

CORNUKE'S *TEMPLE* BOOK: "THE GREATEST ARCHAEOLOGICAL BLUNDER OF ALL TIME"

Gordon Franz

Introduction

Robert Cornuke has written a new book claiming that the Temples of King Solomon and Herod the Great were never located on the Temple Mount, contrary to two thousand years of history. Claiming "amazing new discoveries" that he has observed, the book title says, quote: *Temple: Amazing New Discoveries that Change Everything About the Location of Solomon's Temple* (2014).

Mr. Cornuke is following his long-standing pattern of moving Biblical sites to different locations – such as moving Moses' Mt. Sinai out of the Sinai Peninsula and into Saudi Arabia; shifting Noah's ark out of the "Mountains of Ararat" (cf. Gen. 8:4) into Iran; and wrecking Paul's ship in a different bay on Malta – which enables him to promote them as new "discoveries." So far, he has produced no *credible* historical-geographical, archaeological, geological, or Biblical evidence for any of his alleged discoveries. How will he fare with these "new" discoveries?

Robert Cornuke has now relocated the Temples of Solomon and Herod off of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. He bases this latest twist on the old theories of Dr. Ernest Martin in the latter's book, *The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot* (2000; cf. Cornuke 2014: 10). However, Cornuke inconsistently locates his Temple enclosure/platform either about 300 feet or 600 feet farther south than the historical location of the Temple Mount, but does not seem to be aware of the gross discrepancy (see pink and red squares in the map below). Cornuke's Temple enclosure/platform is inconsistent in size as well. He appears to be unable to decide whether it is only about 300 feet square or the about 860 feet square as attested in the ancient sources and seems utterly unaware of this problem (again see map below).

Mr. Cornuke argues that it is a "legend" that the Temples of King Solomon and Herod the Great were ever thought to be located on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (2014: 9), even though the vast majority of people - Jews, Christians, and Moslems - through the ages understood that the Temples were on the Temple Mount. His new book instead argues that the Temples were to the south of the Temple Mount, over the Gihon Spring, down in the City of David. It is also repeatedly stated in the book that the Antonia Fortress covered the entire Temple Mount enclosure, which was built by Herod the Great to guard his Temple.

The following critique will be concerned with facts and whether the facts led to a correct conclusion. Does Cornuke's book present a credible, compelling case for re-locating the Temples to the south of the Temple Mount with only the Antonia Fortress on the present-day Temple Mount?



ORDNANCE SURVEY OF JERUSALEM.

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES WILSON R.E. UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
COLONEL SIR HENRY JAMES, R.E., F.R.S. & C.

1881-6.

DIRECTOR OF THE ORDNANCE SURVEY

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Vertical Scale



Note: Scales shown on this map were derived directly from the same original Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem map — they are unaltered and exactly proportional to this map image.

THE 500-CUBIT SQUARE PLATFORM (262.5 x 262.5 meters; 861 x 861 feet)

(GREEN)



ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT

(RED)



OVER THE GIHON SPRING

(PINK)



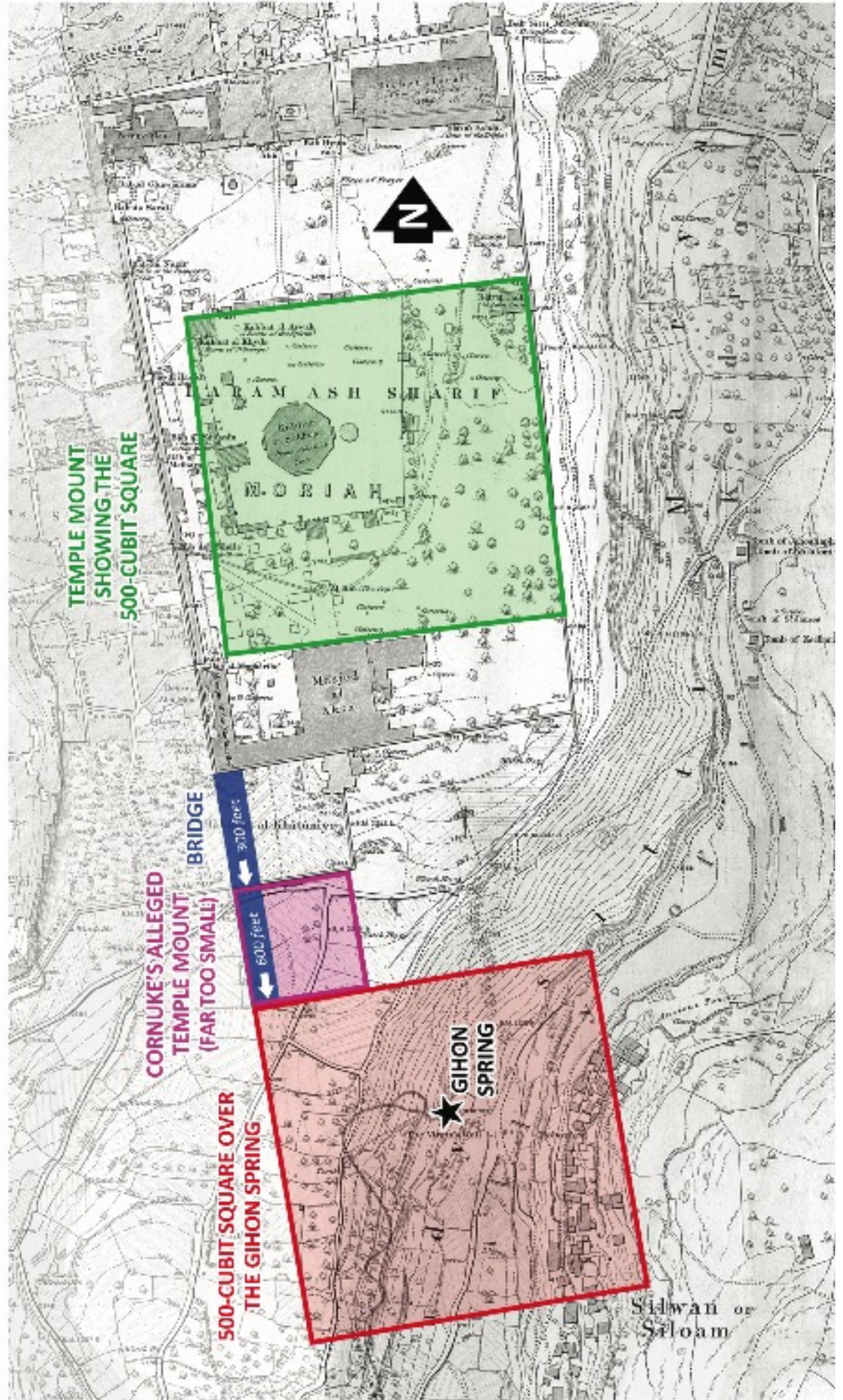
CORNUKE'S SQUARE (Circa 300x300 FT)



CORNUKE'S BRIDGE



GIHON SPRING



The Reviewer and His Goals

This reviewer has lived, studied, led field trips, and worked on archaeological excavations in Jerusalem – on and off – for over thirty-five years. I am well familiar with the literary sources, history, archaeology, topography, geology, and geography of this city.

It is not my intention to write a full-length book discussing Mr. Cornuke's (or Ernest Martin's) ideas about the location of Solomon's and Herod's Temples, although a book could be written refuting these claims because there is so much erroneous information as well as faulty logic used in these two books. I will first deal with Cornuke's two main arguments:

First, according to the book, Solomon's Temple stood upon Zion and Zion was *only* in the City of David; and second that the Temples stood over the Gihon Spring. Then I will select some examples --- these will by no means be exhaustive --- of where Mr. Cornuke got his facts wrong and how **he produced** the "*greatest archaeological blunder of all times*" (cf. Cornuke 2014: 35) by moving the Temples of Solomon and Herod from the Temple Mount to the City of David. I will also demonstrate that this book was not carefully researched. The facts are that the literary sources and archaeological records confirm the location of Solomon's and Herod's Temples on the Temple Mount and not above the Gihon Spring in the City of David as claimed in Cornuke's book.

One resource I found particularly helpful concerning this topic is the excellent book by Dr. Leen Ritmeyer entitled, *The Quest. Revealing the Temple Mount in Jerusalem* (2006). Leen is probably the leading scholar on the topic of the Temples on the Temple Mount. This book, drawn from his PhD dissertation at the University of Manchester in England, is carefully researched, clearly written, well documented, and profusely illustrated with detailed pictures, maps, and diagrams. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the location, history, and development of Solomon's and Herod's Temples. Leen also worked in Jerusalem as the architect for Professor Benjamin Mazar, the director of the Southern Wall of the Temple Mount Excavation, south and west of the Temple Mount. It is interesting to note, the book under review does not interact with, nor discuss, Ritmeyer's scholarly book. In fact, it is not even mentioned in the bibliography. Mr. Cornuke should have first consulted this exhaustive resource before research was begun on his book.

All quotations from Josephus in this essay will be from the scholarly Loeb Classical Library (LCL) edition, unless otherwise noted. All Scripture quotes are from the *New King James* (NKJV).

Where are Zion and the City of David?

