

Map Key

Landmarks	
1	Beit Hatzofeh Observation Point
2	Large Stone Structure
3	Royal Quarter (Area G)
4	Tombs Overlook
5	Water System Entrance (Warren's Shaft)
6	The Hidden Tunnel
7	Canaanite Pool and Spring Citadel
8	Gihon Spring
9	Canaanite Tunnel
10	Hezekiah's Tunnel
11	Walls of Ancient Jerusalem (Area E)
12	Weill Excavations (Tombs of the House of David)
13	Meyuhas House
14	Shiloah Pool
15	Stepped Streets and Pilgrimage Road Entrance
16	Tunnel Exit, Byzantine Shiloah Pool
17	Large Drainage Tunnel Entrance
18	Givati Excavations
19	Western Wall Foundations
20	Archaeological Park Exit

	Pilgrimage Road		Beit Hatzofeh Observation Point and Presentation
	The Biblical City of David		The City of David - Foundation Stones of the Western Wall
	The Biblical City of David, including Water Tunnel Entry		To the Kidron
	Pardes Rimmonim Street		To the Mount of Olives

	Above Ground		Underground
	Entry/Exit Point - Underground Routes		Emergency Exit - Underground Routes

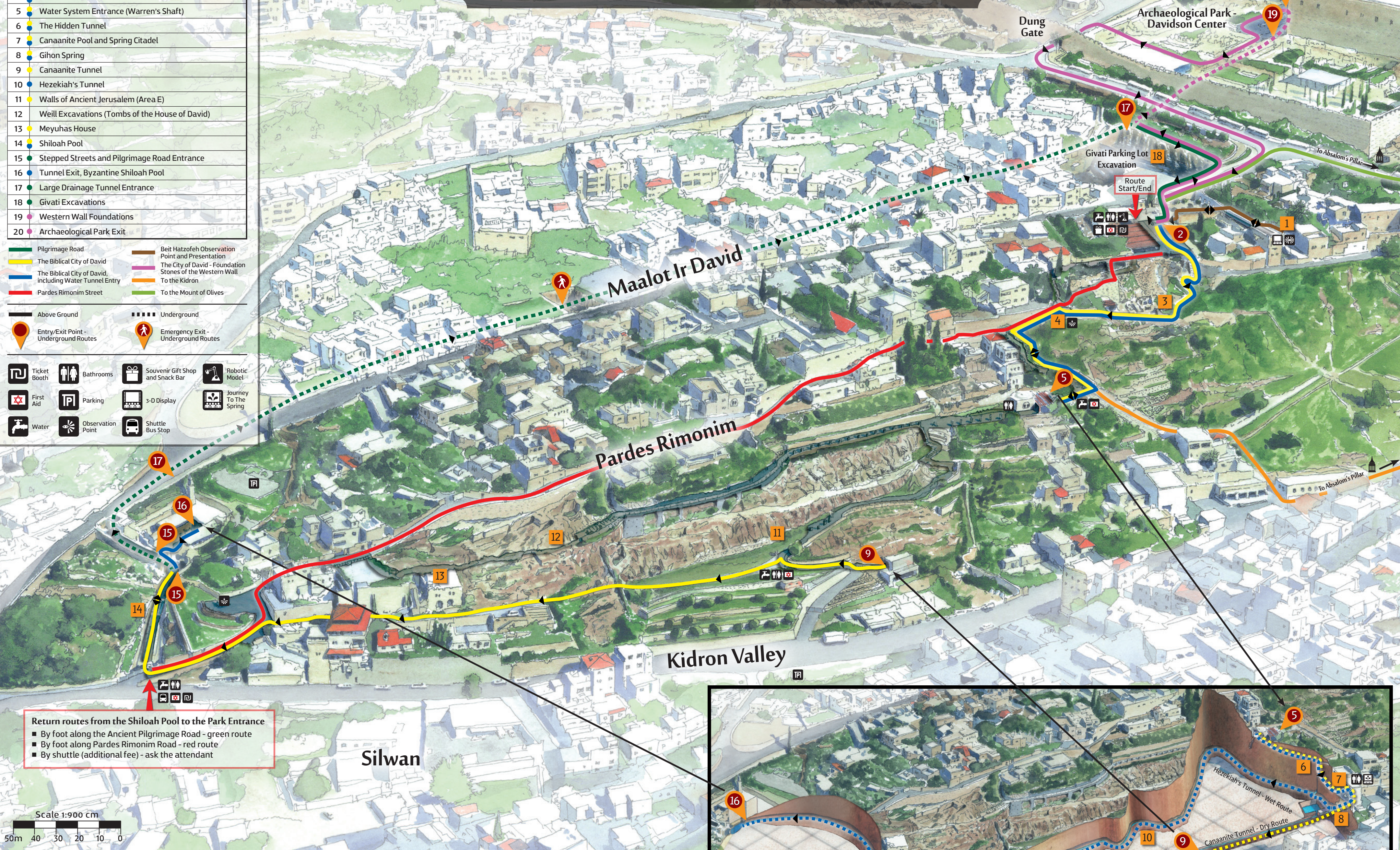
	Ticket Booth		Bathrooms		Souvenir Gift Shop and Snack Bar		Robotic Model
	First Aid		Parking		3-D Display		Journey To The Spring
	Water		Observation Point		Shuttle Bus Stop		

