

**“The Lord has rejected His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has delivered into the hand of the enemy The walls of her palaces.”**

**(Lamentations 2:7)**

### **The Walls Of Her Palaces**

Why is the location of the temples so important? Because if the “western wall” where the prayers are offered today was once part of the second temple or even the retaining wall this would make Jesus a liar when He said “not one stone shall be left upon another”. Matthew 24:3, Mark 13:1-2, Luke 21:5-6 And if he was wrong about that prophecy he would also have been wrong when He said:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6

Could it be in the interest of certain parties to continue to support the idea that the “western wall” which was actually part of Fort Antonia was actually part of the second temple?

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### **The “Second” Temple**

Flavius Josephus records that Herod the Great completely rebuilt the Temple in 20-18 BCE, even going so far as to replace the foundation stones and to smooth off the surface of the Temple Mount. This Temple became known as Herod's Temple.

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Titus Flavius Josephus born Joseph ben Matityahu (Hebrew: was a first-century Romano-Jewish scholar, historian and hagiographer, who was born in Jerusalem—then part of Roman Judea—to a father of priestly descent and a mother who claimed royal ancestry. (He was a Pharisee as well. ED)

Josephus recorded Jewish history, with special emphasis on the first century AD and the First Jewish–Roman War, including the Siege of Masada. His most important works were *The Jewish War* (c. 75) and *Antiquities of the Jews* (c. 94). *The Jewish War* recounts the Jewish revolt against Roman occupation (66–70). *Antiquities of the Jews* recounts the history of the world from a Jewish perspective for an ostensibly Roman audience. These works provide valuable insight into first century Judaism and the background of Early Christianity. Wikipedia

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War VI 1:1

THUS did the miseries of Jerusalem grow worse and worse every day, and the seditious were still more irritated by the calamities they were under, even while the famine preyed upon themselves, after it had preyed upon the people. And indeed the multitude of carcasses that lay in heaps one upon another was a horrible sight, and produced a pestilential stench, which was a hinderance to those that would make sallies out of the city, and fight the enemy: but as those were to go in battle-array, who had been already used to ten thousand murders, and must tread upon those dead bodies as they marched along, so were not they terrified, nor did they pity men as they marched over them; nor did they deem this affront offered to the deceased to be any ill omen to themselves; but as they had their right hands already polluted with the murders of their own countrymen, and in that condition ran out to fight with foreigners, they seem to me to have cast a reproach upon God himself, as if he were too slow in punishing them; for war was not now gone on with as if they had any hope of victory; for they gloried after a brutish manner in that despair of deliverance they were already in. And now the Romans, although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, raised their banks in one and twenty days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety

furlongs round about, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste: nor if any one that had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again; but though he were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it notwithstanding.

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#### CHAPTER 6.

HOW THE ROMANS CARRIED THEIR ENSIGNS TO THE TEMPLE, AND MADE JOYFUL ACCLAMATIONS TO TITUS. THE SPEECH THAT TITUS MADE TO THE JEWS WHEN THEY MADE SUPPLICATION FOR MERCY. WHAT REPLY THEY MADE THERETO; AND HOW THAT REPLY MOVED TITUS'S INDIGNATION AGAINST THEM.

1. AND now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple (24) and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus emperor (25) with the greatest acclamations of joy. And now all the soldiers had such vast quantities of the spoils which they had gotten by plunder, that in Syria a pound weight of gold was sold for half its former value.

11 After this, I shall relate the barbarity of the tyrants towards the people of their own nation, as well as the indulgence of the Romans in sparing foreigners; and how often Titus, out of his desire to preserve the city and the temple, invited the seditious to come to terms of accommodation. I shall also distinguish the sufferings of the people, and their calamities; how far they were afflicted by the sedition, and how far by the famine, and at length were taken. Nor shall I omit to mention the misfortunes of the deserters, nor the punishments inflicted on the captives; as also how the temple was burnt, against the consent of Caesar; and how many sacred things that had been laid up in the temple were snatched out of the fire; the destruction also of the entire city, with the signs and wonders that went before it; and the taking the tyrants captives, and the multitude of those that were made slaves, and into what different misfortunes they were every one distributed. Moreover, what the Romans did to the remains of the wall; and how they demolished the strong holds that were in the country; and how Titus went over the whole country, and settled its affairs; together with his return into Italy, and his triumph.