Mr. Cornuke's book repeatedly quotes 2 Samuel 5:7 as if it proves his case, but take careful note of the exact wording in the Bible: "Nevertheless David took the **Stronghold of Zion** (that is, the **City of David**)" (NKJV, emphasis added by GWF). He claims this is proof that the Temple was in **Zion** and that Zion was the **City of David** (Cornuke 2014: 65, 69, 71, 74, 76, 77, 79, 113, 115, 122, 136; hereafter, GWF = Gordon Franz), but the Stronghold of Zion was not the same thing as the much broader city of Zion, which did expand in size over time until it did encompass the Temple Mount. The Stronghold of Zion never encompassed the Temple or the Temple Mount. The City of David began as identical to the Stronghold of Zion, and though it did expand in size, it never grew so far as to encompass Mount Zion where the Temple Mount / Temple resided.

As one examines the use of the word Zion, it will be shown that the location of Zion did expand beyond the Stronghold of Zion/City of David, but eventually came to include the Temple Mount, hence this is no proof for Mr. Cornuke's anti-Temple Mount assertions.

The word Zion is used 154 times in the Hebrew Scriptures:

2 Sam. 5:7; 1 Kings 8:1; 2 Kings 19:21, 31; 1 Chron. 11:5; 2 Chron. 5:2; Ps. 2:6; 9:11, 14; 14:7; 20:2; 48:2, 11, 12; 50:2; 51:18; 53:6; 65:1; 69:35; 74:2; 76:2; 78:68; 84:7; 87:2; 87:5; 97:8; 99:2; 102:13, 16, 21; 110:2; 125:1; 126:1; 128:5; 129:5; 132:13; 133:3; 134:3; 135:21; 137:1, 3; 146:10; 147:12; 149:2; Song of Songs 3:11; Isa. 1:8, 27; 2:3; 3:16, 17; 4:3, 4, 5; 8:18; 10:12, 24, 32; 12:6; 14:32; 16:1; 18:7; 24:23; 28:16; 29:8; 30:19; 31:4, 9; 33:5, 14, 20; 34:8; 35:10; 37:22, 32; 40:9; 41:27; 46:13; 49:14; 51:3, 11, 16; 52:1, 2, 7, 8; 59:20; 60:14; 61:3; 62:1, 11; 64:10; 66:8; Jer. 3:14; 4:6, 31; 6:2, 23; 8:19; 9:19; 14:19; 26:18; 30:17; 31:6, 12; 50:5, 28; 51:10, 24, 35; Lam. 1:4, 6, 17; 2:1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 18; 4:2, 11, 22; 5:11, 18; Joel 2:1, 15, 23, 32; 3:16, 17, 21; Amos 1:2; 6:1; Obad. 1:17, 21; Micah 1:13; 3:10, 12; 4:2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13; Zeph. 3:14, 16; Zech. 1:14, 17; 2:7, 10; 8:2, 3; 9:9, 13).

Zion is used with different modifiers, such as "Mount Zion" (1 Kings 19:31; Ps. 2:6; 48:2, 11; 74:2; 78:68; 125:1; Isa. 4:5; 8:18; 10:12; 18:7; 24:23; 29:8; 31:4; 37:32; Lam. 5:18; Joel 2:32; 3:17; Obadiah 1:17, 21; Micah 4:7).

Zion came to be synonymous with the city of Jerusalem and hence, again, inclusive of the Temple Mount. In Hebrew poetry there is a literary device called parallelism. Professor C. Hassell Bullock of Wheaton College described this literary device as follows: "The heart of Hebrew poetry is a device called *parallelism*. It is a literary pattern that states an idea in one line and focuses more closely on the same idea in the following line, either repeating the thought in different terms or focusing on the thought more specifically" (2001: 36, highlighted italics in original). A good example of Hebrew parallelism for the study of the location of Zion is found in the words of Isaiah the prophet when he wrote in the 8th century BC: "For out of Zion shall go forth the Law [Torah], and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (2:3). In this verse, there are two parallel thoughts: Zion and Jerusalem are literally synonymous places from which the Torah / Word of the LORD goes forth. Law and Word are another set of synonymous terms. The 8th century BC prophet Micah repeated these two parallel thoughts in his book (4:2).

This parallelism concerning Zion appears at least 40 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. This list is in chronological order and divided by the centuries:

Date not known – Ps. 51:18; 76:2; 102:21; 128:5; 135:21; 147:12

9th century BC – Joel 2:32, 3:16, 17

8th century BC – Isa. 2:3; 4:3, 4; 10:12, 32; 24:23; 30:19; 31:4; 33:20; 37:22, 32; 40:9; 41:27; 52:1, 2; 62:1; 64:10; Amos 1:2; Micah 3:10, 12; 4:2, 8

7th century BC – Jer. 26:18; Zeph. 3:14, 16

6th century BC – Lam. 2:10, 13

5th century BC – Zech. 1:14, 17; 8:3; 9:9

Zion and Jerusalem are recognized to be synonymous and literal places in Hebrew poetry. It is then important to determine *when* to apply the specific size and location of the city of Jerusalem in the different time periods of the First Temple Period

and the beginning of the Second Temple Period. Doing so will determine how the different psalmists and prophets use the word Zion. It will be shown that the term Zion is not limited to the City of David, but also included the Temple Mount.

The **initial city, the core city**, of Jerusalem was the ancient city of Jebus, that 13 acre area between the Kidron Valley and the Central Valley and slightly north of the Stepped Stone Structure (SSS). This was the early city conquered by King David.

The meaning of the name and also the location of the “City of David” (Hebrew = *‘ir dawid*), like Zion, changes throughout the history of Jerusalem. In a recent and important article by Dr. Jurg Hutzle of the College of France in Paris entitled “The Meaning of the Term *‘ir dawid* in Samuel and Kings” (2011), he shows that the term City of David expands beyond the southeastern hill of Jerusalem (i.e. the 13 acres between the Kidron Valley and the Central Valley). He summarizes Othmar Keel’s views thus:

“whenever the term [City of David] is mentioned in Samuel and Kings [2 Sam. 5:7, 9; 6:10, 12, 16; 1 Kings 3:1; 9:24] it relates to the *pre-Davidic* stronghold [i.e. the Stronghold of Zion], which is said to have been conquered by David (2 Sam. 5:7). He outlines his views only briefly in a few lines: After its capture the stronghold served as a residence for David and then also for the daughter of the pharaoh. The ark was placed here before its transfer to the Temple. The residence [= palace] also served as a burial place for the kings. It was only later on, in the Book of Chronicles, that the term began to refer to the entire southeastern hill. Keel ... also takes into account the suggestion by some scholars ... who tentatively identify the Stepped Stone Structure and the assumed building it retains with the biblical ‘stronghold of Zion’” (Hutzle 2011: 167-178; brackets added by GWF).

Note that the Palace is not the Temple. They are two different structures. The **early** City of David on the Stepped Stone Structure is the Palace / Stronghold of Zion area, and was also the royal necropolis until the time of King Hezekiah, and did not include the southeastern hill below the Stepped Stone Structure.

Professor Nadav Na’aman, a Biblical historian and geographer, from Tel Aviv University concurs with Dr. Hutzli’s article that the term City of David is limited to the area around the Stepped Stone Structure in the 10th century BC. He goes on to affirm that: “the ‘City of David’ referred to in 2 Sam. 5:7, 9 overlaps the area of the conquered Stronghold of Zion, and in this limited scope it appears in the cycle stories of David and Solomon and the burials of the Judahite kings prior to Hezekiah” (2012: 96). He then goes on to demonstrate that the term “City of David” in Isaiah 22:9-11a, dated to the end of the 8th century BC, was the entire southeastern hill, and not limited to the area around the Stepped Stone Structure. Thus the term City of David encompasses different areas at different times.

Dr. Eilat Mazar excavated a monumental 10th century BC building just above the Stepped-Stone Structure which she called the “Large Stone Structure” and identified it as the Palace of King David (Mazar 2009: 43-65). Whether that is the Palace of King David, or a building within the “stronghold of Zion” is a matter of scholarly debate, but the pottery associated with the building is clearly 10th century BC. The palace complex would have been somewhere in this general area.

David bought the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, which will be shown to be above and to the north of the City of David, above the Stepped Stone Structure. **David was not allowed to build the Temple** because he was a man of war and

bloodshed (1 Chron. 28:3) so his **son Solomon built it** in the 10th century BC on what is now known as the **Temple Mount**, or Biblical **Mount Zion / Moriah**. This is separate and distinct from the Palace. In the recent, on-going, Temple Mount Sifting Project, archaeological remains of the 10th century BC have been found indicating human occupation on the top of the hill (Mount Moriah) during this period (Barkay and Zweig 2007: 37-41; Barkay and Dvira 2015: 16-20). During the Bronze Age (3rd-2nd millennium BC), temples were generally located on the acropolises, situated on the highest part of cities. The Temple Mount area would be the new acropolis for Jerusalem as it was the highest part of the city during Solomon's reign.