Mount Zion

Jewish Quarter

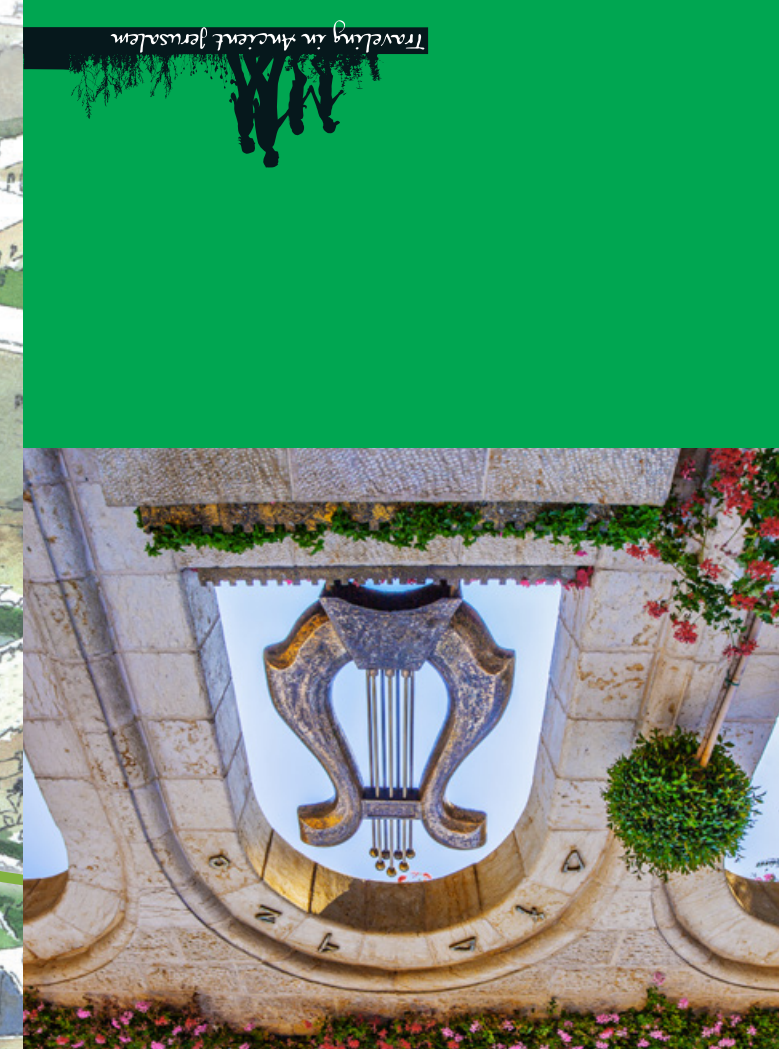
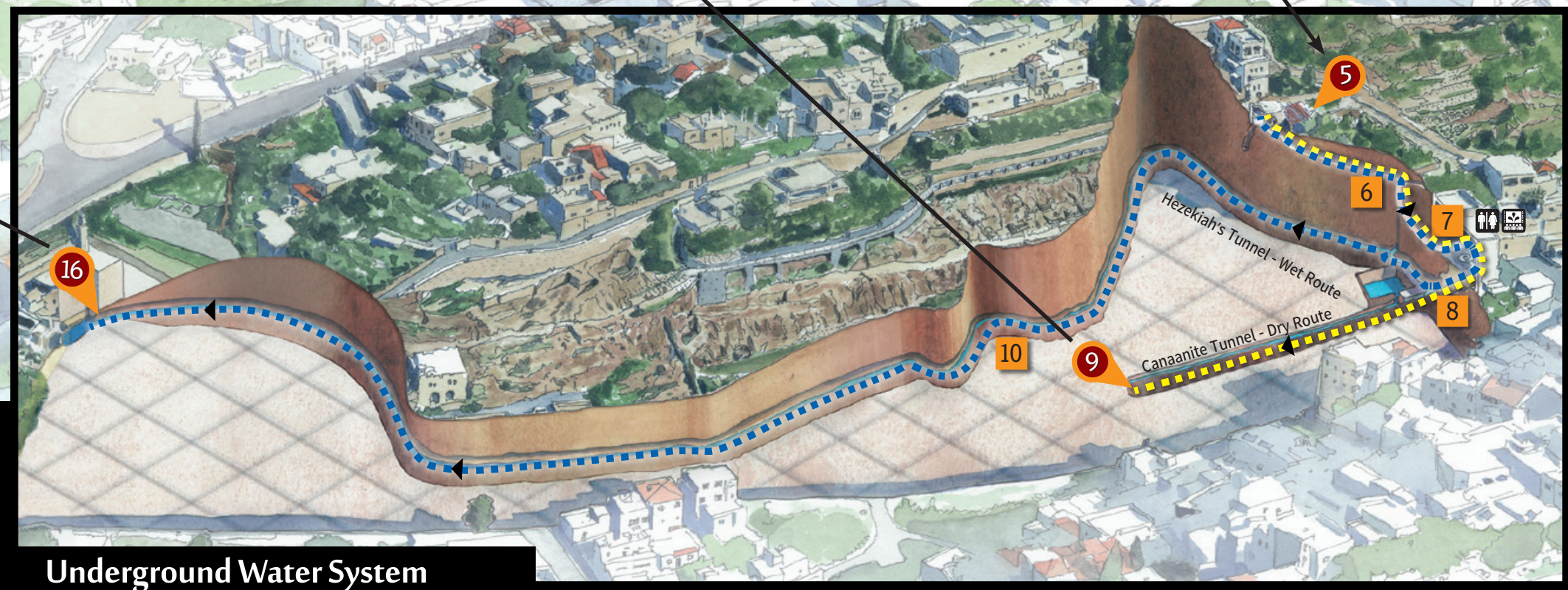
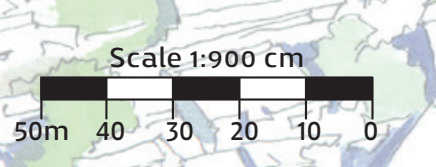
Western Wall Plaza

