30 acres	~4.500	
Herod the Great (~4 BC)	230 acres	~40.000	
Jewish War (66 AD)	450 acres	~80.000	

⁷³ From Magen Broshi, “Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem.”

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