By the 8th century BC the city of Jerusalem had expanded to the Western Hill, which included the Tyropean Valley, the area that is called "Mount Zion" today to the south of Zion Gate and the Old City walls, the Jewish Quarter, the Armenian Quarter, and also the area of Jaffa Gate (Barkay 1985). In the 7th century BC the city still included the area of the Western Hill, but it also expanded to the north of the Iron Age wall, creating extramural suburbs outside the wall of the city. These suburbs included the areas of the today's Christian and Muslim Quarters (cf. Jer. 31:38-40; Zeph. 1:10-11; Barkay 1985: 45-62, XI*; Avigad 1980: 58). Thus, the location of Zion changed over the centuries. Initially Zion was located in the City of David ("Large Stone Structure"), but then included the southeastern hill, as the hill of Zion, or Mount Zion. With the expansion to the west in the 8th century, the entire western hill is considered Zion as well. In the 8th and 7th centuries "Zion" was more than just the Stronghold of Zion, or the City of David.

The latter part of Psalm 48 is twice quoted in Cornuke's book (2014: 78, 114) but the first part of the psalm is not mentioned at all. One of the Sons of Korah composed this psalm at the end of the 8th century BC, and in my opinion, during the Assyrian invasion of Judah by Sennacherib: "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the City of our God, in His holy mountain. **Beautiful in elevation**, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the City of the Great King." (48:1-2). The psalmist apparently lived in the southeastern hill of the City of David and knew from first-hand, eye-witness experience of the elevation change walking from the City of David (at this time it covered the entire southeastern hill; see above) **up** to Mount Zion, the Temple Mount, where the Lord resided between the cherubim that protected the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple. It is also important to notice that Mount Zion is on the north side of Jerusalem. These two geographical indicators fit well with Solomon's Temple being on the Temple Mount.

King Solomon had brought the Ark of the Covenant **up** from the City of David where King David had placed it near his palace in the area of the Stepped Stone Structure (2 Chron. 8:11). "Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, in Jerusalem, that they might bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD **up** from the City of David, which is Zion" (2 Chron. 5:2). It is important to note that King Solomon brought the Ark **up from** the city of David, which is Zion, to a place **outside** the City of David; that place would be called Mount Zion, the area of the Temple Mount today. (Contra Cornuke 2014: 107).

The point of this section is to demonstrate that the words "Zion" and "City of David" encompass different areas at different time periods. They are not limited to one specific place on the map. The historical context determines the locations of "Zion" and the "City of David" within Jerusalem.

Where was the House of Pharaoh's Daughter?

The Bible gives us another clue as to the location of the Temple of Solomon. Solomon had built his house/palace in the area of the Temple. Next to his palace was a palace for his Egyptian wife, the daughter of Pharaoh. The Scriptures stated that Solomon made a political alliance with Pharaoh and sealed the deal with a marriage to Pharaoh's daughter. "Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall all around Jerusalem" (1 Kings 3:1). Dr. Hutzli observed that: "in these cases [1 Kings 3:1 and 9:24] the meaning 'city' / 'quarter of town' for the term *'ir dawid* is possible, but unlikely. Since the verses deal with the relocation of Pharaoh's daughter to a single building (the new palace), one expects a precise indication of her previous residence" (2011: 170; brackets added by GWF).

She initially lived in the City of David, i.e. the royal complex on the Large Stone Structure, until her house was built. "Solomon also made a house like his hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as wife" (1 Kings 7:8b). Then Solomon brought her **up** the hill to her new palace, a place that was outside the City of David. "But Pharaoh's daughter came **up** from the City of David to her house which Solomon had built for her" (1 Kings 9:24). "Now Solomon brought the daughter of Pharaoh **up** from the City of David to the house he had built for her, for he said, 'My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy'" (2 Chron. 8:11).

It is important to note that the Palaces and the Temple were outside the City of David, at a point higher than ("**up from**") the City of David. The Temple Mount makes good sense because the Temple on Mount Zion was **up from** the City of David (Large Stone Structure), supported by the Stepped Stone Structure.

Gihon Spring

Mr. Cornuke's book cited two Biblical passages, Joel 3:18 and Ezekiel 47:1-2, to demonstrate that the Gihon Spring was under the Temple (2014: 81-89). The book, however, ignored the historical, prophetic, and exegetical context of these passages and also ignored another passage that disproves the ideas in the book. The passage in Joel 3:18 says, "A fountain shall flow from the House of the LORD and water the Valley of Acacias [Aravah and Dead Sea – GWF]." The exegetical context of this passage is eschatological. It is set in a still future day when Judah and Jerusalem are brought back from captivity (Joel 3:1; cf. Matt. 24:29-31) and the Lord Jesus judges the Gentile nations in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2-3, 12-15; cf. Matt. 25:31-46).

Hundreds of years later, the prophet Zechariah predicted the same thing, but he added a few more details. The LORD will bring the Gentile nations to Jerusalem to fight them (Zech. 14:3; cf. Joel 3:2-3, 12-15) when He will return to the Mount of Olives and split it in two, creating an east-west valley, that will allow the water from the Temple to flow to the Aravah and the Dead Sea (Zech. 14:4, 8; cf. Joel 3:18). Zechariah dated these events to the end of the Great Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom when the "LORD shall be King over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9). This is still future and has not been fulfilled. The passages are not referring to Solomon's or Herod's Temple. This is also the prophetic setting of the Ezekiel 47 passage. Ezekiel 40-48 describes a still future Temple in Jerusalem that will be built by the Lord.

There will be great seismic and geological changes in Jerusalem during the Great Tribulation and the beginning of the Kingdom Age. For example, there will be a “mighty and great earthquake as has not occurred since men were on the earth” in Jerusalem (Rev. 16:18; Babylon is the “great city” of the still future Jerusalem of the Great Tribulation, cf. Rev. 11:8 and 16:19). The Mount of Olives will split in an east-west direction opposite the Temple Mount (Zech. 14:4-5). The Hill Country of Judah will become a plain from Geba (north of Jerusalem) to Rimmon (Zech. 14:10; Tel Halif, some 40 miles to the southwest of Jerusalem), and Mount Zion shall be lifted up above all the other mountains (Isa. 2:2). With all these seismic and geological changes, the present day Gihon Spring will no longer exist and a new spring will be created under the Millennial Temple which is still future. The prophets Joel, Zechariah, and Ezekiel were not talking about the Gihon Spring under the Temples of Solomon or Herod, but a still future Temple.

The question has been raised, “Where did Solomon get the water to keep the Temple clean when he conducted all the sacrifices? Where did the water come from to wash away the blood from the sacrifices?” The advocates of the Temple over the Gihon Spring would say the spring below the Temple. However, the question of water is not a problem for the view that the Temples having been on the Temple Mount. There are a number of cisterns that were discovered on the Temple Mount, but the issue is the dating of these cisterns (Gibson and Jacobson 1996). It would make sense that some cisterns were quarried contemporaneously with the building of Solomon’s Temple and the stones quarried were used for building the Temple and surrounding buildings.

Recently Dr. Eli Shukron found a public reservoir in the Tyropean Valley to the west of the Temple Mount. It had a capacity of 250 cubic meters and was dated to the 10th century BC based on parallels in Beer-sheva and Beth Shemesh. Shukron observed: “This reservoir apparently supplied water for daily use in the Temple, and in times of emergency could also be used by the inhabitants of the city as well. This shows that the city was not totally dependent on water from the Gihon Spring, and may indicate that there were other such reservoirs that drew water from the Tyropean Valley as well” (2012: 29-30, 36*).

Where was the Threshing Floor of Araunah the Jebusite?

King David bought a threshing floor from Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:18-25; cf. 1 Chron. 21:18-30). His son, King Solomon, built the First Temple on that threshing floor. “Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Chron. 3:1).

Where are threshing floors located? And where, specifically, was the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite? In the book, it is dogmatically stated: “So there is absolutely no doubt that David bought the threshing floor as a site to build a future temple and it was in the strict confines of the ancient outline walls of the City of David – which the Bible clearly refers to as the stronghold of Zion” (Cornuke 2014: 79, see also 2014: 66). Is this a factually true statement?

Dr. Oded Borowski, an Israeli archaeologist, wrote his doctoral dissertation on agriculture in Iron Age Israel. In this important work, he described the location of the threshing floor (*goren* in Hebrew) thus: “The *goren* [threshing floor] was **located outside the city** where the prevalent west wind could be used for winnowing (Hos. 13:3). The exact location of the threshing floor was determined by the local topography.

Sometimes it was close to the city gate (Jer. 15:7), and at times it was situated in an area somewhat lower than the city itself (Ruth 3:3) [As in the case of Bethlehem and Gibeon]. There is no direct statement in the OT concerning the ownership of the threshing floor, but the story of Ruth (chap. 3) implies the existence of private threshing floors. Because it was a large open space, the threshing floors were publically owned. The use of threshing floors was most likely directed by the village authorities.”

“***Being outside the city***, the site of the threshing floor could not be defended in case of attack, and thus we find Gideon threshing wheat in the *gat*, ‘winepress’ (Judges 6:11), inside the city, as a precaution against the Midianites. The same problem is illustrated by the attack of the Philistines on the threshing floor of Qe’ila (1 Sam. 23:1).” (Borowski 1987: 62-63, highlighted italics and brackets by GWF). It will be observed that after Ruth spent the night at the threshing floor with Boaz, she went ***into*** the city (Ruth 3:15). The Bible placed the threshing floor of Boaz **outside** the city of Bethlehem.

The threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite would have been **outside** the City of David. In the book, the mistake that the threshing floor was **inside** the walls of the City of David was repeatedly made (Cornuke 2014: 66, 75, 77, 79, 80, 113). The Bible gives clues as to where the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite was, but it was not inside the city, but rather, outside the city, atop the open hill of Moriah.