CITY OF DAVID | TOUR MAP



Return routes from the Shiloah Pool to the Park Entrance

- By foot along the Ancient Pilgrimage Road - green route
- By foot along Pardes Rimmonim Road - red route
- By shuttle (additional fee) - ask the attendant



The City of David - Ancient Jerusalem
Jerusalem Walls National Park



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- Rules of Conduct at the Site**
- Please wear a hat and carry drinking water. The water from the spring is not drinkable.
 - Beware of slippery surfaces.
 - Please remain on marked routes and pathways.
 - Please dispose of garbage in the proper receptacles.
 - Please do not climb on or cause damage to antiquities.
 - Please do not harm the flora or gardens.
 - Please follow all posted instructions and tour guide directions.
 - Do not enter restricted areas or construction zones.
 - Please use flashlights for illumination in the underground tunnel—do not light candles.
 - Please read all safety warnings before entering sites.

Underground Water System

Journey to the Beginning

The city of Jerusalem was built on the hill upon which you now stand. Over 3,000 years ago, David, son of Jesse, King of Israel, conquered the small Jebusite city and made it his capital- the City of David. A visit to the City of David is a journey to the heart of one of the most compelling places in the world. David and Solomon ruled here, and here the stories of the Bible occurred. The City of David is where Jerusalem was born - the place where it all began.

A Brief History of Ancient Jerusalem

The City of David is located outside the walls of today’s Old City, south of the Temple Mount. The ridge was inhabited as early as the Chalcolithic period (the fifth millennium BCE), but a walled city was built here only some 4,000 years ago, during the Middle Bronze Age II (the period of the Patriarchs).

Jerusalem first appears in the Bible as Shalem (Salem), the city of Melchizedek (Genesis 14). The might of the city is reflected in the Egyptian execration texts, which refer to it as one of the Canaanite cities that threatened Egyptian hegemony in the region. Jerusalem is also mentioned in the 14th century BCE Amarna Letters, found in the royal archives of Pharaonic Egypt. Adoni-Zedek, the Canaanite ruler of Jerusalem (Joshua 10:1), was defeated by Joshua during the Israelite conquest of the land, but the city itself remained in Canaanite hands.


Approximately 3,000 years ago (around 1000 BCE), King David conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites and established it as his royal city. David’s choice of Jerusalem for his capital was based in part on the presence of a perennial water source, the Gihon Spring, as well as the city’s strong defenses, its central location in the lands of the Israelite tribes, and the fact that as neutral territory it could serve as a symbol of unity for the entire nation. Jerusalem also possessed a long heritage of sanctity, linking it to ancient Shalem and to Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1), the site of the Binding of Isaac. David built the royal palace and brought the Ark of the Covenant into the city, thus transforming it into spiritual and a political center.

David’s son Solomon enlarged the city to include Mount Moriah, where he built the Temple and his royal palace. After Solomon died, the kingdom was divided in two, and Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah only.

Toward the end of the eighth century BCE, the Assyrians vanquished the Kingdom of Israel and its capital, Samaria. Refugees from the kingdom flocked to Jerusalem and settled in new neighborhoods built on the Western Hill, around which a broad wall was constructed. Soon afterwards, the Assyrians conquered the cities of Judah but failed in their attempt to capture the capital, Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35). About 100 years later, in the Hebrew month of Av in 586 BCE, the Babylonians conquered the city and razed it to the ground (2 Kings 25:8–9).

The period of the Return to Zion (the late sixth century BCE) saw the renewal of Jewish settlement in Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple. Nehemiah, the governor, rebuilt the ruined walls of the City of David (444 BCE). After the Hasmonean revolt (mid-second century BCE), the city once again became the capital of the kingdom. During the Second Temple period, Jerusalem expanded again toward the Western Hill, the location of the Upper City, with the construction of an opulent residential quarter. In the City of David, which was part of the Lower City, Queen Helena of Adiabene built several palaces for herself and her family, though the area was mostly inhabited by the poor. In the Great Revolt against Rome (66–70 CE), the City of David was razed to the ground.

The Roman emperor Hadrian built his pagan city, Aelia Capitolina (135 CE), on the ruins of Jewish Jerusalem using stones quarried in the City of David. During the Roman and Byzantine periods, a large residential quarter was constructed on the northern part of the hill. In the south, near the Shiloah (Siloam) Pool, the Church of Siloam was built during the fifth century, and during the Early Muslim period, a residential area occupied the northern part of the hill. In the 11th century, the southern wall of Jerusalem was diverted northward, leaving the City of David outside the city limits.

	City of David Timeline
Period of the Patriarchs	<p>Early Canaanite 3500-2200 BCE</p> <p>Middle Canaanite 2200-1550 BCE</p>
First Temple Period	<p>Late Canaanite 1550-1200 BCE</p> <p>Israelite 1200-586 BCE</p> <p>Persian 586-332 BCE</p>
Second Temple Period	<p>Hellenistic 332-63 BCE</p> <p>Roman 63 BCE -324 CE</p> <p>Byzantine 324-638</p> <p>Early Muslim 638-1099</p>
Middle Ages	<p>Crusader 1099-1291</p> <p>Late Muslim 1291-1516</p>
Modern Period	<p>Ottoman 1516-1917</p> <p>British Rule 1917-1948</p> <p>State of Israel 1948</p>



1 | Beit Hatzofeh Lookout

"Jerusalem, hills enfold it, and the Lord enfolds His people now and forever" (Psalm 125:2).

