

The Acts of the Apostles

Lesson 6 Handout: Simon and Philip

Acts 8:4-40

Lesson 6 Answers:

1. What did the scattered disciples do wherever they went?
8:4 indicates they preached everywhere they went.
2. What did Philip do in Samaria that attracted the people?
8:7 indicates that Philip excised evil spirits and healed the lame and paralyzed.
3. What attracted the people of Samaria to Simon?
8:9 says that Simon practiced sorcery (magic) and proclaimed himself to be someone great.
4. Did Simon realize that the power Philip displayed was supernatural?
8:13 Yes.
5. Did Simon believe because of the miracles Philip performed?
The miracles were the authentication of the good news that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah. Simon and many others believed.
6. After Peter and John arrived in Samaria, what action did they perform to convey the Holy Spirit to the Samaritan believers?
8:17 shows that the Apostles laid their hands on the new believers gifting them with the Holy Spirit.
7. What was the wickedness of Simon?
Simon wanted to buy the gift of laying his hands on people for them to receive the Holy Spirit.
8. Did Simon repent? Yes. He asked to be prayed for.
9. What was the resume of the Ethiopian eunuch? Was he a Jew?
The Eunuch was a righteous Jew who worked in Ethiopia in the treasury of the Queen. He had undertaken the long trip via chariot to worship in Jerusalem.
10. Where is the passage from which the eunuch was reading?
Isaiah 53:7-8
11. Why did Philip start with the answer to that question rather than expounding on his favorite theme?
It is good teaching practice to start where the student is. And the Eunuch did ask a specific question.

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12. Why did Philip and the eunuch go down into the water for baptism?

Being baptized means to be immersed in the water, that is, to be buried with Christ.
The one being baptized comes up out of the water saved.

13. What essentials for gaining salvation can be gleaned from this account?

Desire for salvation, search for the answer, hear the Word of God, believe it, and be baptized.

14. What indicates that the eunuch believed in the action of his baptism for salvation?

8:39 indicates the Eunuch went away rejoicing.

Cameo 6 – The Samaritans

Their Origins: Samaritan Version

- Direct descendants of the northern tribes of Israel. They are the true Israelites.
- Schism began with Eli, the illegitimate priest, moved the tabernacle from Shechem to Shiloh.
- They maintained the true teachings of Moses as enshrined in the Torah.

Modern Samaritans

- Two communities of Samaritans remain, one in the West Bank city of Nablus and one in Holon, near Tel Aviv.
- They number only about 800 people, but their numbers have been gradually growing in the last century.
- They read their version of the Torah, have weekly Sabbath services, and celebrate most of the Jewish holidays.

Their Origins: Old Testament

- About 875 B.C., Omri founded the city of Samaria on a hill about seven miles northwest of Shechem. He bought the hill from a man named Shemer for two talents of silver, built a fortified city, and called it Samaria, after the name of the previous owner (1 Kgs 16:24). Shemer was apparently a widespread clan name in Israel.
- Samaria became the name of the city and the surrounding region.
- 2 Kings 17:29- Only place in the OT that “Samaritans” is used. 2 Kings 17 says Assyria transplanted people from Mesopotamia into northern Israel, who practiced a syncretistic faith, fearing YHWH and still worshiping their native gods (8th c. BC).
- Ezra 4 says when the Jews returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple and Jerusalem, they rejected the offer of the Samaritans to assist them, leading to ongoing political conflict (6th c. BC).

John Hyrcanus Destroys Samaritan Temple

- John Hyrcanus served as the Jewish high priest and King. He wanted to expand his territory in the north and south. When Hyrcanus went north, he attacked the Samaritans and destroyed their temple.
- If you are a Samaritan living 4 to 5 generations after this destruction, the event would still have implications in your understanding of being a Samaritan living amongst Jews and could create dissention between you and the Jews.
- John Hyrcanus, from the Maccabean family, destroyed the Samaritan temple at Mt. Gerizim in 128 B.C. and the city of Shechem a few years later.
- The temple was never rebuilt but the site remains sacred to the Samaritans to this day.

The Samaritan’s Abbreviated Bible

- The only authoritative scripture for the Samaritans is their version of the Torah, commonly known as the Samaritan Pentateuch (SP).