There are two accounts of David numbering the people with the Lord sending a plague against Israel (2 Sam. 24; 1 Chron. 21). During the plague, the Lord instructed the prophet Gad to inform David to “**Go up**, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite” (2 Sam. 24:18; cf. 1 Chron. 21:18). Presumably David is in his palace in the City of David above the Stepped Stone Structure when he receives these instructions and he is to **go up the hill** to the threshing floor. When Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant to the threshing floor from the City of David we read: “Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, in Jerusalem, that they might bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD **up** from the City of David, which is Zion” (2 Chron. 5:2).

The writer of the Book of Kings essentially says the same thing: “Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring **up** the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is Zion” (1 Kings 8:1). Hutzle correctly observed on this verse that “it seems appropriate to assume that the term ‘*ir dawid*’ refers to a building or a complex of buildings: since the destination of the ark is a concrete place (the Temple), one expects a similarly concrete indication for the former location of the holy object” (2011: 170). The topographical points should be noted that the Ark was taken **uphill** from out of the City of David, just above the Stepped Stone Structure. The threshing floor could only be on the Temple Mount!

Dr. Leen Ritmeyer has suggested a more precise location on the Temple Mount. He wrote: “Araunah’s threshing floor was located 21.6 feet (6.6 m) east of the Dome of the Chain. This was the place where David built an altar. The Angel who appeared to David probably stood on the Rock (Sakhra), where the Ark of the Covenant was later placed (1992: 24-45, 64-65; 2006: 315; see also 2006: 7, 244, 312-314).

Another clue as to the location of the threshing floor is found in 2 Chron. 3:1. It stated that the House of the LORD (= Temple) was built on Mount Moriah where the threshing floor was located. In the book, Mr. Cornuke never identified where Mount Moriah was located, (since it would upset his theory) nor does he even mention Mount Moriah in the book, which is astonishing!

The only passage where Mount Moriah is mentioned in the Bible is 2 Chron. 3:1. (The *mountains in the land of Moriah* are what are mentioned in Gen. 22:2). Interestingly, he quotes 2 Chron. 3:1 three times in the book (2014: 66, 75, 113), and cites the passage four times (2014: 70, 77, 80, 113) but still insisted that the Temple was located near the Gihon Spring (2014: 66, 113). Yet every time he quoted the verse he had an ellipsis (three dots "...") in the middle of the passage. The ellipsis means that a word or words are omitted from the passage. What are the words that he deleted from this verse, 2 Chron. 3:1? Each time the Scripture verse is quoted, the words: "**on Mount Moriah, where the LORD has appeared to his father David**" are left out. Four of the quotes or citations of this passage are found in the chapter of the book entitled, "What Does the Bible say?" The author should have let the "Bible Say" what it says and not left out any of the highly relevant words here. Quoting the whole Bible passage would have clearly identified where the Temple was located. "Now Solomon began to build the House of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." The Biblical text is clear: the Temple and the threshing floor were **up** on MOUNT MORIAH and not down in the area of the Gihon Spring in the Kidron Valley!

"Not One Stone Left upon Another"

The book quoted Matthew 24:1-2 and comments: "Christ's words clearly state that the entire temple, each and every stone, will be dug up, dislodged, and tossed away. It is interesting to note that there are massive stone blocks by the thousands in the wall supporting the Temple Mount platform. Was Jesus wrong in His prophesying that not one stone would remain standing?" (2014: 44).

The Lord Jesus was not wrong in His prophecy. What did Jesus actually say? "Then Jesus went out and departed from the Temple [*ierou*], and His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the Temple [*ierou*]. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down'" (Matt. 24: 1-2). "Then as He went out of the Temple [*ierou*], one of His disciples said to Him, 'Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!' And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down'" (Mark 13: 1-2). "Then, as some spoke of the Temple [*ierou*], how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, 'As for these things which you see, the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down'" (Luke 21: 5-6). When each of the accounts are read in the three Synoptic gospels, it is observed that only the Temple and the buildings on the Temple Mount will be destroyed. The Lord Jesus said nothing about the Temple platform enlarged and constructed by Herod the Great because it is not a building!

What buildings were the disciples pointing to when Jesus said they would be destroyed? On the north side of the Temple, going west to east, there is the Chamber of the Hearth, the Gate of Jeconiah, a rinsing chamber, the Gate of the Offering for Women, a salt chamber, the Gate of the Flame, the Chamber of the Lepers, the Northern Gate, and the Chamber of the Woodshed. On the south side of the Temple, going west to east, there is the Kindling gate, a wood chamber, the Gate of the Firstling, the Golah chamber, the Water Gate, the Chamber of Hewn Stone, the Chamber of the House of Oil, the Southern Gate, and the Chamber of the Nazarites. For a map, see

Ritmeyer 2006: 345; for pictures of models, see 2006: 141, 218, 349, 372, 373; see also Netzer 2006: 141. There was also the Royal Stoa at the southern end of the Temple Mount (Josephus, *Antiquities* 15. 411-415; LCL 8: 199-201; Ritmeyer 2006: 90-94; Netzer 2006: 164-171).

In AD 70, the Temple and the surrounding buildings were destroyed, but the retaining walls were not the subject of the disciples' observations, thus the prophecy of the Lord Jesus did not include the platform on which the Temple was built. The Lord Jesus said nothing about the enclosure wall of the Temple Mount, although a significant portion of its perimeter structures were included in the Roman destruction. His prediction of the Temple and the surrounding buildings being destroyed was fulfilled – 100% to the letter, yet Jesus predicted nothing about the retaining wall built by Herod the Great.

A Perfect Fit?

Cornuke tried to argue that the Temple of Herod was a “perfect fit,” situated on a large square platform, 500 cubits by 500 cubits, over the Gihon Spring and part of the City of David. The book stated: “Josephus also confirms (in *Wars* V.5.2) that the temple was square-shaped. The traditional Temple Mount/Dome of the Rock platform however is not square at all, but a trapezium that measures 1,041 feet on its north wall, 1,596 feet on its west wall, 929 feet on its south wall, and 1,556 feet on its east wall” (2014: 109).

There are several factual errors in this quote. First of all, the citation from *Wars* 5 says nothing about the Temple being square; the correct quote is actually found in *Antiquities* 15. Second, the square mentioned by Josephus was actually the measurement of the platform that Solomon's Temple was originally built upon and not Herod's Temple (Ritmeyer 1992: 27; 2006: 140). Josephus is quite clear on this point. He wrote: “The hill [where Herod's Temple was built] was a rocky ascent that sloped gently up toward the eastern part of the city to the topmost peak” (*Antiquities* 15.397; LCL 8:193; brackets added by GWF). Two geographical points are to be noticed. First, Herod's Temple was on the topmost peak, a reference to the top of the Temple Mount, not down the slopes over, or near, the Gihon Spring. Second, Jerusalem of the Second Temple period included the area of the Western Hill and today's Christian Quarter. From these areas, the Temple Mount is the eastern part of the city.

Josephus then described the hill on which Solomon's Temple was built in these terms: “This hill our first king, Solomon, with God-given wisdom surrounded with great works above at the top. And below, beginning at the foot, where a deep ravine runs around it, he surrounded it with enormous stones bound together with lead. He cut off more and more of the area within as (the wall) became greater in depth, so that the size and height of the structure, **which was a square**, were immense, and the great size of the stones was seen along the front surface, while iron clamps on the inside assured that the joints would remain permanently united. When this work reached the top of the hill, he leveled off the summit, and filled in the hollow spaces near the walls, and made the upper surface smooth and even throughout. **Such was the whole enclosure, having a circumference of four stades, each side taking up the length of a stade**” (*Antiquities* 15. 398-400; LCL 8:193; Ritmeyer 2006: 138-145, 165-205; highlighted italics by GWF). It is important to note again the geographical terms “at the top” and “the top of the hill,” not down the slopes in the City of David as his book contends. The

square platform was built by Solomon, or one of the later Judean kings, but not by Herod the Great as the book stated (Ritmeyer 2006: 141).

The book cited “Shanks, p. 69” as the source for the 500 by 500 cubits square platform information (Cornuke 2014: 203, footnote 6). It was actually found in Shanks book (2007: 69, 192, footnote 15) where Shanks footnoted Dr. Leen Ritmeyer’s excellent article on the location of the original Solomonic Temple (1992: 24-45, 65-66), but apparently not consulted, or at least not interacted with, by Mr. Cornuke for his book. The measurement alleged twin-bridge that was 600 feet between the Antonia Fortress and the Temple

of 500 cubits also comes from tractate *Middoth* (“measurements”) of the Mishnah. “The Temple Mount measured five hundred cubits by five hundred cubits. Its largest [open] space was to the south, † Antonia’s Fortress

he next largest to the east, the third largest to the north, and its smallest [open space] was to the west” (2.1; Danby 1985: 591; brackets in original). The cubit used by Solomon was the long (royal) Egyptian cubit that measured 52.5 centimeters, or 20.67 inches, long (Barkay 1986: 37; Ritmeyer 1992: 33). Thus the First Temple square platform was 262.5 meters (861 feet, almost three football fields in length) on each side. (In the Second Temple period, ca. 400 BC to 70 AD, the cubit was about 50 cm.)