From this vantage point, you can see the mountains that surround the City of David. This is the view that inspired the words of the Psalmist: "Jerusalem, hills enfold it, and the Lord enfolds His people..."

Although the hill of the City of David is relatively low, in antiquity it towered over the deep valleys that surrounded it on almost every side. The eastern slope that descends to the Kidron Valley is still very steep, though due to the accumulation of rubble and debris, much less so than in ancient times.

Looking north you can see the Temple Mount on Mount Moriah, the site of the Binding of Isaac. David’s son Solomon enlarged the city to include Mount Moriah, where he built the Temple (2 Chronicles 3:1). In the Ophel area between the City of David and the Temple, he built his royal palace. A wall connected the city to the new royal quarter, merging the two areas into one: "Jerusalem built up, a city knit together" (Psalm 122:3).

In the eighth century BCE, the city expanded to the Western Hill, where Mount Zion and the Jewish and Armenian quarters stand today. The *Mishneh* (2 Chronicles 34:22) and other neighborhoods built on the Western Hill contributed to the growth of the city, and by the end of the First Temple period, Jerusalem covered an area of approximately 700 dunams (about 177 acres) - a very large city for those days.

State of the Art 3D Presentation

You are invited to visit our new and exciting 3-dimensional presentation of the transformation of the City of David through the generations, from the Biblical era to the modern period. Tickets can be purchased at the ticket office.

2 | The Large Stone Structure: The Remains of David’s Palace

"And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedars-trees, and carpenters, and masons; and they built David a house" (2 Samuel 5:11).

In 2005, remains of what became known as the “Large Stone Structure” were discovered beneath ruins of the Byzantine and Second Temple periods. The main elements visible in the excavation are the fieldstones that served as the foundation of this large structure; its upper stories did not survive. Excavations carried out in recent years under the direction of Eliat Mazar have unearthed numerous finds associated with the structure that indicate, in Mazar’s opinion, that it was constructed in the early 10th century BCE. Based on clues from the Bible regarding the location of David’s house and on stately architectural elements found in a nearby landslide, it has been suggested that the Large Stone Structure was the palace of King David.

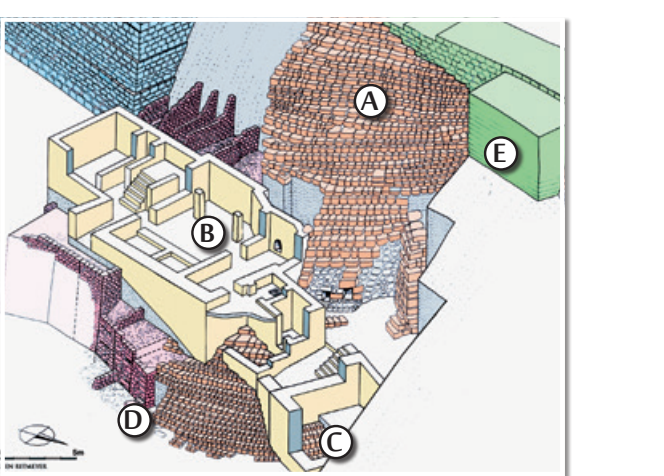
Two *bullae* (clay impressions used for sealing documents) belonging to high-ranking officials from the court of King Zedekiah the last king of Judah, were found near the stucture indicating that it continued to serve the royal administration of Judah until the Babylonian destruction in the year 586 BCE. The *bullae* bear the names of Jehucal son of Shelemyah

son of Shobai and Gedalyahu son of Pashhur, both fierce antagonists of the Prophet Jeremiah. "Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, JucaI son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah, heard what Jeremiah was saying to all the people...Then the officials said to the king, 'Let that man be put to death...'" (Jeremiah 38:4)

3 | The Royal Quarter (Area G)

"...the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the fortress in its proper place" (Jeremiah 30:18).

During the First Temple period, this area was a residential quarter inhabited by notables and royal officials. The Royal Quarter was destroyed, together with the rest of Jerusalem, in the Babylonian destruction. In the first part of the Second Temple period, a new city wall was built at the top of the excavation area seen here, leaving this royal quarter.



I Area G – The Royal Quarter

A. The Stepped Stone Structure

"... David captured the stronghold of Zion; it is now the City of David" (2 Samuel 5:7).

The impressive stepped structure uncovered here served as part of a large retaining wall. Scholars are divided as to the date of its construction. Some contend that it was built in the late 13th century or early 12th century BCE as part of the foundation of the Canaanite Fortress of Zion conquered by David. Others believe it supported David’s Palace, whose foundations may have been recently uncovered at the top of the hill.

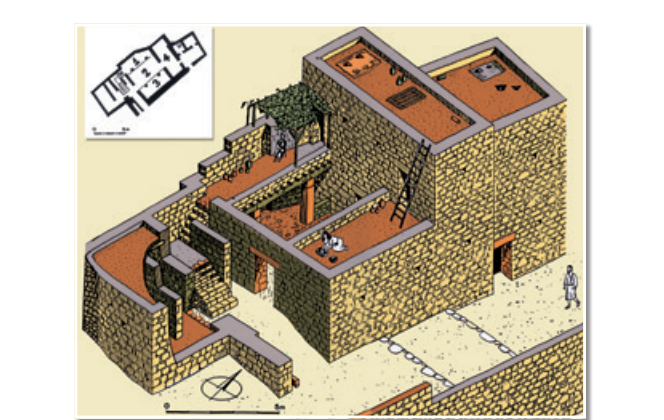
B. The House of Ahiel

"He (David) had houses made for himself in the City of David..." (1 Chronicles 15:1)

The name Ahiel, which appears on potsherd found in the ruins of this house, may be the name of its owner. The house is a typical First Temple period dwelling, built in a style known as the “four-room house.” It consists of three rectangular rooms built around an open courtyard (the fourth room) where farm animals were kept and various

household tasks were carried out. The roof beams were supported by columns, parts of which are seen here, and the house presumably had two stories. To the right of the building is a stone toilet seat that was set over a pit. The presence of a toilet near the dwelling reflects the elevated status of its residents.