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And for prime evidence of this fact, we have eyewitness accounts of both Josephus and Titus (the Roman general who conducted the war against the Jews) who give the description of utter ruin and thorough destruction of Jerusalem. Josephus and Titus mentioned that if they had not been in Jerusalem during the war and personally seen the demolition that took place, they would not have believed that there was once a city in the area. 21 But they were eyewitnesses to its utter ruin. It is significant that Josephus used the exact words of Jesus' prophecy to describe the uprooted condition of even the foundation stones that constituted Jewish Jerusalem. He said:

"It [Jerusalem] was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was nothing left to make those that came thither believe it [Jerusalem] had ever been inhabited." 22 21 War VI.1,1; VII.1,1.

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War VII 8,7

Where is this city that was believed to have God himself inhabiting therein? It is now demolished to the very foundations, and hath nothing but that monument of it preserved, I mean the camp of those that hath destroyed it, which still dwells upon its ruins; some unfortunate old men also lie upon the ashes of the temple, and a few women are there preserved alive by the enemy, for our bitter shame and reproach.

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War V,8

8. Now as to the tower of Antonia, it was situated at the corner of two cloisters of the court of the temple; of that on the west, and that on the north; it was erected upon a rock of fifty cubits in height, and was on a great precipice; it was the work of king Herod, wherein he demonstrated his natural magnanimity. In the first place, the rock itself was covered over with smooth pieces of stone, from its foundation, both for ornament, and that any one who would either try to get up or to go down it might not be able to hold his feet upon it. Next to this, and before you come to the edifice of the tower itself, there was a wall three cubits high; but within that wall all the space of the tower of Antonia itself was built upon, to the height of forty cubits. The inward parts had the largeness and form of a palace, it being parted into all kinds of rooms and other conveniences, such as courts, and places for bathing, and broad spaces for camps; insomuch that, by having all conveniences that cities wanted, it might seem to be composed of several cities, but by its magnificence it seemed a palace. And as the entire structure resembled that of a tower, it contained also four other distinct towers at its four corners; whereof the others were but fifty cubits high; whereas that which lay upon the southeast corner was seventy cubits high, that from thence the whole temple might be viewed; but on the corner where it joined to the two cloisters of the temple, it had passages down to them both, through which the guard (for there always lay in this tower a Roman legion) went several ways among the cloisters, with their arms, on the Jewish festivals, in order to watch the people, that they might not there attempt to make any innovations; for the temple was a fortress that guarded the city, as was the tower of Antonia a guard to the temple; and in that tower were the guards of those three (14). There was also a peculiar fortress belonging to the upper city, which was Herod's palace; but for the hill Bezetha, it was divided from the tower Antonia, as we have already told you; and as that hill on which the tower of Antonia stood was the highest of these three, so did it adjoin to the new city, and was the only place that hindered the sight of the temple on the north. And this shall suffice at present to have spoken about the city and the walls about it, because I have proposed to myself to make a more accurate description of it elsewhere.

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This was also believed by the Jewish authority Rabbi David Kimchi who (just after the time of Maimonides) stated that the Jewish Temple was still in utter ruins and that no Christian or Muslim had ever built over the spot where the true Temples stood. This express dogmatism of Rabbi David Kimchi, one of the great biblical commentators of the Jews (otherwise known as the RADAQ) who lived from about 1160 to 1235 C.E., is of utmost value. Rabbi Kimchi said that as late as his time the region of the former Temples still remained in ruins and that **NO GENTILES (whether Roman, Byzantine or Muslim) HAD YET BUILT ANY OF THEIR BUILDINGS OVER THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE** (emphases mine). He said (and I quote him verbatim): "And [the Temple] is still in ruins, [in] that the Temple site **WAS NEVER BUILT ON BY THE**

NATIONS." 41 These comments of Rabbi David Kimchi are first-class Jewish evidence in about 1235 C.E., and they show in no uncertain terms that the built-up area of the Haram esh-Sharif (long built over by the Christians and Muslims) WAS NOT the Temple site. The real Temple area was located over and around the Gihon Spring on the southeast ridge which was in Rabbi Kimchi's time outside the walls of Jerusalem and was a derelict area used for a dump.