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- Its beginnings cannot be precisely dated.
- The most overt differences are where the SP add another commandment after Exodus 20:17 which states an altar is to be built at Mt. Gerizem, and in Deut 27:4 where "Ebal" is changed to "Gerizem."
- It is written in an older Hebrew script.

Jewish-Samaritan Agreement/Disagreement in 1st Century

John 4:19-20

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

John 4:25-27

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

Samaritan Encounters- parable of the good Samaritan, the woman at the well, James and John wanted to call fire from heaven to torch a Samaritan village, Jesus instructed the Twelve not to go into any Samaritan village (Mt. 10:5-6).



Mount Gerizem

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Taxation in the Roman Empire

By Martin Armstrong

May 30, 2019

The Roman economy was more like the USA during the mid-19th century in that it was pre-industrial. About 80% of its inhabitants worked in agriculture, which was about where we were in 1840. There was no social agenda of trying to redistribute wealth from one class to the other. Still, there were social programs. But the socialistic agenda that was adopted by modern governments has sought not merely to redistribute wealth among the classes, but it has justified bigger government on a grand scale never before witnessed in history. The tax rate in the ancient Roman Empire was about 5% with some paying as little as 2%. The actual cost of government during the Roman Empire was minimal compared to the modern standard. The Roman Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD) formalized the *alimenta*, which was a welfare program that helped orphans and poor children throughout Italy. It provided general funds as well as food and subsidized education. The program was supported initially out of Dacian War booty, and then later by a combination of estate taxes and philanthropy. So there were programs to take care of people who needed help.

Virtually all the taxes and rents raised by the imperial government were spent on the military, which came out to be about 80% of the imperial budget in 150 AD. This military spending constituted about 2.5% of the empire's GDP. Obviously, we do not really see separatist's movement until the mid-3rd century when Valerian I (253-260 AD) was captured by the Persians. With the cost of the military coming in about 2.5%, this explains the lack of tax rebellions. The tax enforcement was nowhere near as intrusive as we see today. The US military budget comes in about 4% or twice that of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire lasted far longer than any modern state for it seems to have been much more tolerable of a burden, whereas the U.S. military budget will be around 20% at times of total expenditure.

The primary purpose of my investigation into the monetary system of the world is very simple. The political unrest ONLY rises when there is economic tension. Turn the economy down and you will get historically civil unrest. Additionally, it is interesting to see what policies produce the best and worst results. Augustus (27-14 AD) created a real land boom as he issued a tremendous amount of coinage creating a booming economy. He was followed by Tiberius (14-37 AD) who imposed austerity and issued very little coinage by comparison. That resulted in an economic depression in 33 AD and this was in part reflected in the Jewish rebellions over taxes. Remember the story that Jesus asks whose picture is on the coin and he replies to give to Caesar what is Caesar's? So we can see the impact of austerity throughout history to extract the best policies under which we should live to promote like Rome – Pax Romanum.

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Jesus Temple Destruction Prophecy and the Wailing Wall

In three of the four gospels Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple, to the last stone.

Matthew 24:1-2 And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, 'See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.'

Mark 13:1-2 And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings! And Jesus said unto him, 'Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down.'

Luke 21:5-6 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said, 'As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'

And the destruction of Jerusalem to the last stone, in the gospel of Luke

Luke 19:41-44 And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Even the Pharisees of the time knew that after the Messiah, the Temple and the city would be destroyed, in *John 11:47-48* are making a reference to *Daniel 9:26*.

John 11:47-48 The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we? For this man doeth many signs. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

Daniel 9:26 And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his end shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.

Even the historian Josephus described the destruction of Jerusalem (not that the Bible needed a backing up).

Now, why is it that many Christians firmly believe that the Wailing Wall was part of the Temple? This is a statement that can imply that Jesus was wrong.

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What Christians believe is that Jesus prophesied the coming literal destruction and that it **was fulfilled**, and attested by independent historical accounts outside the New Testament. Whether "Not ... one stone upon another" should be interpreted as a metaphor, or whether the Wailing Wall was included in the prophecy was left as a minor debate.

The ESV Study Bible commentary on Matt 24:1-2 says: The road from Jerusalem to Bethany, where Jesus and his disciples stay each evening, takes one alongside the Mount of Olives, which affords a spectacular view of the temple in the distance.

Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of the temple was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the Roman army under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. **Not ... one stone upon another** may be intended as a metaphor for total destruction, or it may be understood as something that was literally fulfilled in the destruction of the temple building itself (but not the entire Temple Mount, some of which remains to this day).

Commentary by Wayne Jackson:

Shortly before his death, Christ informed his disciples that the Jewish temple would be destroyed, and not one stone would be left upon another. Some claim the prophecy failed. What are the facts?

A skeptic recently claimed that Jesus' prophecy regarding the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem has proved false. It is alleged that when the Romans invaded the city, wreaking devastation in A.D. 70, the temple was not totally demolished. Rather, the "Wailing Wall" is standing yet. Thus, supposedly, the Lord's prophecy was not fulfilled.

Temple History

The original temple was constructed in the days of Solomon, but that structure was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 587/6 B.C. (2 Kings 25:8-17). When the Jews returned from the Babylonian Captivity (536 B.C.), the project of rebuilding the temple was begun (Ezra 1:1-4). The work was stalled for several years, but finally was completed in 515 B.C., due to the prophetic urging of Zechariah and Haggai (cf. Ezra 6:15). There was some destruction of Jerusalem's walls again in the days of Antiochus IV (169 B.C.).

Herod the Great (who slaughtered the infants in attempting to eradicate Christ—Matthew 2:1ff) reigned from 37-4 B.C. (a calendar error accounts for the 4 B.C.). One of his ambitious projects was to remodel the temple and expand the surrounding area.

In a confrontation with the Lord near the commencement of his ministry, the Jews claimed the building project had been underway for forty-six years (John 2:20). It is one of the oddities of history that the temple project was not completed until A.D. 64 — just in time to be destroyed six years later as a result of Jewish rebellion.

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Herod's enterprise was phenomenal. The king enlarged the platform area around the temple considerably, building massive retaining walls that were filled in with dirt and stone. The walls had huge stones (one measures 39 ft. long by 13 ft. wide). The area enclosed was about 172,000 square yards. The "Wailing Wall" was a part of this retaining system.

The Romans invaded Jerusalem in August of A.D. 70, after a five-month siege. A full account of the bloody conflict is found in Josephus (Wars V, VI). The temple was destroyed on the 10th day of the 5th month, according to Jewish tradition — ironically, the same day of the year upon which Nebuchadnezzar had burned down the first temple, some 656 years earlier!

The Alleged Problem

Let us now address the alleged problem in Christ's prophecy. Does the "Wailing Wall" constitute an argument against the accuracy of Christ's prophecy? It does not.

First, Jesus' language could have been hyperbolic, simply signifying a complete destruction.

Hyperbole is common to all languages as a technique for matters of great emphasis.

Second, this wall actually was a part of Herod's "platform" project to extend the temple compound area. It was not related to the temple structure itself; the disciples asked about the "buildings," not the city walls.

In his book, *The Archaeology of the Jerusalem Area* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), Harold Mare, former president of the Near East Archaeological Society, notes: "We do not have any remains of the Herodian temple itself because of the devastating Roman destruction in A.D. 70" (p. 141; emp. WJ).

Another scholar declares: "Strictly speaking, the Temple proper is not a matter of archaeological consideration since only one stone from it and parts of another can be positively identified" (H.T. Frank, *An Archaeological Companion to the Bible*, London: SCM Press, 1972, p. 249). That "one stone" was from the small wall separating the Court of the Gentiles from the sacred compound.

Jesus prophesied correctly!

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Commentary by Norma Robertson

I am often asked the question, "How can you say the Temple was on the Temple Mount when Jesus said not one stone will be upon another? Those walls sure are a lot of stones one upon another." That was put into the minds of a lot of people by Dr. E Martin and now by Bob Cornuke repeating Martin's words. So, they claim the Temple Mount was all Fort Antonia.

I have a few things to say about that. Firstly, Jesus never said anything about the walls, just the buildings. But, that aside, the huge rectangle Temple Mount, with 4 walls all the same height that we see today, are not the walls that actually remained standing after the 70 AD destruction.

What beautiful buildings were they speaking of to Jesus? Herod's Temple. The beautiful white stones he used to build the temple and outer buildings. Jesus was not being shown the walls of the Mount, only the buildings that Herod built.

