

The Temples That Jerusalem Forgot

by

Ernest L. Martin

ASK Publications

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my dear and lovely wife Ramona Jean who has gone through the same “blood, sweat and tears” as I have in sharing the time for research and the composition of this book. I thank her for her patience and kindness. Also, it is dedicated to the Associates of the “Associates for Scriptural Knowledge” who gave me the encouragement and support to continue in this task of historical research. I thank them all from the bottom of my heart.

From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth,
From the laziness that is content with half-truths,
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,

O God of Truth, deliver us.

~ Ancient Prayer

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this large world in which we live, no man is ever an island. Each of us is constantly coming in contact with others from whom we learn many valuable teachings that cause us to change our minds on some important occasions. In regard to the discovery of the site of the Temples in Jerusalem, I have had the pleasure and the good fortune of being brought into the company of many of the top historians and archaeologists of Jerusalem over the period of my professional career as a historian and theologian. My first visit to Jerusalem in 1961 set my mind on solving the problems that affected the true geographical comprehension of early Jerusalem throughout all its periods of history. I watched closely how Professor Benjamin Mazar and Meir Ben Dov (his assistant at the time) went about their professional duties and this was a great learning experience. Both of them were more than willing to answer questions for me in the many private times that I could learn from them. I later met Professor Mazar's son, Ory, who was the first to recommend to me that the Temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel were located on the Ophel mound just to the north of the original Mount Zion on the southeast ridge. He said his father was leaning in that direction at the time of his death. After a study of six months, in 1995 I wrote a preliminary report that suggested strongly that this theory was indeed correct for the two earlier Temples. I was then under the impression that Simon the Hasmonean (along with Herod a century later) moved the Temple from the Ophel mound to the Dome of the Rock area. Mr. Bill Lavers in England in reading closely the texts in Josephus

mentioned that Herod stated dogmatically that his Temple (though enlarged to be double in size of the former Temple) was still located in the same general area as that of the former Temples. This was also pointed out to me by Dr. James Tabor and David Sielaff (my historical and compositional editor). But then I noticed the eyewitness account of Eleazar who led the final contingent of Jewish resistance to the Romans at Masada. He stated that the Roman fortress which had long been in Jerusalem was the only structure left by 73 C.E. With this key in mind, I came to the conclusion in 1997 that all the Temples were indeed located on the Ophel mound over the area of the Gihon Spring. It then became clear that the dimensions of the Temple (with its unique shape and characteristics) was not the Haram esh-Sharif. We then began to draw (as would an architect) the Temple at its location over the Gihon Spring. I had the good fortune of having a professional artist, who was also interested in biblical matters, draw what Josephus stated in his writings. My thanks go to Lydia Cooper who provided the pictures showing how the Temple and Fort Antonia looked in relationship to one another. The illustrations she provided help make the matter much clearer to those who have only a limited amount of study into these historical and geographical matters.

This book is a result of my concluding research that shows that the Temples of God in Jerusalem were indeed located over the Gihon Spring and not over the Dome of the Rock. What has been amazing to me is the vast amount of Jewish, Muslim and Christian records that remain available from the first to the sixteenth centuries that clearly vindicate the conclusions that I have reached in this book of research. Any information that you readers may have or discover that either support or detract from the conclusions that I have made in this book, would be greatly appreciated by me.

Ernest L. Martin

“And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.”

Isaiah 29:18

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INTRODUCTION

IT IS WELL KNOWN that Herod (called “the Great”) vastly modified the geography of the Temple and the City of Jerusalem. Herod made the Mother City of the Jewish people into one of the most urbanized areas in the Roman Empire. So outstanding did Jerusalem become that it was favorably compared in architectural majesty, grandeur and prosperity with Rome and other great cities of the Empire. What Herod also did was to rebuild and to increase the size of the Temple. Next to the Sanctuary he reconditioned a fortress formerly called the Baris and renamed it Fort Antonia after Mark Anthony. To the west of the Temple, Herod constructed his palace and three major citadels in what was called the Upper City.

In spite of these accomplishments that scholars recognize today, people are still not aware what the Jerusalem of Herod and Jesus was really like. This book will show that Herod also created a Jerusalem with a topography quite different from that imagined by most modern historians and by our present religious authorities. Once this actual Jerusalem is recognized (and the proper location of the Temple determined), this new understanding will have a profound influence on how modern Jews and Muslims (as well as Christians) view the contemporary and future political status of Jerusalem. The antagonists fighting one another in the Holy City will come to realize that they are struggling over areas that have nothing to do with the former site of the Temple of Herod (nor the Temples of Solomon or Zerubbabel which were built in the same location). Strange as it may seem, the religious authorities of all the three Abrahamic creeds have forgotten where those Temples

were built. Only in the last two years have their sites been discovered for our modern world to recognize.