So, Rabbi Kimchi around 1235 C.E. without doubt states that NO GENTILE BUILDINGS had ever been built on the site of the Temple – and this included the period of 600 years before him when the Muslims (and during the Crusader period, the Christians) had control over all areas of Jerusalem! In fact, Rabbi Kimchi said that the exclusive region for the Temple EVEN IN HIS DAY was "still in ruins." This historical observation by Kimchi is proof positive that many Jews were not being led over to Christian and Muslim beliefs about the Temple site in the Crusade period, because it is obvious that the Dome of the Rock had been built over the Church of the Holy Wisdom which only later (in 692 C.E.) became the Muslim Shrine of the Dome of the Rock. And, what the Muslims called Solomon's Temple (and so did the Christian Crusaders – that is, the Al Aksa Mosque) was also a Muslim building within the Haram esh-Sharif. David Kimchi, however, made the clear teaching that the original area of the Jewish Temples was in his time (about 1235 C.E.) still unoccupied by any Christian or Muslim buildings from the past or at the present and that the site was in Kimchi's time in complete ruins.

Commentary on Isaiah 64:10 and quoted by Prof. Kaufman in Biblical Archaeology Review, March/April, 2000, p.61 (Ernest L. Martin)

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"Omar agreed that seventy households should come [to Jerusalem from Tiberias]. They agreed to that. After that, he asked: 'Where do you wish to live within the city?' They replied: 'In the southern section of the city, which is the market of the Jews.' Their request was to enable them to be near the site of the Temple and its gates, as well as to the waters of Shiloah, which could be used for immersion. This was granted them [the 70 Jewish families] by the Emir of the Believers. So seventy households including women and children moved from Tiberias, and established settlements in buildings whose foundations had stood for many generations." 42 Reuven Hammer, The Jerusalem Anthology, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1995, p.148.

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When the Karaite Jews a century later settled in Jerusalem, they also went to this same southern area as well as adjacently across the Kidron into the Silwan area.

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There were some extremely important differences between the Solomon's Temple and Herod's Temple. Incidentally, outside the Old Testament, there is no record of Solomon's Temple having ever existed.

Since some of the original artifacts were, according to the biblical account, lost after the destruction of the First Temple, the Second Temple lacked the following holy articles:

- **The Ark of the Covenant containing the Tablets of Stone, before which were placed the pot of manna and Aaron's rod**
- **The Urim and Thummim (divination objects contained in the Hoshen)**
- **The holy oil**
- **The sacred fire.**

In the Second Temple, the Kodesh Hakodashim (Holy of Holies) was separated by curtains rather than a wall as in the First Temple. Still, as in the Tabernacle, the Second Temple included:

- **The Menorah (golden lamp) for the Hekhal**
- **The Table of Showbread**
- **The golden altar of incense, with golden censers.**

According to the Mishnah (Middot iii. 6), the "Foundation Stone" stood where the Ark used to be, and the High Priest put his censer on it on Yom Kippur.

The Second Temple also included many of the original vessels of gold that had been taken by the Babylonians but restored by Cyrus the Great. According to the Babylonian Talmud (Yoma 22b),<sup>[2]</sup> however, **the Temple lacked the Shekinah, the dwelling or settling divine presence of God, and the Ruach HaKodesh, the Spirit of Holiness, present in the first.** “

These are major differences since the Ark of the Covenant was the heart and soul of the Jewish faith. This was also how the Jews received forgiveness of sin when the high priest went into the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement.

Some interesting verses to ponder can be found in Ezekiel chapter 10 which was written in approximately 594 BC just eight years before Jerusalem was destroyed and the Ark of the Covenant disappeared. God had been showing Ezekiel the abominations the elders of Israel were committing in the Temple itself.

“Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, [and stood] over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD’S glory. Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims. And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also [were] beside them, and [every one] stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD’S house; and the glory of the God of Israel [was] over them above.” Ezekiel 10:4, 18-19

The Spirit of God departed from the cherubims.

### **Day of Atonement**

#### **Yom Kippur**

“The Holy of Holies was entered once a year by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, to sprinkle the blood of sacrificial animals (a bull offered as atonement for the Priest and his household, and a goat offered as atonement for the people) and offer incense upon the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat which sat on top of the ark in the First Temple (the Second Temple had no ark and the blood was sprinkled where the Ark would have been and the incense was left on the Foundation Stone). The animal was sacrificed on the Brazen Altar and the blood was carried into the most holy place. The golden censers were also found in the Most Holy Place.” Wikipedia

"Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. "You shall slaughter the bull before the LORD at the doorway of the tent of meeting. "You shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger; and you shall pour out all the blood at the base of the altar. "You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, and offer them up in smoke on the altar. "But the flesh of the bull and its hide and its refuse, you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.” Exodus 29:10-14

Since sometime before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC these items have been missing and there has really been no atonement for sin although some Jews today say repentance and good works is what

really count.

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