Jesus was being specific. "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another. By 30 AD the Herodians had built the Temple and all the buildings of the Temple court and the Woman's court, and also Fort Antonia, but Herod the Great died in 4 BC, long before the Southern section of the west wall of the Temple Mount was built. Coins in an old mikveh were found under the foundation stones deep below Robinson's Arch that were dated from 17-18 AD. So, it was Herod's son and grandson that slowly, over the next 70 years, finished building the west wall and also the last court of Herod's Temple called the lower court, according to Josephus. The Lower Court was called "lower" because it was built on a lower part of the hill. The Lower Court contained Herod's Royal Stoa, which was 600 feet long. The work on this lower court was not finished until 66 AD, 36 years after Jesus was crucified. I doubt they had even built the foundation of the lower court when Jesus walked in the Temple. He walked in the lower southern court that had been there since the time of Solomon within those ancient walls (pre-Herodian extended southern court and walls). The lower court with the Royal Stoa on the Ophel was knocked down or disassembled after the destruction of 70 AD.

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What is a retaining wall and why is it still standing?

In this case of the west wall, the retaining wall is part of the construction of a new western court of the Temple. There had never been a western court because Solomon built to the edge of the Tyropoeon Valley. To create a western court The Herodians had to start building the foundations for the wall in the depths of that valley. Behind the wall are arches upon arches in layers. This was done to bring the new west court up to the ground level of the Temple/Priest's court. In the photo below I've marked out where the old Herodian stones, that weren't thrown over, ends. This shows us where the ground level of the Mount was in 70 AD. Only the stones that were above ground level could be thrown down, which they were, but any stones below ground level couldn't be thrown down. So, after the destruction of 70 AD there was no wall above ground level. It was like a plain, as Jesus prophesied it would be.

In 134 AD the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, began building his Temple of Jupiter on the bare Temple Mount. He built a few rows of wall above the Herodian retaining wall and above that the Muslim's continued to build the wall even higher.



As we round the Southwest corner the ground level stays high but then drops down. This is because the ground level dropped.

Below the red line are Herodian stones and above the red line are Hadrian stones and above the blue line are Muslim stones. These Herodian stones couldn't be thrown over, meaning it was

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ground level; this is because this is where the Temple was located. The southern wall we see today was actually the inner wall of the sacred area, which included the Temple court, Priest court, Men's court and Women's court.



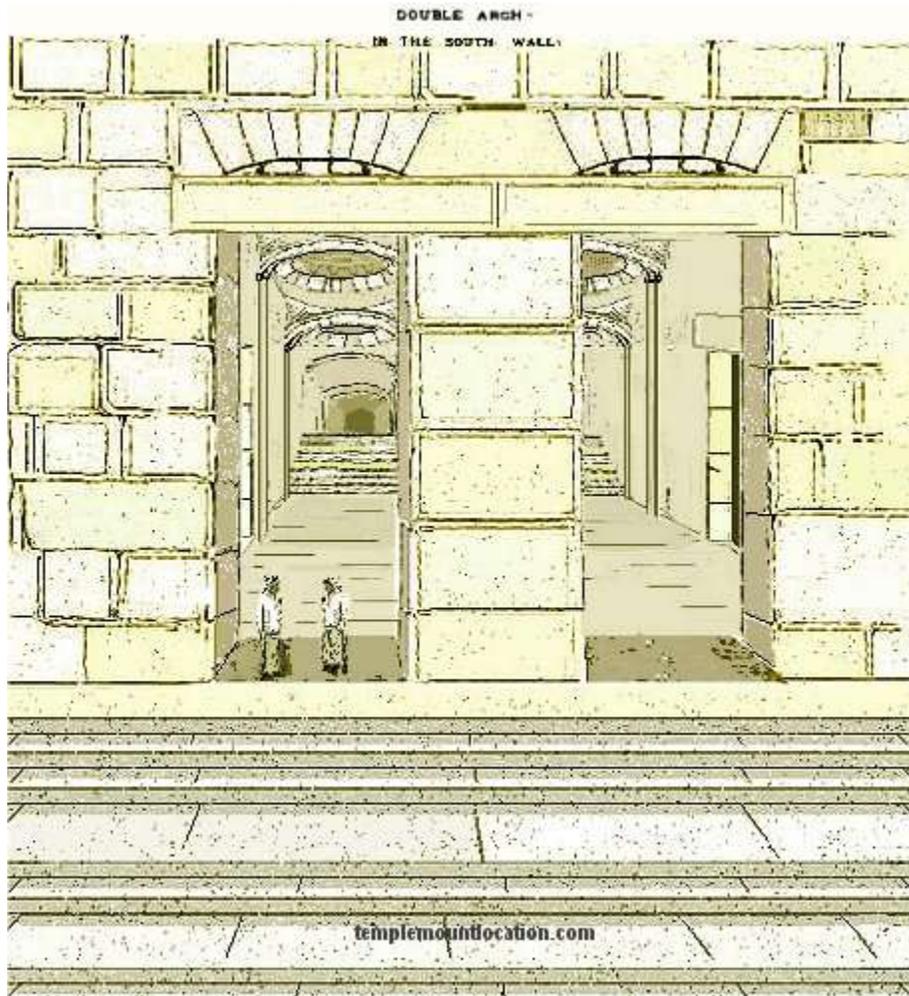
So, after the destruction of 70 AD all a person would have seen of the walls when viewing the Temple Mount was all the retaining stones below the red line on the above photo. As for the rest of the Temple area, and the Temple itself, and Fort Antonia, they were laid even to the ground. As Josephus wrote; you couldn't even tell a Temple had ever been there.