I did a very revealing exercise (see diagram on page two) by taking the “Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem” topographical map (1864-65) by Captain Charles Wilson of the British army and cut a square out of a piece of paper that was 861 feet on the English foot scale. I placed the square 600 feet south of the Temple Mount, according to the scale, and had the square parallel to the Temple Mount. Cornuke’s alleged twin-bridge that was 600 feet between the Antonia’s Fortress and the Temple Mount was connected from the southwest corner of the present-day Temple Mount to the northwest corner of the Temple complex as shown in the drawing in the book (2014: 142; cf. 2014: 62; blue line on diagram). What the imagined square in the book (red square on diagram) covered was very revealing. Besides part of the City of David, it also covered the entire Kidron Valley and part of the Silwan Village on the western slopes of the Mount of Olives. As will be shown below, the illustrations in the book did not even follow its own written calculations!

Geographically, this square platform over the Gihon Spring (red square on diagram) makes no sense for the location of Solomon’s or Herod’s Temples and is impossible for the location of the Temple platform, for three reasons. First, the First Temple platform would have covered the Iron Age houses in the residential area on the eastern slopes of the City of David, also known as Shiloh’s Areas G and E, and Kenyon’s Area A, that were built after the time of Solomon (Shiloh 1984: 17-20). Were these houses dug into the basement of the platform after the construction of the First Temple by Solomon? Second, part of the Silwan Village, which was an Iron Age necropolis for Jerusalemite administrators, would have also been covered (Ussishkin 1993). It would be impossible to hewn Iron Age burial caves in the Silwan escarpment after the Solomonic platform was built! Third, it would dam up the Kidron Valley and create a lake to the north of the Temple complex. Unless of course, Solomon or Herod the Great engaged in a monumental construction project by putting huge sewer pipes under the Temple platform to allow the water from the Kidron Valley to flow through, or

underneath, the Temple complex and down the Kidron Valley to the Dead Sea. But there are no records in the Bible, in Josephus, the rabbinic sources, or archaeological evidence, of any such sewer system or man-made lake.

In reality, Herod expanded the Temple platform so it was considerably larger than the 500-cubit First Temple platform and this is consistent with the literary sources. During the Seleucid, Hasmonean, and Herodian periods the Temple Mount platform was enlarged, thus making the Temple Mount in the days of Herod the Great much larger than the square platform of King Solomon (Ritmeyer 1992: 30-31; Patrich and Edelcopp 2011: 17-37). This is the trapezoid-shaped Temple Mount platform, cited in the first paragraph of this section, which is seen today.

The “perfect fit” of a square of 500 cubits on each side does, however, fit very well on the historical Temple Mount, called by scholars the “Ritmeyer Square” (see green square on diagram; for an excellent summary of this square on the Temple Mount, see Ritmeyer 1992: 27; 2006: 139-145, 238-239)! Mr. Cornuke’s (as well as Ernest Martin’s) idea that the Temples were over the Gihon Spring collapses on this one point alone and it was not the Roman’s that dismantled this imagined square platform - it was the facts on the ground and on the maps that dismantled this theory!

The Inaccurate Drawings in the Book

There are a series of sketches and maps in the book (2014: 140-145) that purport to illustrate the location of the Temples and the Antonia Fortress that the book is trying to argue. There is inaccurate and misleading information in these drawings and maps and they are not reliable. For example, the drawings of the “Roman Fort Antonia” (2014: 143 and 145) are inaccurate because they show only one gate on the entire western side of the Temple Mount, when in fact there were four gates along the western wall that are mentioned in the ancient sources, are known archaeologically, and their remains can be seen today (Ritmeyer 2006: 20-52). The drawing of Herod’s Temple on the bottom of page 141 does not have the porticos surrounding the Temple Platform, nor does it have the auxiliary buildings surrounding the Temple: on the north side of the Temple, going west to east, there is the Chamber of the Hearth, the Gate of Jeconiah, a rinsing chamber, the Gate of the Offering for Women, a salt chamber, the Gate of the Flame, the Chamber of the Lepers, the Northern Gate, and the Chamber of the Woodshed. On the south side of the Temple, going west to east, there is the Kindling gate, a wood chamber, the Gate of the Firstling, the Golah chamber, the Water Gate, the Chamber of Hewn Stone, the Chamber of the House of Oil, the Southern Gate, and the Chamber of the Nazarites. They are all missing. One could be nit-picky on some of the other details, but this is enough to show that the drawings in the book are highly inaccurate and unreliable and do not measure up to rigorous scrutiny, facts on the ground, or the ancient sources.

Unfortunately, for whatever reason, there are no scales on the maps on pages 142 and 144. If there were scales, it would be obvious that the 500-cubit by 500-cubit square platform for the Temple over the Gihon Spring is much too small. This is also true of the two drawings of the temples on pages 140 (bottom) and 141 (bottom). This square platform, if it was consistent with the ancient sources, would have extended over the Kidron Valley to include the Silwan Village (see maps above).

Even without scales the size of the “square platform” and the alleged bridge on the maps can be determined. The entire western wall of the Temple Mount platform is 1,590 feet (Cornuke 2014: 109). If one compares the measurements of the drawings of

the bridge and the “square platform” on the map of page 142, it will be observed that the Temple Mount is $5\frac{1}{2}$ times longer than the bridge or the square, both being approximately the same size. Do the math (1,590 divided by $5\frac{1}{2}$ = 289 feet). Let’s say for the sake of a round number, the “square platform” is 300 x 300 feet and the bridge is 300 feet long (the length of one football field is 91.44 meters, or 182 cubits when in the Second Temple period the cubit was about 50 centimeters long).

The 300-foot “bridge” on Cornuke’s map is half the size of the 600 foot length attributed to it in his book, and the 300 x 300 feet “square platform” (pink square on the diagram) does not even fit into the 500 x 500 cubit square platform over the Gihon Spring in the City of David! The maps and diagrams are very misleading and this creates another major problem for the theory that the Temples were over the Gihon Spring. To confirm my measurement estimates, I also scanned his book map into the computer and was able to place it over my map and the lines of the square in Cornuke’s book and the pink lines are very close, thus confirming my conclusions.

My estimation for the 300 feet is also derived from the known topography of the City of David because in the drawing on page 141, the square platform is northwest of the Gihon Spring and only part way down the eastern slopes of the City of David. The northwestern limit of the platform is the end of the alleged 600-foot bridge (drawn by Cornuke as only 300 ft) coming down from the Temple Mount.

Cornuke’s 300 x 300 foot square is extremely small and could not even support the area of the known dimensions of Herod’s Temple, let alone a 500 x 500 cubit Temple Mount-type platform. The area of Herod’s Temple proper, plus the Courts of the Israelites and the Priests, the altar and the space behind the Temple is 187 cubits long or about 307 feet (Ritmeyer 2006: 370). This measurement is larger than the alleged 300-foot length of Cornuke’s whole platform [pink square] and does not even include the buildings surrounding the Temple, nor the Court of the Women, or the Outer Court for the Gentiles and the Royal Stoa.

Cornuke’s Herodian Temple is not gigantic, grandiose, and glorious as the ancient sources describe. After all, the rabbi’s gave the hated Herod the Great a back-handed compliment when they said, “He who has not seen the Temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building” (BT *Baba Bathra* 4a; Simon 1935: 12). Elsewhere, “Our rabbis taught ... He who has not seen Jerusalem in her splendor, has never seen a desirable city in his life. He who has not seen the Temple in its full construction has never seen a glorious building in his life. Which Temple? ... [Rabbi] Hisda, replied, The reference is to the building of Herod” (BT *Sukkah* 51b; Slotki 1938: 244). And Josephus, “And it was a structure more noteworthy than any under the sun” (*Antiquities* 15.412; LCL 8:199; see also *Wars* 5.207-226; LCL 3:263-269). When the details are examined, this whole Temple-Over-the-City-of-David theory will collapse under the weight of the 500 x 500 cubit square.

The bottom line is this: **Cornuke’s 300 x 300 foot Square Temple Platform is far too small to accommodate the Temple according to the ancient descriptions in the literary sources. The 861 x 861 foot (500 cubit) Square Platform is way too big for Cornuke’s relocation over the City of David, thus it is not a “perfect fit”!!! Yet the 500 x 500 cubit square, called the “Ritmeyer Square by scholars, is a perfect fit for the historical Temple Mount.**

Garbage In, Garbage Out

The book's imagined 500 by 500-cubit Herodian square (red on diagram) would have covered the eastern slope of the City of David that was an active city garbage dump during the Second Temple period. In an important and fascinating article by Professor Ronny Reich and Dr. Eli Shukron, the recent excavators of the City of David, they've described the city-dump on this slope in these terms: "In almost every excavated area, an extremely thick layer of loose debris just under surface [was encountered]. This layer is made of earth, loose rubble, small stones and a large amount of broken artifacts (mainly pottery shards with fragments of stone and glass vessels, coins, etc.), as well as broken animal bones. It seems to be ordinary household garbage, which was dumped down the slope, as is characterized by the slanting bedding lines of the debris. These bedding lines have a constant gradient of approximately 32 degrees, and they show occasional sorting of the components according to mass and size" (2003: 12; brackets added by GWF).