This loss of the Temple site by our contemporary religious leaders and scholars has happened even though the Holy Scriptures encouraged the faithful never to forget Jerusalem. What the Psalmist stated has long been echoed by Israelites in their prayers over the centuries.

“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.
If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my
mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

• *Psalm 137:5-6*

This is a beautiful sentiment expressed by the Psalmist, but as far as the historical records are concerned for the past 800 years not only have Israelites forgotten the true geography of early Jerusalem, the whole world has also forgotten (and this includes the Muslim and Christian authorities). The actual site of the Temple languishes in Jerusalem forlorn, lonely, abandoned and thoroughly forgotten.

Yet the present religious authorities exalt to the highest esteem and respect an enclosure as the site of the Temple that was in Jesus' day the chief architectural symbol of Rome's claim to imperial world power. As a result, all religious leaders in Jerusalem and the world remain ignorant of the true location of the Temples of God. Even the worshippers at the “Wailing Wall” are directing their present devotions and veneration to a Roman edifice that their ancestors in Herod's time held in utter contempt.

This book, however, will identify in the clearest of ways where the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod were actually located. In fact, it is a simple process to discover the site of the former Temples. If a person can pinpoint the original “Mount Zion,” then he or she will also find the “Temple Mount” because the two terms are acknowledged as identical in several biblical contexts. Indeed, the first place the scholars and religious leaders misplaced (and finally forgot) was the location of the original “Mount Zion” that King David built and named. The real “Mount Zion” was situated at the lower end of the southeast ridge (and this

was rediscovered from the years 1875 to 1885 C.E.¹ by the vigorous and almost single handed efforts of Professor Birch in England. But the scholars forgot that in correctly re-locating “Mount Zion” on the southeast ridge of Jerusalem, they should have moved the site of the Temples to the same southeast ridge (but slightly north of “Mount Zion”). This necessary task was not only neglected by the scholars, they dug in their trenches and began to defend the Haram esh-Sharif with its Dome of the Rock as the proper place for the former Temples. They were absolutely wrong in this assessment.

But look at the simple facts. Since everyone now knows that the “Mount Zion” of King David’s time was located in the *southern* part of Jerusalem on its *southeast* ridge, this means that the Temples would have to be located immediately north on what was called the “Ophel” in the Scriptures (but NOT a third of a mile north to the Dome of the Rock). This well known geographical fact signifies that the real site of the Temples was a few yards (meters) west of the Gihon Spring, about a third of a mile south of the Dome of the Rock now situated within the enclosure of the Haram esh-Sharif.

Thankfully, modern scholars and religious leaders over a hundred years ago properly returned “Mount Zion” to its original location on the *southeast* ridge, but they failed to return with it the “Temple Mount” as common biblical sense would have demanded. The historians and religious officials (with their opinions chiseled in stone so it seems) tenaciously maintain that the site of the former Temples is in the region of the Haram esh-Sharif. Their resistance to the true biblical site (mainly because of their religious convictions) has caused the whole world to reject the proper location of the Temples.

It is sad to witness, but the real “Temple Mount” is presently in a forsaken state and the site is deserted of all its holiness that once

¹ In this book I will use the scholarly C.E. (Common Era) and B.C.E. (Before Common Era) instead of the usual A.D. and B.C. for identifying particular years in history. Since I have shown in my book *The Star that Astonished the World* that Jesus was born in what we call 3 B.C.E. (a full two years *before* our present calendar states Jesus was born), it is better to use terms describing an “Era” rather than a wrong “birthdate.”

graced the area. But people today are deceived when they look westward from the Mount of Olives and witness the majestic walls of the Haram esh-Sharif in all their glory and grandeur (and with their emotions running high that they are viewing the ancient remains of the outer Temple walls), they make the mistake that they are looking at the walls around the "Temple Mount." After all, people are confidently told by the scholars and religious authorities that they are observing the very walls that once surrounded the Temple. This appraisal, however, is manifestly wrong.