The gate, called Double Gate on Warren's map, was once the location of what Josephus called the Upper Gate. This gate is mostly covered up by the crusader building built against the southern wall (see above photo). This gate still has some Herodian stones at the entrance and arch of the gate. There are steps with the height of 22 feet where one would walk up and then enter the upper gate to make a sacrifice. Inside the upper gate were eleven marble steps that brought one up to the level of the actual threshing floor where the altar was located. Because the threshing floor was set back from the entrance of Upper Gate, this allowed the stones of the walls on either side of the gate to be thrown down.

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Double gate (Upper Gate)

Notice in the illustration the 11 steps within the gate.



The women's court was also at the same level as Upper Gate. Therefore, the stones in that area could be thrown over; all except the bottom row of the wall, which remains today. That row was part of the lower retaining walls.

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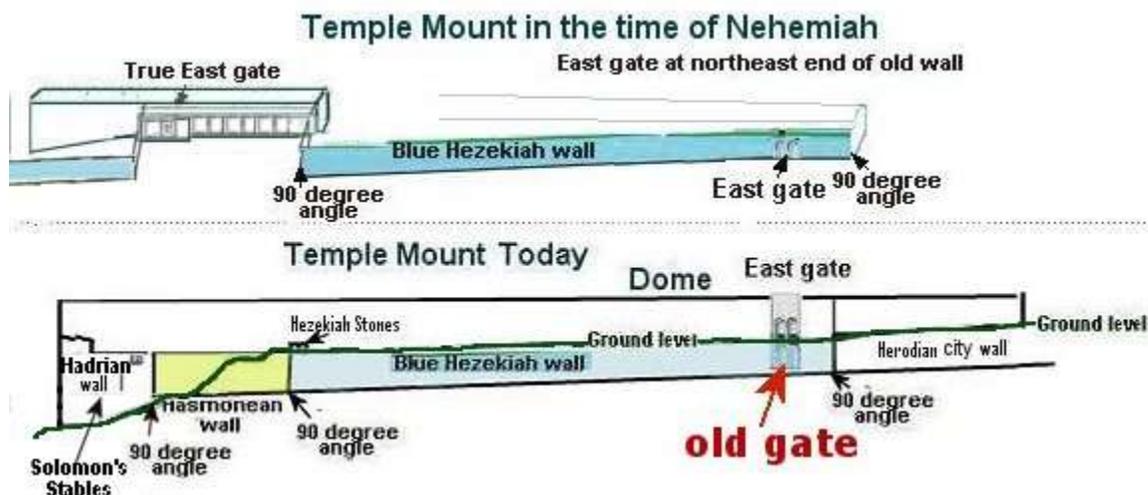
What about the east wall?