Reich and Shukron summarized the size and date of this dump by saying: "The mantle of debris covers the entire eastern slope of the south western hill (the City of David). This area of debris is at least 400 meters long on the North-South axis (i.e., the length of the hill), and 50-70 meters wide on the West-East axis (i.e., the length of the slope). A modest estimate will show that we deal here with a huge deposit which measures, at least, 400 x 50 x 10 m = 200,000 cubic meters. According to a preliminary reading of the artifacts retrieved from the debris, the greater part of this amount was accumulated during a period of time that extends approximately from the middle of the 1st century B.C.E. [BC] to the year 70 C.E. [70 AD], i.e., over approximately 100-120 years" (2003:14; see also Bouchnik, Bar-Oz, and Reich 2004: 71-80, 50*; Reich and Bar-Oz 2006: 83-98, 14*-15*; Reich 2011: 219-221; brackets added by GWF).

In reality, an active city garbage dump that was in continuous use during at least the last 100 years of the Second Temple period covered the area where the book claimed the 500 x 500 cubit Temple platform was standing. Herod the Great would not have built a temple over an active garbage dump that continued to be in use the whole time his temple existed! The Temple must have been located elsewhere.

A "Superiority" Complex?

In this section several factual errors were made, and one mistake was copied and repeated from a secondary source (2014: 37-39). The section began by calling the Dome of the Rock the Mosque of Omar (see also 2014: 8, 19). The Dome of the Rock is not a mosque and Omar did not build it! This shrine was built by the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik (AD 685-705). Its octagonal shape indicated that it was a commemorative building, and not a mosque.

Professor Moshe Sharon of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and an expert on Arabic and Islamic history observed that: "The Dome of the Rock was not a mosque, it was a shrine, and it no doubt was built to honor and commemorate the rock over which the dome itself was raised." He goes on to suggest that: "The most important memory involved the Jewish Temple built by Solomon; the Muslims believed the rock of the Dome of the Rock was a vestige of Solomon's Temple" (2006: 42).

Sharon documented the fact that the earliest Muslims in Jerusalem believed the Dome of the Rock was the location of Solomon's Temple and they learned of the location of this Temple from the local Jewish population. Sharon stated: "[The] Dome of the Rock was built by the early Muslims to symbolize the renewal of the Temple. The new holy structure thus served as a physical refutation of the Christian belief that the

site should remain in desolation. Similarly, early Jewish midrash, though composed some 60 years after the building of the Dome of the Rock, hails the Muslims as the initiators of Israel's redemption and praises one Muslim ruler as the builder of the 'House of the Lord'" (2006: 44; also see his earlier article, 1992: 56-67).

This goes contrary to the statement in the book that the Muslims did not build the Dome of the Rock because of any former Jewish Temple (Cornuke 2014: 39). In actual fact, that's **exactly** why the Muslims built the Dome of the Rock, because it was the place of the former Temple of Solomon.

Mr. Cornuke's book goes on to quote Dr. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon as saying: "the buildings [plural] on the Temple Mount were, 'Conceived in a manner and setting meant entirely to overwhelm and overshadow the Christian shrine, (which is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher).'" (2014: 39; bracket added by GWF). The book then cited the footnote on page 7 of her *Qedem* 28 volume describing the early Islamic monuments on the Haram al-Sharif ("Noble Sanctuary"), the Arabic name for the Temple Mount. The quote in the book actually came from page 11 of Hershel Shanks book, *Jerusalem's Temple Mount*. Cornuke's book even copied the mistake that Shanks made citing Rosen-Ayalon's book. Shanks said that the buildings (plural), referred to the buildings on the Temple Mount, when in fact, Rosen-Ayalon wrote an "Islamic monument" (singular) and was referring specifically to the al-Aqsa Mosque, not the Dome of the Rock, or any other buildings on the Temple Mount (1989: 4-7). Did the author of the book *Temple* actually consult Dr. Rosen-Ayalon's important work on the architecture of the Haram?

Cornuke's book also claimed that the Mosque of Omar [sic] "is thought by Muslims to be the third most holy place in Islam" (2014: 19). This is also factually incorrect. The Al-Aqsa Mosque is the third holiest shrine in Islam, not the Dome of the Rock. The reader will remember that when Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, went to Jerusalem to make peace with Menachem Begin, the prime minister of Israel, he went to Al-Aqsa Mosque to pray and not the Dome of the Rock.

The 10th century AD Muslim historian, Muqaddasi, was also quoted, but a footnote for this source is not given in the book for this quote (2014: 38). I observed that this quote also came from page 11 of Shanks' book, but Cornuke's book only quoted Shanks book, a secondary source, and not the original sources footnoted by Shanks (Grabar 1976: 55; Goitein 1982: 177). These two articles should have been consulted as well.

The author of the book did not verify what Shanks wrote in his book, but just copied his inaccurate statement. He should have looked up Rosen-Ayalon's book and caught Shanks mistake himself, rather than repeat the inaccurate statement.

A Fourth Century Eye Witness – The Pilgrim of Bordeaux

The book also tried to leverage the Pilgrim of Bordeaux to bolster its arguments. It said: "When the Pilgrim of Bordeaux finally arrived at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in 333 AD (which was still under construction), he wrote some very interesting observations. He said that while looking east from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, he saw stone walls with foundations going down to the Tyropoean Valley. Keep in mind that the pilgrim was looking due east and was staring directly at the traditional Temple Mount area. He said absolutely nothing about it being the temple site, but rather he describes the stone walls (all of the stone walls) that he was looking at as the praetorium of the Romans. Portions of the wall were still evident. This means that the walls would have survived the Roman/Jewish war of 66-70, because they were

property of the fort itself. The praetorium was there, according to the pilgrim, which he said was the place where Jesus was sentenced to death” (2014: 55).

As if on a witness stand, let’s allow the Pilgrim of Bordeaux to speak for himself. This is what he actually said when he wrote about his visit to Jerusalem: “As you leave there [Sion, the church tradition for Mount Zion on the southwest hill of Jerusalem] and pass through the wall of Sion [near present-day Zion Gate] towards the Gate of Neapolis [present-day Damascus Gate], down in the valley [Tyropoean Valley] on your right you have some walls where Pontius Pilate had his house, the Praetorium where the Lord’s case was heard before He suffered. On the left is the hillock Golgotha where the Lord was crucified, and about a stone’s throw from it the vault where they laid His body, and He rose again on the third day. By order of the Emperor Constantine there has now been built there a “basilica” – I mean a “place for the Lord” – which has beside it cisterns of remarkable beauty, and beside them a bath where children are baptized” (Wilkinson 1981: 158-159, information in brackets added by GWF).

It should be observed that the book did not accurately report what the Pilgrim of Bordeaux actually said and, in fact, put words in his mouth. Note some of the inconsistencies: The Pilgrim does not say he is looking east from the Holy Sepulcher to the Temple Mount as the book claimed. Nor did the Pilgrim say he saw stone walls with foundations going down to the Tyropoean Valley. All he said was there were “some walls where Pontius Pilate had his house.”

What the Pilgrim actually wrote of his travels to Jerusalem, describes a walk he took from present-day Zion Gate, north, up the main Roman street within the city, which would later become the Byzantine *Cardo Maximus*, toward the present-day Damascus Gate. He recorded two sites he saw as he walked along this street. The first was the Praetorium on his right and the second was the Holy Sepulcher on his left. He does not state that he is looking east from the Holy Sepulcher.

The location of the Praetorium where the Lord Jesus appeared before Pontius Pilate (Matt. 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28, 33; 19:9) is a debated subject among archaeologists and geographers of the New Testament. There are three sites that have been identified as the Praetorium in the scholarly literature (Pixner 2010: 266-294). The first is the Antonia Fortress in the area of the northwest corner of the Temple Mount under the Sisters of Zion Convent today (*Wars* 5.238-247; LCL 3:275-277). This site is advocated by Father L. H. Vincent (1959: 87-107) and Sister Marie Aline in her doctoral dissertation (1955). The second suggested site is the Upper Palace of Herod in the area of Jaffa Gate (*Wars* 5.177-183, 246; LCL 3:253-255, 277). This site is advocated by Father Pierre Benoit (1971: 135-167; 1973: 167-188; 1975: 87-89) and Dr. Shimon Gibson who places the trial in the Gate of the Essenes next to Herod’s Palace (2009: 81-106). The final site is the Hasmonean Palace located on the eastern edge of the Jewish Quarter today, near the Burnt House and the Herodian Quarter excavations. This site is advocated by Father Bargil Pixner (1996: 122-126; 2010: 266-294; Wilkinson 1977: 168).

Pixner discusses the account by the Pilgrim of Bordeaux in these terms: “The walls (*parietes*) that the pilgrim saw were probably the foundation of the Hasmonean palace, which reached right down into the Tyropoeon Valley” (2010: 277). He goes on to describe the excavations for a Jewish Hospital in 1914 that was observed by Father L. H. Vincent (1914: 429-436) which fits the location and description of the Hasmonean Palace (2010: 285-289). It was this building in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City that the Pilgrim was writing about and not the Temple Mount.

Did the Pilgrim of Bordeaux Actually Visit the Temple Site?