The conclusions reached in this book (which are easy to understand if one relies on biblical teaching and what the historical documents state) will have profound implications on our modern world in both a religious and political sense. For the first time in 800 years, people will understand and they can properly evaluate the real geographical and historical events connected with the Jerusalem of Herod and Jesus. The result is a very different "Jerusalem" than what people have imagined up to now. The fact is, the *REAL* Jerusalem of Herod and Jesus was far more impressive and elegant than that imagined by the false notions imposed on the world by the present religious authorities whether Christian, Muslim or Jewish.

This research provides the key to unlocking the real history and geography of the Jerusalem that existed 2000 years ago. But the outcome even goes farther than that. People also will achieve greater insight into the prophetic and doctrinal teachings of the Old and New Testaments. What has been obscure and confusing to scholars and religious leaders because of their false identifications will become radiantly clear. A proper (and a *new* kind of) Jerusalem will appear on the scene that is radically different than the "false Jerusalem" now imagined by modern authorities.

Three years ago, I readily admit, I taught and believed those same errors of the contemporary authorities. But an abundance of new research material shows that all of us must change our former convictions. All of us who have been (or are) admirers of the opinions of the religious establishments must now mend our thinking in favor of the truth, instead of the traditions and false teachings of former times. This is important because it is primarily

religious opinions (not biblical or historical evidence) that have determined much of the wrong geography involving the scriptural sites.

Though I would like to be kind to my religious peers who maintain these falsehoods, the biblical and historical facts that I document in this book show that the religious authorities of the three Abrahamic faiths have been (and are) totally *wrong* with their erroneous geographical teachings they have maintained over the centuries. They need to publicly renounce their spurious “holy places” and return to the true sites shown in the biblical and historical documents.

The fact is, the Temple as revealed in the historical records was *not* located near or within the Haram esh-Sharif. The actual Temple of Herod was located over the Gihon Spring and on the southeast ridge of Jerusalem. It was so destroyed that modern archaeologists will not be able to discover any remnants of it within the confines of its former site. They will not find even its foundation stones that were once strongly positioned in place. This is because Jerusalem and the interior and exterior walls of the Temple of Herod were totally demolished down to the bedrock in the Roman/Jewish War of 66 to 70 C.E. Only a few important Roman buildings continued to exist after that war. Among those Roman remains is the Haram esh-Sharif that was once an imperial administration center that the Romans sustained in use for another 200 years after the war.

As a matter of fact, when Jesus said the Temple and the City of Jerusalem would be obliterated, his prophecies were accurate to a tee. The historical records show that when the Romans got through with their fury in dismantling Jerusalem and the Temple, no stones were left in place that would make one believe there was once a city or a holy sanctuary in the area. So thorough was the ruin of the Temple (and also of “*Jewish* Jerusalem”) that scholars cannot find any stone of the Temple still in place in its original location on the Ophel mound, once a part of the southeast ridge of Jerusalem.

This forgetfulness of original Jerusalem is a profound anomaly because the actual “Mount Zion” and the “Temple Mount” have

been misplaced and forgotten even though those two areas have been the most holy of regions for the past 3000 years and that both sites were also located in one of the most urbanized areas of our world community. What is almost impossible to believe (but it is true), from the year 1150 C.E. unto the year 1875 C.E. (a period of 725 years!), the original site of “Mount Zion” and the real location of the former Temples were so hidden from view from all scholars and religious authorities that the areas were not even reckoned by people who lived in the region in later times to be a part of the City of Jerusalem. These important holy sites from earlier times were so forgotten by the people of Jerusalem that the City of Jerusalem built by Solomon and later by Zerubbabel were finally shunted into a remote and insignificant area of Jerusalem that the region remained even *outside* the walls of the City. That precinct of holiness became open countryside and not even designated as a part of the urban region of Jerusalem.

The documented historical and geographical proofs that I will provide in this book to prove these points will be a surprising shock to the religious authorities (whether they are Christian, Muslim or Jewish). But, for the first time in 800 years, this new research will restore to the world the whereabouts and the importance of “The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot.”

Albert Einstein gave his opinion: “If at first the idea is not *absurd*, then there is no hope for it.”

An illustration: On an airplane between London and Tel Aviv, I explained to a distinguished looking man who appeared to be an orthodox Rabbi the basic historical research of this book. My conclusion to him showed that the Bible and history revealed the “Wailing Wall” was *not* a wall of the Temple but is the western wall of Herod’s Fort Antonia. He retorted vociferously and vigorously with a single English word: “PREPOSTEROUS”!