C. The Burnt Room



I Reconstruction of The House of Ahiel

I

"On the seventh day of the fifth month - that was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon - Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, an officer of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. He burned the House of the Lord, the king’s palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; he burned down the house of every notable person" (2 Kings 25:8–9).

The fire that consumed Jerusalem in 586 BCE did not spare the Royal Quarter. Among the ruins was the burnt room of a house that had collapsed in the fire; its floor was covered with a thick layer of ash. Under the piles of debris in the burnt room, the excavators found numerous arrowheads and the remains of a charred wooden piece of furniture carved with a stylized date-palm motif. The furniture, made of wood imported from Syria, is another sign of the elevated status of the inhabitants.

D. The House of the Bullae

"Thus said the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Take these documents, this deed of purchase, the sealed text and the open one, and put them into an earthen jar; so that they may last a long time" (Jeremiah 32:14).



I Bullae Collection

Remains of an archive known as the “House of the *Bullae*” were unearthed at the lower section of the excavation site. The building that housed the archive was destroyed together with the entire quarter. Its contents, which included various official documents, went up in flames. However, the fire hardened and preserved the *bullae*, which are clay seal impressions that were attached to the documents. A hoard of 51 *bullae* was discovered by the archaeologist Yigal Shihoh during his excavations in the City of David (1978–1985). The seal impressions bear the names of people who lived in the First Temple period, some of whom are known from the Bible, such as Gemaryahu son of Shaphan the scribe, an important official in the court of King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36:10).

E. Nehemiah’s Wall

"When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall...he mocked the Jews...Can they revive those stones out of the dust heaps, burned as they are?" Tobiah the Ammonite, alongside him, said, "That stone wall they are building - if a fox climbed it he would break it!" (Nehemiah 3:35–35)

To the right (north) of the Stepped Stone Structure stood a large stone tower (dismantled by the archaeologists), which was built in the mid-fifth century BCE, during the time of Nehemiah. The small section of wall that can be seen at the top of the Stepped Stone Structure also belongs to this period. Nehemiah is believed to have constructed the wall here at the top of the slope because piles of debris from the Babylonian destruction made it impossible to rebuild it along the original line. The Bible relates that the neighboring peoples who opposed the rebuilding of the wall harassed the builders, who were forced to take up arms to protect themselves: "doing work with one hand while the other held a weapon" (Nehemiah 4:1).

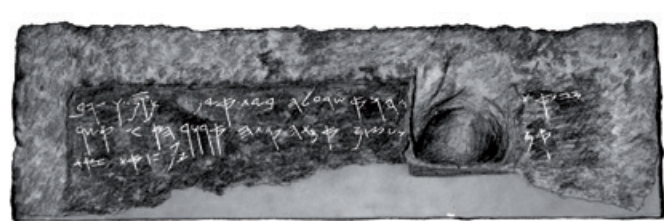
4 | Ancient Tombs Lookout

"Go in to see the steward, that Shebna, in charge of the palace: What have you here, and who have you here, that you have hewn out a tomb for yourself here? O you who have hewn your tomb on high; O you who have hollowed out for yourself an abode in the cliff!" (Isaiah 22:15–16)

The Kidron Valley is the boundary between the living, in the City of David, and the dead, in the necropolis on the Mount of Olives across from the lookout. Between 1968 and 1970, archaeologists David Ussishkin and Gabriel Barkay surveyed approximately 50 burial caves in the village of Silwan that were part of the cemetery of Jerusalem during the First Temple period. The caves served as burial places for the wealthy families of the Kingdom of Judah.

In 1870, the French scholar Charles Clermont-Ganneau discovered an ancient Hebrew inscription that read "...Iahiu who is over the house" on the entrance of one of the burial caves. The full name may have been Shebna (Shebniahu?), an official who held the title

of “over the house” in the court of King Hezekiah (Isaiah 22:15–16). The inscription contains a warning to would-be robbers that the tomb holds neither silver nor gold, but only the bones of the deceased. The inscription also roundly curses any robbers who would dare to open the tomb.



I The "Yahu Who Is Over the House" Inscription

5 | The Warren’s Shaft System

"And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land...David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David. And David said on that day: 'Whosoever smites the Jebusites, and touches the channel...'” (2 Samuel 5:6–8)

The Gihon Spring, which issues close to the foot of the eastern slope of the City of David, has always been Jerusalem’s main water source. Because it is so low down, however, the builders of the city had to leave it outside the city walls. In 1867, British explorer Captain Charles Warren discovered an underground tunnel that burrowed beneath the city walls and led to a 13-meter deep shaft. For many years, the shaft, known since as Warren’s Shaft, was considered the main component of the ancient city’s water system from which the inhabitants drew spring water when under siege. Some scholars identified the shaft as the channel ostensibly used by David’s soldiers to infiltrate Jebus.

From 1995 on, following the excavations of Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, remnants have been uncovered that significantly changed our understanding of the ancient water system: In the 18th century BCE, the Canaanite inhabitants of the city hewed a large pool in the rock near the Gihon Spring and surrounded it with fortifications. Warren’s discoveries led him to theorize that the inhabitants descended through the secret tunnel to draw their water from the fortified pool, which was outside the city walls, under the protection of the massive fortifications. However, we now know that it was only about 1,000 years later, in the eighth century BCE, that the floor level of the tunnel lowered for unknown reasons, revealing the existence of a natural (karstic) shaft. It is now apparent that the shaft fulfilled no function in the Canaanite water system.