The book claimed that the Pilgrim is looking due east at the Temple Mount and says nothing about it being the temple site (2014: 55). As was shown above, he was not looking at the Temple Mount, but rather the remains of the Praetorium in the present-day Jewish Quarter as he walked past it on his way to the Holy Sepulcher, but interestingly, the Pilgrim had already been on the Temple Mount and gave his description of it.

Here is what he wrote with my comments in brackets: “Jerusalem is twelve miles further on [from Bethel]. In Jerusalem beside the Temple [north side] are two large pools, one to the right and the other to the left [Strouthion Pool; *Wars* 5.467; LCL 3:347; Ritmeyer 2006: 118; and the Pool of Israel; Gurevich 2012], built by Solomon, and inside the city are the twin pools with five porches called Bethsaida [in the area of the St. Anne’s Church]. People who had been sick for many years used to be cured there. The water of these pools is turbid and its colour is scarlet.”

“There is also a vault there [somewhere on the Temple Mount, probably referring to one of the cisterns] where Solomon used to torture demons [cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.45; LCL 5:595], and the corner of a very lofty tower [southeastern corner of the Temple Mount; Ritmeyer 2006: 105], which was where the Lord climbed and said to the Tempter, ‘Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, but Him only shalt thou serve.’ And there also is the great corner-stone of which it was said, ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.’”

“Below the pinnacle of this tower are very many chambers where Solomon had his palace [the so-called Solomon’s Stables]. There too is the chamber where he was when he wrote of Wisdom, and it is roofed with a single stone. Below ground there are some great water-cisterns and pools built with enormous labor [documented by Gibson and Jacobson 1996].”

“And in the sanctuary itself, where the Temple stood which Solomon built, there is marble in front of the altar which has on it the blood of Zacharias – you would think it had only been shed today. All around you can see the marks of the hobnails of the soldiers who killed him, as plainly as if they had been pressed into wax. Two statues of Hadrian stand there, and, not far from them, a pierced stone which the Jews come and anoint each year [the Sakhra Stone under the Dome of the Rock, see Gibson and Jacobson 1996: chapter 8]. They mourn and rend their garments, and then depart. There too is the house of Hezekiah, king of Judah.”

“Moreover, as you leave Jerusalem to climb Sion [he departed the Temple Mount via Warren’s Gate or Barclay’s Gate and exited the city of Jerusalem via the Dung Gate], you see down in the valley on your left, beside the wall, the pool called Siloam [the Pilgrim observes the Pool of Siloam down the Tyropoeon Valley]” (Wilkinson 1981: 155-157).

It should be observed that prior to the Pilgrim of Bordeaux (AD 333 Jewish people were going to the Temple Mount, probably only on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and anointing the Rock where the Holy of Holies once stood (Ritmeyer 2006: 263). These facts are contrary to the book’s assertion that in the 4th century AD people did not know where the Temples had been located (Cornuke 2014: 9, 35). The Jewish people **knew** exactly where the Temples were because they had unbroken knowledge from AD 70 as to where the temples had stood on the historical Temple Mount. When the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik (AD 685-705) inquired as to where the

Temple of Solomon once stood, the Jewish people could show him exactly where it was on the Temple Mount.

The book also quoted the 6th century AD pilgrim from Brevarius who stated: “There is nothing left there [where Solomon built the temple] apart from a single cave” (Cornuke 2014: 57; brackets in original; cited from Shanks 2007: 58; who cited Wilkinson 1977: 61). The Cornuke’s book interprets this passage to mean that: “The ‘*nothing left*’ notation clearly means no stone walls such as we find at the traditional Temple Mount and the ‘*single cave*’ description harmonizes with geological consistency with the large stone cave that encapsulates the Gihon Spring area in the city of David where half a million tourists a year walk through” (2014: 57).

It would be more accurate to interpret the “nothing left” to refer to nothing left of the actual Temple as mentioned above, and the “single cave” as the cave under the Sakhra in the Dome of the Rock (Gibson and Jacobson 1996: chapter 8). Cornuke’s book ignored the correct comments by Shanks after the Brevarius pilgrim quote when he wrote: “This is probably the cave, still to be visited, under the rock of the Dome of the Rock” (2007: 57).

Destruction of the Antonia Fortress

The book described the Antonia Fortress as “several cities” and attributed to Josephus this description: [It was] “a huge complex with many thousands of troops and support staff, from medical facilities to prisons, places of worship, food storage, kitchens, stables, horse tenders, bakers, armories, blacksmiths, barbers, court rooms, baths, granaries, brothels, roads, latrines, barracks and officers’ quarters” (2014: 50; but neither statement is documented or footnoted).

A brief overview of the history of the Antonia Fortress should be given. One of the first acts of King Herod after he returned from Rome as “King of the Jews” was to build the fortress about 37 BC and he completed it in short order (Netzer 2008: 120-121). He named it after his friend Mark Anthony, as “a crowning exhibition of the innate grandeur of his genius” (*Wars* 5.238; LCL 3: 275). It was built over the area of the Baris, a Hasmonean fort. The Roman’s garrisoned troops there to keep the peace during festivals when Jewish nationalistic fever ran high.

Josephus recorded the siege of the Antonia Fortress by the Jewish rebels at the beginning of the First Jewish Revolt in AD 66. He stated: “On the next day, being the fifteenth of the month Lous [equivalent to the month of Av, or about August on the Gregorian calendar], they [the Jewish rebels] attacked Antonia, and, after a siege of two days, captured the garrison, put them to the sword and set fire to the fortress” (*Wars* 2.430; LCL 2:493, brackets added by GWF).

This passage raises several serious problems for the idea that all of the Temple Mount was the Antonia Fortress. First, it would be impossible for the Jewish rebels to take the Antonia Fortress from 6,000 heavily armed Roman soldiers and another 4,000 support troops after just a two-day siege. Second, the Jewish rebels slaughtered all of the Roman soldiers. There are no independent records of a whole Roman legion of 10,000 soldiers being wiped out by Jewish rebels at the beginning of the First Jewish Revolt. Third, the Antonia Fortress remained in Jewish hands until the end of the First Revolt in AD 70.

The fact that the Jewish rebels controlled the Antonia Fortress accounted for why General Titus attacked the fortress which was controlled by John of Gischala in order to get to the Temple, assuming the Temple was on the Temple Mount (*Wars* 5.356-358;

LCL 3:311). Two Roman Legions, the 5th and the 12th, attacked the Antonia Fortress (*Wars* 5.467; LCL 3:347). After a fierce battle, the Romans took the fortress and General Titus ordered the destruction of the entire Antonia Fortress (*Wars* 6.93; LCL 3:403). It took his soldiers seven days to demolish it (*Wars* 6.149; LCL 3:419), even while they are fighting the Jewish rebels! It would have taken them way more than seven days to demolish the Antonia Fortress if it consisted of all the buildings the book suggested were on the whole Temple Mount and many more men to help demolish it.

If the Antonia Fortress is the entire Temple Mount, it does not make sense strategically or militarily for General Titus to destroy the “several cities” (Cornuke 2014: 50) of the Antonia fortress. Why would he want to destroy such a strategic position? It would make more sense for him to preserve the Antonia Fortress (Temple Mount according to the book) because he would have controlled the high ground overlooking the Temple, if it was down in the City of David, as the book claims. These are serious problems which are not addressed by the advocates of the Temple Mount being only the Antonia Fortress because these facts refute their ideas.

On the other hand, it makes perfect sense if the Antonia Fortress is in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount and the Herodian Temple was on the Temple Mount (Netzer 2007: 134-143, 14*; 2008: 120-126). The Romans were making a path to get to the Jewish fighters defending the Temple on the Temple Mount and that path lead through the Antonia Fortress.

Evidence from the Masada Commander

Cornuke’s book introduced the commander of Masada thus: “One still voice from Masada still speaks to us today. He was a very important eyewitness to events described in this book, and offers a huge piece of evidence on the temple location. His name is Eleazar Bin [sic] Jari [sic] – commander of the Jewish rebels at Masada” (2014: 60). Was he an important eyewitness? Does the “huge piece of evidence” support the claims of the book?

In AD 66, the Jewish faction called the Sicarii, headed by Menahem, a relative of Eleazar Ben-Yair, captured Masada from the Romans and took the weapons that were stored there and used them to capture the Upper City of Jerusalem (*Wars* 2.408-409; LCL 2:483; 2.433-440; LCL 2:493-495). After the battle, Menahem was killed by another Jewish faction in Jerusalem and Eleazar fled to Masada to become its despot (*Wars* 2.447; LCL 2:497). It should be pointed out that Eleazar Ben-Yair was not an eyewitness to the fall of Jerusalem. In fact, he sat out the whole four-year battle for Jerusalem at the fortress of Masada at the southern end of the Dead Sea!

The book recounted the words of the commander of Masada, Eleazar Ben-Yair, in order to demonstrate “the Roman camp called Antonia Garrison Fort with its high stone walls [were] still standing. This can only mean that (according to Eleazar) the Temple Mount (Roman fort) survived, in part, because it was a camp of the Tenth Legion of Rome. On the other hand, Eleazar clearly says that the temple was gone completely, even its very foundations were uprooted, thus fulfilling the prophecy of our Lord” (2014: 61, parenthesis in original, brackets added by GWF).