Jesus was looking at an east wall built by Solomon, because Herod refused to let his masons rebuild that ancient work, because of the great time and expense involved. (Josephus Flavius Ant. 20:9, section 7) "These cloisters belonged to the outer court (Woman's court), and were situated in a deep valley, and had walls that reached four hundred cubits [in length], and were built of square and very white stones, the length of each of which stones was twenty cubits, and their height six cubits. This was the work of King Solomon, who first of all built the entire temple. But king Agrippa, who had the care of the temple committed to him by Claudius Caesar, considering that it is easy to demolish any building, but hard to build it up again, and that it was particularly hard to do it to these cloisters, which would require a considerable time, and great sums of money, he denied the petitioners their request about that matter."

This is saying the Solomon's porch and Solomon's east wall remained intact. The Herodians just extended it to the north and to the south as they extended the north and south courts.

Josephus, when giving measurements of the Temple complex looking at it from the east, called the east wall "Solomon's wall". That 400-cubit (a standard Greek cubit of 18" 400cu = 600') wall cannot be seen today. Part of the 400 cubits was the lower/southern court. The whole Lower Court was burned and thrown down after 70 AD. It was located on the Ophel. All of the fragments of the Royal Stoa were found on the Ophel during the excavations of Benjamin Mazar, which is hard to explain if a person doesn't know the Temple compound went beyond the southern wall of the Temple Mount we see today. When I first started this work I remember, seeing an old news item with a quote by B. Mazar saying "I believe I have found a 600-foot building on the Ophel". I have not seen that quote since then. What this means is that he found hundreds of fragments, spread over 600 feet that were from one building. In this case it was fragments from the Herodian Royal Stoa.

Here is a diagram of the east wall today. It was a city wall. The Temple sat back from the city wall. In the time of Jesus only the yellow and blue walls existed.



Hadrian used recycled Herodian stones to build Solomon's Stables (named that by the Crusaders in the 10th century). This created the Southeast corner. When Jesus and some of the disciples

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were looking at the Temple from the Mount of Olives they saw the upper diagram Blue wall of Hezekiah, along with the extended Hasmonean wall (in Yellow) built around 160 BC. The entire wall above the Hasmonean and Hezekiah wall, was built by the Romans, including the east gate they call the Golden Gate (above the old gate). Above the Roman stones are the courses of Muslim stones. Everyone who has studied knows this Gate was not built by Herod!

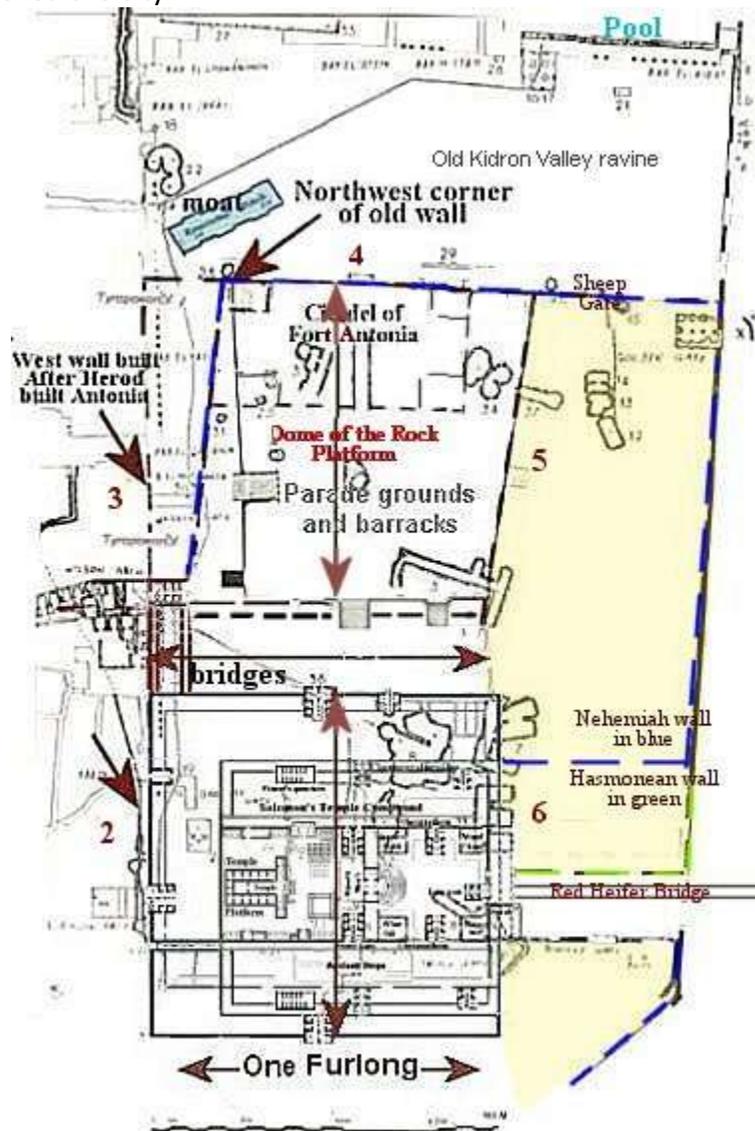
The high east wall of today's Temple Mount began as a low City wall that Nehemiah rebuilt. He described the city wall all around Jerusalem (see scripture). That wall was not a wall of the Temple. In fact, Nehemiah did not rebuild any of the Temple walls, only the city walls.