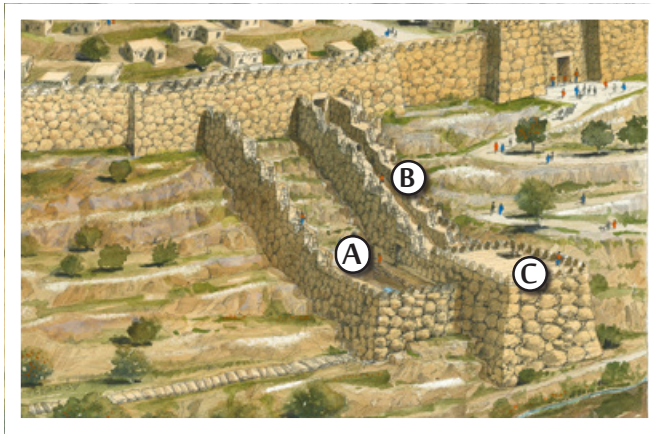
6 | The Secret Tunnel

The tunnel through which you are about to walk was the secret underground passageway leading to the fortified pool. To overcome the steep descent in the first part of the tunnel, it is very likely that the ancient inhabitants installed wooden steps that did not survive. Oil lamps placed in niches in the tunnel walls lit their way down. The next part of the tunnel descended gradually, passing underneath the city walls.

7 | The Canaanite Pool and the Fortifications of the Spring House

A. The Canaanite Pool

The secret tunnel has led you to the surface of the eastern slope, outside the city walls. To the south, a large pool is visible, cut into the bedrock and replenished by the Gihon Spring waters; it was from here that the Canaanites drew their water.



Perhaps the pool was the scene of the biblical story of the coronation of Solomon: "So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David’s mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the Tent, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the ram’s horn; and all the people said: 'Long live king Solomon'" (Kings 1:38–39).

In the eighth century BCE, or before the Canaanite Pool went out of use, earth and debris were piled into it and homes were built upon them. In the fill beneath the homes, remains of around 200 *bullae* and thousands of fish bones were discovered.

B. The Fortifications of the Pool

Although the pool was outside the city walls, it was surrounded by massive fortifications. An example of these defenses can be seen above the northern side of the pool. It consists of two parallel walls that served as a guarded passage to the water.

C. The Spring Tower

Beneath the metal structure on which you are standing are the foundations of the Spring Tower, which surrounded the Gihon Spring. Each stone weighs several tons. The eastern wall of the tower is approximately seven meters wide; the tower measured some 230 square meters.

David Faces the Walls of Jebus

"David was told, 'Yahu will never get in here! Even the blind and the lame will turn you back'...And David said on that day: 'Whosoever smites the Jebusites and touches the channel...'” (2 Samuel 5:6–8)

The fortifications seen here were built by the Canaanites in the 18th century BCE but they remained standing for many years. David may have stood before these very walls when he set out to conquer the Jebusite city. The great difficulty in overcoming the city walls is illustrated in the biblical story of the “blind and the lame” whom the Jebusites stationed on the walls, perhaps to mock David’s intention to breach the fortifications.

8 | The Gihon Spring

The Gihon is one of the largest springs in the mountain region. Until several decades ago, the karstic spring pulsed at regular intervals, accounting for its Hebrew name, which derives from the Hebrew word *gihā*, meaning ‘bursting out.’

9 | The Canaanite Tunnel

"The brook that flowed through the midst of the land..." (2 Chronicles 32:4)

The Canaanites directed the Gihon Spring waters to a storage pool south of the city through a channel, known today as the Canaanite Tunnel. The channel ran along the eastern slope of the City of David for a distance of 400 meters, and on its way south replenished the Canaanite Pool. The channel was also used to irrigate farmland in the Kidron Valley. It is possible that the words of the Prophet Isaiah, “the waters of Shiloah that go softly” (Isaiah 8:6), allude to the relatively gentle flow of the water in the Canaanite Tunnel.

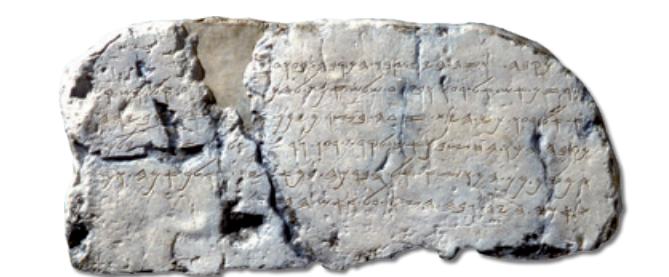
10 | Hezekiah’s Tunnel

"So there was gathered much people together, and they stopped all the fountains, and the brook that flowed through the midst of the land, saying: 'Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?'" (2 Chronicles 32:4)

King Hezekiah of Judah feared that the abundant water flowing outside the city could be used by the Assyrian army. He therefore diverted the water of the Gihon Spring to a tunnel cut through the belly of the rock.

Hezekiah’s Tunnel channeled the water to the Shiloah Pool, built within the walls in the southern part of the city (2 Chronicles 32:30). The winding tunnel was hewn simultaneously from both sides for a length of approximately 533 meters. The height differential between the source of the spring and the end of the tunnel is a mere 30 centimeters (an average slope of 0.06 percent) - a truly amazing feat of engineering: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?" (2 Kings 20:20)

In 1880, an inscription in ancient Hebrew script was discovered about six meters from the end of the tunnel. It describes the last moments of the complex tunneling operation and the dramatic encounter between



I The Shiloah (Siloam) Inscription

the two groups of diggers.

