

HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL

Hezekiah's Tunnel is a 530-meter subterranean water conduit snaking from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam. Dated to the late eighth century B.C.E., the tunnel fits the biblical description of Hezekiah's "conduit" described in 2 Kings 20:20 (and other passages).

The Gihon was well fortified at the time of King Hezekiah. Water overflowed into the Kidron Valley and was used to irrigate crops, vines and fruit trees. Around 710 B.C.E., as Sennacherib's Assyrian army plundered Judah and approached Jerusalem, King Hezekiah redirected water from the Gihon to a secure location within the city walls.

The tunnel is an engineering marvel: Dug from both ends, it has a gradient of just 0.6 degrees. Geologists estimate the tunnel took around one to four years to dig, probably using rock-sounding methods to guide the digging teams. The Siloam Inscription, found on the south end of the tunnel and dated to the same period, commemorates the impressive construction effort.

GIHON SPRING



SILOAM INSCRIPTION

"... the tunneling [was finished]. And this was the matter of the tunneling: While [the hewers yielded] the ax, each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be he[wn], there was hear[d] a man's voice calling to his fellow, for there was a crack[?] in the rock on the right and [on the left]. And at the end of the tunneling the hewers hacked each man toward his fellow, ax upon ax. And there flowed the waters from the spring toward the reservoir for two hundre[d and] a thousand cubits. And a hu[nd]red cubits was the height of the rock above the head[s] of the hewers."

POINT AT WHICH THE HEWERS, DIGGING FROM BOTH ENDS, MET

SILOAM INSCRIPTION

POOL OF SILOAM

Ancient Jerusalem

Ancient Jerusalem was much smaller than the modern city: Situated on the Mount Zion ridge, and orientated around the Gihon Spring, ancient Jerusalem encompassed roughly 12 acres.

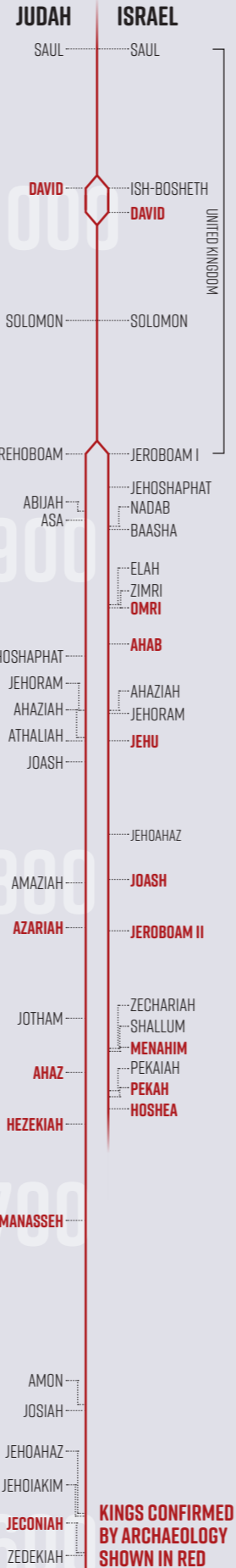
The Bible first mentions Jerusalem in Genesis 14, when it was founded and ruled by the king-priest Melchizedek. Archaeologists have dated the earliest city wall, uncovered near the Gihon Spring (measuring up to 7 meters wide), to this same period (c. 19th century B.C.E.).

During the middle of the second millennium B.C.E., Jerusalem (called Jebus) was inhabited by the Jebusites. Excavations in Egypt have revealed 14th-century correspondence from the Canaanite king of Jebus, requesting aid in fighting "Habiru" invaders reportedly "plundering all the lands" of Canaan. This remarkable account parallels references to Israel's invasion of Canaan recorded in the book of Joshua.

When David became king in the late 11th century and began to unite Israel, he quickly set his sights on Jerusalem. The new king understood Jerusalem's strategic (2 Samuel 5:6), diplomatic (Joshua 18:28) and symbolic significance (Genesis 14, 22), and was determined to make it Israel's capital.

The Jebusites were defeated when Joab, the commander of David's army, led a band of soldiers to infiltrate the city via a water shaft (2 Samuel 5:6-10; possibly Warren's Shaft, near the Gihon Spring). Jebus was conquered, then transformed by David and his son, King Solomon, into Israel's impressive capital—a role it serves even today, more than 3,000 years later.

Kings of Judah and Israel



KINGS CONFIRMED BY ARCHAEOLOGY SHOWN IN RED



Herbert W. Armstrong (center) tours the "Big Dig" with Prof. Benjamin Mazar (Right)

AIBA Chancellor Gerald Flurry with Dr. Eilat Mazar

THE ARMSTRONG INSTITUTE OF BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY (AIBA) is named after Herbert W. Armstrong, the prominent 20th-century Bible scholar and humanitarian. Mr. Armstrong was a keen supporter of biblical archaeology and the Jewish state. From 1968 to 1986, he supported multiple archaeological excavations in Israel, most notably the "Big Dig," a massive excavation on the Temple Mount led by Hebrew University professor Benjamin Mazar.

The late Hebrew University archaeologist, Dr. Eilat Mazar, granddaughter of Prof. Benjamin Mazar, was one of Israel's greatest biblical archaeologists. Eilat was responsible for making some of Israel's most sensational discoveries, including King David's palace, King Solomon's royal complex, Nehemiah's wall and the seals of King Hezekiah and Isaiah (among other finds). Dr. Mazar was a brilliant scientist who not only deeply valued the scientific method but recognized the crucial role the Bible plays in the study of Jerusalem's ancient history.