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So how did the Temple Mount become the huge rectangle it is today?

We can thank the Roman Emperor Hadrian for that piece of handy work. I am sure you have heard that the whole Temple Mount was Fort Antonia. That is not true. Fort Antonia only took up a portion of it. Josephus tells us that the Temple and Fort Antonia together measured six furlong around. A furlong is approximately 600 feet, making the combined Temple and Fort Antonia complex 600' x 1200' altogether. We know the Temple was 600 x 600 feet, but Fort Antonia area was approximately 600 x 500 feet with around 100 feet between the Fort and the Temple. The Fort occupied the elevated platform of the Dome of the Rock area. Josephus tells us that Herod built a low wall around the top of the Mountain and filled it in with dirt and covered it with flagstone and there they built the fortress. The Fort overlooked the Temple and the Temple overlooked the city.

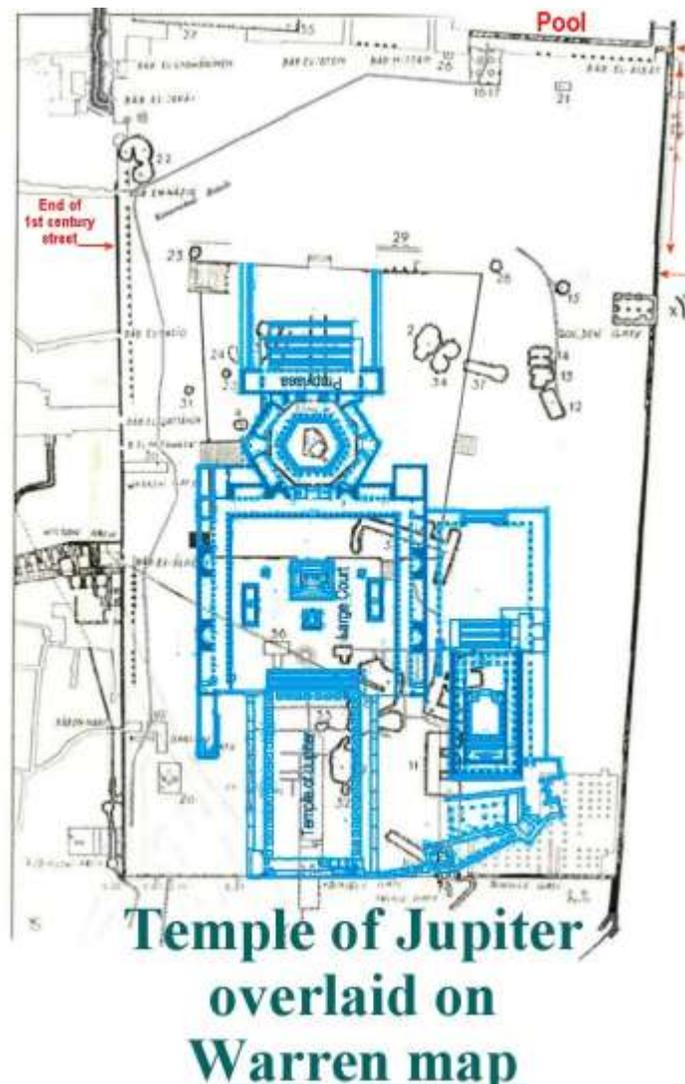


The Temple platform was about 30 feet lower on the mountain than Fort Antonia

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In 135 AD Hadrian began the building of a new city, and began work on his Temple of Jupiter. At first the remaining Jews thought he was going to rebuild their Temple and were actually helping him. When they found out he wasn't, they rebelled. If you read Josephus you would understand that Fort Antonia was built on a hill that was 75 foot high, whereas, the Temple was built at a lower elevation on the mountain, on the threshing floor. That is what Hadrian had to deal with. He needed a huge flat surface for his temple complex.