"While the hewers wielded the axe, each man toward his fellow, and with three cubits still to be hewn, there was heard a man’s voice calling to his fellow, for there was a zdh [fissure?] in the rock on the right and on the left. And on the day of the tunneling the hewers struck each man towards his fellow, axe upon axe. And the water flowed from the source to the pool for two hundred and a thousand cubits. And a hu[nd]red cubits was the height of the rock above the head(s) of the hewers."

Please note the safety instructions before you enter the tunnel.

11 | The Walls of Ancient Jerusalem (Area E)

Seen here is a 90-meter section of the ancient First Temple city wall that was excavated by Yigal Shihoh between 1978–1985. The wall was built of large fieldstones on a natural rock scarp. A segment of the original Canaanite wall made of even bigger fieldstones can be seen in the northern part of this section.

12 | The Weill Excavations (“The Tombs of the House of David”)

"And David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David" (1 Kings 2:10).

In 1913, the French-Jewish archaeologist Raymond Weill was commissioned by Baron Edmond de Rothschild to find the tombs of the House of David in the City of David. Weill uncovered several rock-cut tunnels and caves that he believed were the remains of the tombs, but the later discovery of more lavish burial caves from the First Temple period have cast doubt on this theory.

A Synagogue from Temple Times: The Theodotos Inscription

"Theodotos son of Vrettenos, priest and synagogue leader, son of a synagogue leader, grandson of a synagogue leader, built this synagogue for the reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments, and the hostelry, rooms and baths, for the lodging of those who have need from abroad. It was established by his forefathers, the elders and Simonides."

This inscription, written in Greek, was discovered by Weill during his expedition in 1913-1914. Dating from the first century CE, it tells of the construction of a synagogue in Jerusalem by a man named Theodotos son of Vrettenos, who served as the synagogue leader, as had his forefathers. The inscription attests to the existence of synagogues in Jerusalem when the Second Temple stood, and to the function of the synagogue as a place for reading the Torah, teaching Jewish law and hosting pilgrims.

13 | Meyuhas House

Rahamim Nathan Meyuhas, a member of a longstanding Sephardic family in Jerusalem, was a fowl and livestock butcher who lived in the Old City in the late 19th century. In 1873, Meyuhas acquired a plot of land and built a house. He reported to his family, "We will now establish our home in the Shiloah village near the city. We will live there and breathe in the air and light. We will no longer drink murky well water or eat purchased vegetables, because our water will now be the living water of the spring and we will eat the vegetables we plant with our own hands."

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Meyuhas family and other Jewish families who lived in the City of David left their homes. In 1991, descendants of these residents returned and settled in the area with other Jewish families.

14 | The Shiloah (Siloam) Pool

"Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?" (2 Kings 20:20)

It is likely that the pool built by Hezekiah stood here at the base of the Central Valley. Hezekiah enclosed the pool between the wall of the City of David and the new wall that he built around the Western Hill: "You made also a basin between the two walls for the water of the old pool" (Isaiah 22:1).

In 2004, remains of the Shiloah Pool - a magnificent pool from the late Second Temple period - were uncovered here. Steps descended from four sides to the floor of the pool. The steps are overlaid with stone, and underneath them are the remains of an earlier pool dating from the Hasmonean era. The pool appears to have extended across the entire area of the present-day garden, covering approximately three dunams.

Sources related to the Second Temple mention the Shiloah Pool in regard to Temple ceremonies: "How was the Water Libation performed? He [the priest] would fill a golden flask holding three logs [a liquid measure] with water from Shiloah..." (Mishnah Sukkah 4:9)

The special stepped structure of the pool has led excavators to posit that pilgrims used it as a ritual bath to purify themselves before ascending to the Temple.



I The Shiloah (Siloam) Pool

15 | The Stepped Road: Pilgrim’s Ascent

The Promenade and the Western Stepped Road

A flight of stairs once led up from the pool to a large, paved colonnade. This served as a sheltered promenade for visitors to the pool. On one side of the colonnade, a modern wall painting depicts daily life in the pool in the late Second Temple period. The father carrying his child on his shoulders in the painting illustrates a debate among the Sages as to the age at which pilgrimage became mandatory: "Who is deemed a child? Any that cannot ride on his father’s shoulders and go up from Jerusalem to the Temple Mount. So say the School of Shammai. And the School of Hillel say: Any that cannot hold his father’s hand and go up from Jerusalem to the Temple Mount..." (Mishnah Hagigah 1:1)

A stepped road from the late Second Temple period was found on the western side of the pool. The street ascended northward along the Central (Tyropeon) Valley. Scholars believe that this was the route taken by pilgrims on their way up to the Temple.

The Eastern Stepped Street: The Last Refuge

Another road from Second Temple times was discovered east of the pool. Today scholars believe that both roads were, in fact, part of the same thoroughfare, the base of which was extremely wide. The paving stones of the street were found in excellent condition, except for a number of places where they were broken; below them, you can see the drainage channel that ran beneath the road. On the floor of the channel, archaeologists found intact cooking pots, together with coins minted during the Great Revolt against Rome. Scholars believe that it was from here that the last surviving Jewish rebels fled from the Roman soldiers in 70 CE. The pavement was apparently shattered by the Romans as they searched for people taking refuge in the drainage channel. As Flavius Josephus described it: "Every man who showed himself was either killed or captured by the Romans, and then those in the sewers were ferreted out, the ground was torn up, and all who fell into their hands were killed" (The Jewish War, 6, 9, 4).