From 2006 up until her death in May 2021, AIBA happily sponsored and worked alongside Dr. Mazar in her excavations in the City of David and on the Ophel. We endeavor to preserve Dr. Mazar's archaeological legacy and keep it alive by approaching biblical archaeology with the same dedication to scientific and academic integrity, and the same passion, urgency and love.

AIBA's overarching mission can be divided into five specific objectives:

- To promote the Bible as a credible and essential historical resource in the practice of archaeology in Israel
- To feature and continue the archaeological work of Dr. Eilat Mazar and her grandfather, Prof. Benjamin Mazar
- To analyze and explain archaeological excavations and discoveries past and present in the context of the Bible
- To challenge the unwarranted and unsupported criticisms leveled against the use of the Bible in archaeology in Israel
- To encourage archaeologists to consider and employ the Bible in the practice of archaeology

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Tour Ancient Jerusalem



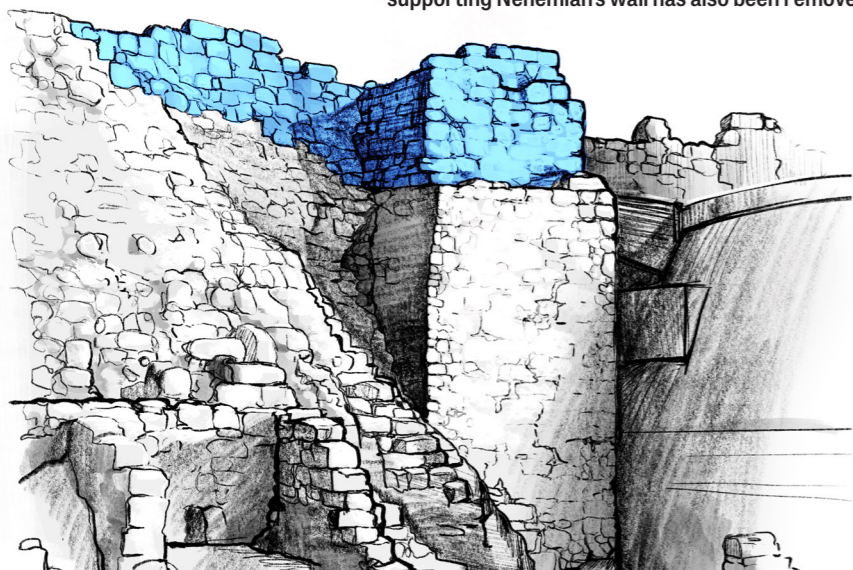
AL-AQSA MOSQUE

UNCOVERING ANCIENT JERUSALEM

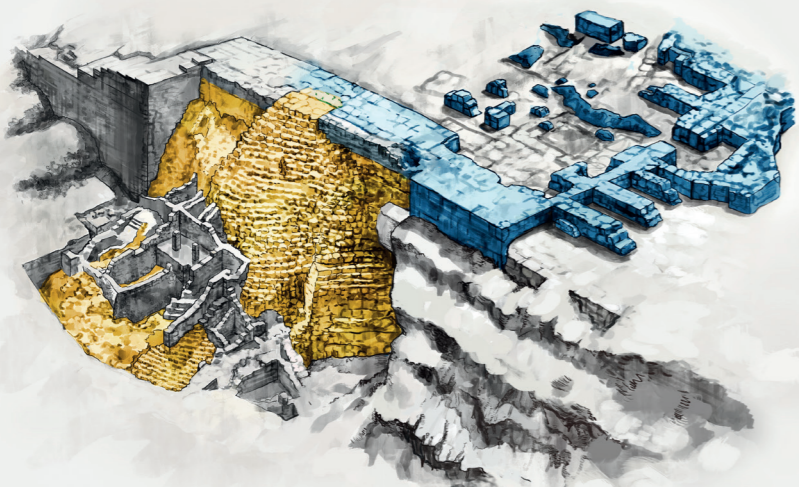


Jerusalem's Solomonic gate complex

Now removed due to safety concerns, the remains of Nehemiah's wall (in blue) were found on the north edge of the Stepped Stone Structure. The tower supporting Nehemiah's wall has also been removed.



The Large Stone Structure ("David's Palace;" in blue), interlocks with and is supported by the buttressing Stepped Stone Structure (yellow).



SOLOMONIC GATE
10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 1986, 2009 | EILAT MAZAR

SOLOMON'S WALL
10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2009-2012 | EILAT MAZAR

LARGE TOWER
LIKELY 10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 1867-1870 | CHARLES WARREN

KING DAVID'S PALACE
10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2005-2008 | EILAT MAZAR

NEHEMIAH'S WALL
450 B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2007 | EILAT MAZAR

STEPPED STONE STRUCTURE
10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 1922-2008

Small Finds



1 PITHOS INSCRIPTION
11TH-10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2012 | EILAT MAZAR



2 MENORAH MEDALLION
6TH CENTURY C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2013 | EILAT MAZAR



3 ISAIAH BULLA
8TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2009 | EILAT MAZAR



4 HEZEKIAH BULLA
8TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2009 | EILAT MAZAR



5 AKKADIAN TABLETS
14TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2009, 2013 | EILAT MAZAR



6 JEHUCAL BULLA
6TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2005 | EILAT MAZAR



7 GEDALIAH BULLA
6TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 2008 | EILAT MAZAR



8 GAMARIAH BULLA
6TH CENTURY B.C.E.
DISCOVERED: 1982 | YIGAL SHILOH