This is the design of Hadrian's Jupiter temple complex in Lebanon (in blue) laid over Warren's map.



No North Wall found?

If we look at the northern section of the West wall, on Warren's map above, you will notice that there is no Northwest wall at all, and according to Sir Charles Warren he could find no trace of a North wall either. Its border is determined by the wall of the ancient Pool of Israel. The suburbs,

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called New City by Josephus, had a land bridge connecting it to the eastern ridge so the Jews cut a moat to separate the two hills. The foss of that moat can still be seen on this map north of the Dome of the Rock platform labeled "Excavated Ditch". This means the real northern wall was in the same place as the Nehemiah wall, cutting across the mount west to east, along the north end of the Dome of the Rock platform.

Actually, the Herodian west wall does not go beyond the end of the first century Herodian street, which is opposite the north end of the Dome of the Rock platform.

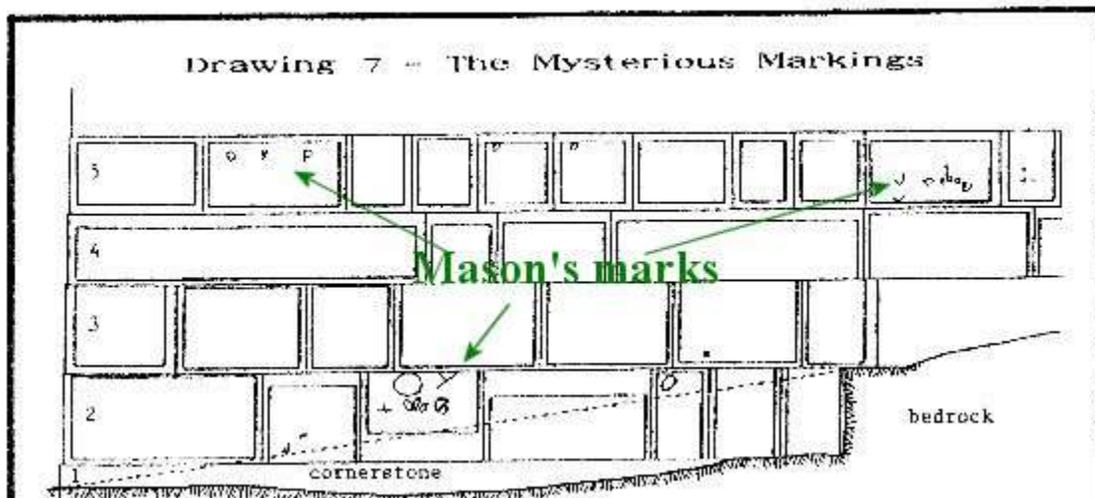
On the east, the northern part of the east wall, starting shortly after the eastern gate and meeting up with the Pool wall to the north, is part of the third city wall built by Herod Agrippa II. This falsely gives the appearance of a Northeast corner.

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What about Solomon's Stables and the Southeast corner?



Not only was the SE corner, all the way to the straight joint, not built by the Herodians, but was actually built of mismatched, recycled, Herodian stones, as we can see in this diagram drawn by Charles Warren. Cap. Warren, in the 1800's, dug a 90 foot shaft to examine the SE section of the east wall. Here is what he found.



As you can see it is not the beautiful wall of the Herodian builders, but mismatch stone work. The margins around a Herodian stone were chiseled by stonecutters after the wall was built. Because of this all the stones in his wall had matching margins. Not one stone in this part of the southeast corner matches another. That means that the terraced arches of Solomon's Stables was most likely built by Hadrian in 135 AD for the purpose of creating a SE corner at level needed to be able to build his Temple of Jupiter complex.

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Triple Gate and Double gate Halls, on Warren's map, were also used for this purpose. The rest of the southern section of the Temple Mount is filled in with fill dirt and rubble, as Warren tells us in his report. (what Warren calls "made earth") What Warren didn't realize is that the threshing floor lay beneath that fill dirt.