16 | The Byzantine Pool of Siloam

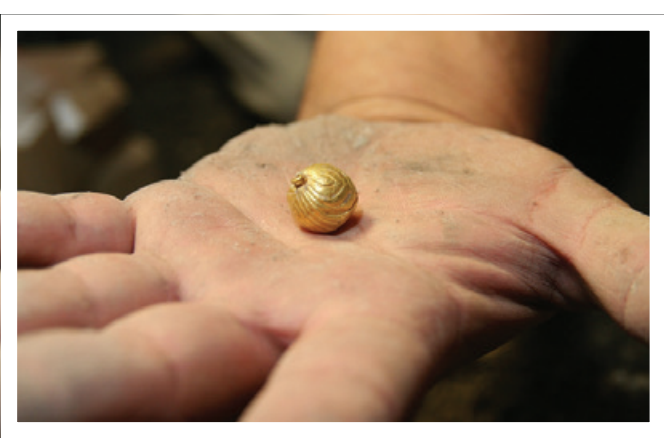
At the outlet of Hezekiah’s Tunnel, part of the Byzantine Pool of Siloam (the Greek pronunciation of the Hebrew Shiloah) can be seen. The pool was incorporated within the Siloam Church complex, which was apparently built by the Empress Eudocia in the middle of the fifth century. The Byzantines built the church and the pool to commemorate the Christian tradition of the miracle of the healing of a blind man (John 9).

17 | The Drainage Canal

Jerusalem’s central drainage system was built at the end of the first century BCE. It was at this time that Herod rebuilt the Second Temple,

substantially enlarging the Temple Mount. This enlargement obstructed the natural flow of the winter rains that collected in the Tyropeon Valley, necessitating the building of an alternative underground drainage facility. At the turn of the 19th century, various sections of the canal were excavated, but it wasn’t until the spring of 2011, when Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron completed the excavation, that the canal was cleared from the Shiloah Pool to Robinson’s Arch, a distance of 650 meters.

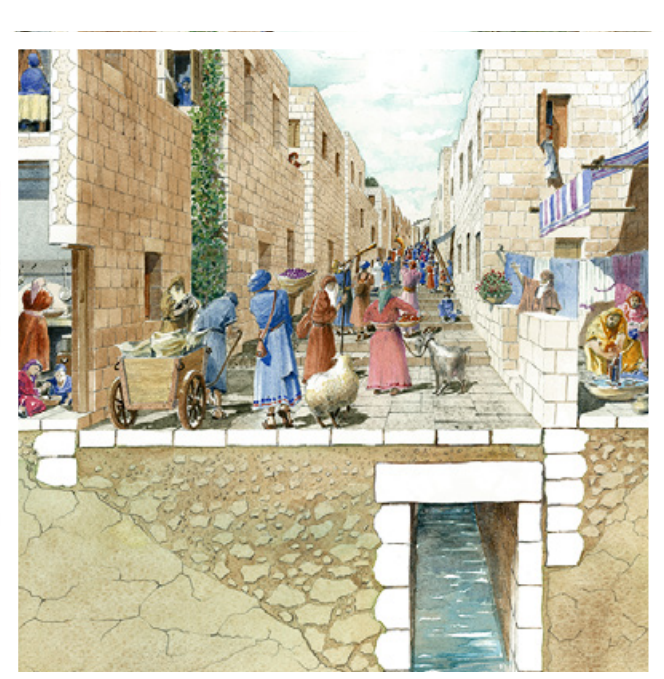
The northern part of the canal was cut into the rock and covered with stone walls. In this section, Charles Warren discovered one of the Kotel (Western Wall) stones that had fallen during the construction of the Temple Mount and became wedged between the canal walls. Presumably, the workers chose to leave it where it had fallen so the evidence of their folly was buried, hidden deep beneath the ground. The southern part of the canal, apparently added later, was built on the surface of the descending slope. Its two parallel walls were covered with flat stone slabs that supported the stepped road used by the pilgrims. As the builders progressed, they encountered several cisterns which they integrated into the path of the canal.



I The Golden Bell

Sifting through the debris that accumulated in the drainage canal, archaeologists found a wealth of artifacts that had fallen from the road above. These include thousands of Second Temple period coins, a rare silver shekel minted in Tyre, a gold bell ornament similar to those that adorned the robe of the High Priest, a Roman sword, and a clay seal verifying the purity of items used for Temple offerings. Further finds highlight the canal’s final role as an underground refuge used by the rebels who fled the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 CE.

Along the path inside the canal are a number of manholes that opened onto the street above, as well as secondary channels branching out from the walls of the main conduit. Towards the end of the route is a cistern dated to the First Temple period - an example of one of the cisterns that stood in the path of the canal and was integrated into it. Upon exiting the cistern, the path leaves the canal and turns east. Here stands the bedrock adjacent to Mount Moriah and the foundation stones of the Western Wall, laid upon the Mount more than 2,000 years ago.



I Herodian Road & The Water Channel Beneath It (Rendition)

18 | Givati Excavations

Until 2007, this site served as a parking lot whose remnants can be seen at the edge of the excavation area. Structures from ten time periods, ranging from the Biblical period (tenth century BCE) until the early Islamic period (7th-10th centuries CE), were found in the area, including: an Arab market, gold coins from the Byzantine period, an impressive villa from the Late Roman period, remains of houses and ritual baths (*mikvaot*) from the time of the Second Temple, and a huge Hellenistic fortification including arrowheads and slingshots of the period, which led the researchers to conclude that this was the formidable citadel of the Acra fortress built by Antiochus IV in Jerusalem. Fragments of the capital of a magnificent column from the Biblical period were also found in the area.

19 | Western Wall Foundations