The book quoted part of Eleazar’s speech to the defenders of Masada trying to convince them to commit suicide rather than be captured and ravished by the Romans. The words attributed by Josephus to Eleazar are: “It [Jerusalem] is now demolished to the very foundations, and hath nothing left but that monument of it preserved, I mean the camp of those [the Romans] that hath destroyed it, which still dwells upon the ruins.”

[Brackets in original, the footnote cited is to Martin 2000: 29. The actual citation from Josephus is not given in the book but it comes from *Wars* VII.8.7]. Let's assume for a minute this is a valid translation. The translation in the Loeb edition, however, is much different (*Wars* 7.375-377; LCL 3: 611).

Josephus, elsewhere, described the destruction of Jerusalem after all the Jewish people were slaughtered or carried away captive. He wrote: "Caesar ordered the whole city and the temple to be razed to the ground, leaving only the loftiest of the towers, Phasael, Hippicus, and Mariamme, and the portion of the wall enclosing the city [of Jerusalem, not the Western Wall of the Temple Mount] on the west: the latter as an encampment for the garrison that was to remain, and the towers to indicate to posterity the nature of the city and of the strong defenses which had yet yielded to Roman prowess. All the rest of the wall encompassing the city was so completely leveled to the ground as to leave future visitors to the spot no ground for believing that it had been inhabited" (*Wars* 7.1-4; LCL 3:505, brackets added by GWF).

The monument that Eleazar is referring to is the Citadel with its three towers, not the Antonia Fortress or the Temple Mount. The remains of these towers are in the area of today's Jaffa Gate (Geva 1981:57-65; Netzer 2006:126-129; for a description of these towers, see Josephus, *Antiquities* 5:161-175; LCL 3:249-253). These were in fact preserved for posterity by the Tenth Roman Legion which made their encampment in that area after the destruction of Jerusalem, located today underneath the Police Station near Jaffa Gate. The camp could not be referring to the Temple Mount as the Antonia Fortress as is claimed in the book because General Titus ordered the destruction of the Antonia Fortress (*Wars* 6.93; LCL 3:403) and it took his soldiers seven days to demolish it (*Wars* 6.149; LCL 3:419). So the Antonia Fortress was already destroyed by the Romans themselves!

Another reason the Antonia Fortress could not be the entire Temple Mount as the book claimed is because its high stone walls were not left standing, but were pushed over the edge (contra to the book's assertion, 2014: 61). This was vividly shown by the ashlar blocks that fell from the Temple Mount enclosure (for photos, see Ben-Dov 1982: 109, top and bottom; Geva 1997: 37). The piles of stones were much higher after the AD 70 destruction, but many of the stones were put to secondary use during the Byzantine period as well as in the Omayyad palace structures near the Temple Mount (Mazar 1971: 11).

The book stated that: "Most scholars insist that remnants of the fort are to be one day found in the upper city region, but this ghost fort is still missing. The *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly* in 1998 stated that absolutely no evidence of a Roman camp ever was found in the upper city" (2014: 56). Unfortunately the proper citation for this article is not given in the bibliography. The article was by Doron Bar and entitled, "Aelia Capitolina and the Location of the Camp of the Tenth Legion." Bar correctly pointed out archaeological and literary reasons why the camp of the Tenth Roman legion could not have been on the south-western hill, the area of today's Armenian Quarter (1998: 8-13). However, Cornuke's book did not present Bar's new proposal, nor did it interact with that proposal (1998: 13-18) that the: "location of the Tenth Legion's camp was confined to the area between the Second Wall and the Third Wall. This area, which today is included within the boundaries of the Christian Quarter, the Muristan and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, enabled the Legion soldiers to control the entire city easily. ...That area was chosen because of the relative sparsity of construction there and mostly because of the topographical and military advantages it offered" (1998: 15,

see map, page 14). Unfortunately, because the Christian Quarter, northeast of Jaffa Gate, is a living community, little archaeological excavations have been conducted in this area, but there are scattered archaeological remains that suggest the Roman camp might have been in this location.

The Two Bridges

The book, following the ideas of Ernest Martin (2000: 413-416), suggested that there was a 600 foot double-bridge between the Antonia Fortress and the Temple Mount (2014: 61-63). Two passages from Josephus are cited to prove this bridge existed. One passage stated: “The Jewish revolutionaries, afraid that Florus would return to the attack and seize the Temple by way of the fortress Antonia, instantly mounted the porticoes that link the two buildings and cut the connection. This maneuver cooled the cupidity of Florus; for it was the treasures of God that he coveted and for this reason he was anxious to reach Antonia, and now that the porticoes were broken down, his ardor was checked” (*Wars* 2.15.6 (330-331a); Cornfeld 1982: 176; see also LCL 2: 451). It is very important to note, this passage does NOT mention a bridge: porticoes are not bridges! The footnote on this passage in the Cornfeld edition of Josephus stated: “Communications were cut between the Antonia and the Temple when the southern porticoes were destroyed. As shown in the diagram, porticoes surrounded all four sides of the vast Temple esplanade and the western portico abutted the Antonia at the northern end” (1982: 176, footnote 330a). There is no mention of any bridge.

Professor Ehud Netzer discussed these porticoes, also known as colonnades, in his important book, *The Architecture of Herod the Great Builder* (2008: 164-165). “The colonnades which surrounded Herod’s Temple Mount on the western, northern and eastern sides were double ones, whereas on the south stood the larger and more elaborate *stoa basileia*” (2008: 164). He then cited Josephus’ description of the porticoes (*Wars* 5. 190-192; LCL 3: 257). For the sake of continuity, we will continue quoting from the Cornfeld edition of Josephus: “Nor were the superstructures of the sanctuary unworthy of such foundations. The porticoes, all erected in double rows, were supported by columns 25 cubits high – cut from single blocks of the purest white marble – and the ceiling was paneled with cedar. The natural magnificence of these columns, their excellent polished and accurate jointing, afforded a striking spectacle, without any added ornament of painting or carving. The porticoes were 30 cubits wide and the complete circuit of them measured six furlong, the Antonia tower being enclosed within them. From end to end the open court was paved with all manner of varied stones” (*Wars* 5.5.2 (190-192); 1982: 351, 354).

Netzer continued to explain the importance of the porticoes. He stated: “They undoubtedly enhanced the splendor of the Temple Mount and in any event served as an architectural framework for the huge space. They also provided a refuge from the heat of the sun, winds and rain, and were a convenient place for relaxation, meetings, and other activities such as the sale of certain commodities or money changing” (2008: 165).

The second passage from Josephus that is cited in the book is *Wars* 6.2.6 (144). “The fight was mainly of stationary nature and confined in a narrow space [of a furlong], the maneuvers flowing very slightly and rapidly to and fro; flight and pursuit were alike impossible for both sides in the restricted space.” The importance of this passage for the advocates of the Temple being over the Gihon Spring is the measurement of one furlong, or 600 feet. The context of this passage concerned the battle over the Temple Mount at the end of the First Jewish Revolt. It should be noticed that there is no mention

of any bridge, or fighting on a bridge. The fighting being described is in the narrow confines of the northern portico on the Temple Mount (Aharoni, Avi-Yonah, Rainey, and Safrai Map 261, movement 9).

Josephus gives a lengthy description of the Antonia Fortress (*Wars* 5.238-247). In the beginning he describes the location of the Fortress: “The Tower of Antonia lay at the angle where two porticoes, the western and the northern, of the first court of the Temple meet; it was built upon a rock fifty cubits high and on all sides precipitous. It was the work of King Herod and a crowning exhibition of the innate grandeur of his genius” (*Wars* 5.238; LCL 3:275). In this passage, Josephus places the Fortress in the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount, where the western and northern porticoes meet, and he does not mention any bridge.

There was direct contact between the Fortress and the Temple courts. Later in the passage, Josephus stated: “At the point where it impinged upon the porticoes of the Temple, there were stairs leading down to both of them, by which the guards descended” (*Wars* 5.242-243; LCL 3: 277). These would be the stairs that the Apostle Paul was taken up into the Fortress and from which he spoke to the crowd below in the Temple court (Acts 21:32, 35, 40).

Josephus does not mention a 600 foot double-bridge between the Antonia Fortress and the Temple Mount. Unfortunately the ancient sources were not carefully read by the author of the book.

The Flowing Waters of Gihon

The eighth chapter of the book begins with a story about a letter that was found in the Cairo Genizah (2014: 81-82). It claimed that this letter “indicated that [the] seventh century Jews from Tiberius [sic] believed that the gates from the temple were not on the traditional Temple Mount but south of the location over the water system of the Spring of Gihon” (brackets added by GWF).

The book then cited: “When the Caliph Omar visited Jerusalem shortly after the conquest, he asked the Jews, ‘Where would you wish to live in the city?’ They answered, ‘In the Southern section of the city, which is the market of the Jews.’” It then footnoted (2014: 203) page 148 in the softback edition of Rabbi Reuven Hammer’s book *The Jerusalem Anthology. A Literary Guide*. The quote is found on page 159 of the hardback edition of Hammer’s book (1995: 159).

It is then speculated: “The Jews, by saying this, wanted to be close to the real temple site and its gates, as well as the waters of Siloam [Gihon Spring]. These very rare and important written records make it clear that, at least in the seventh century, the Jews from Tiberius [sic] had gained knowledge which caused them to believe that the temple was situated contiguous to Gihon in the City of David and in the stronghold of Zion. They never fully accepted that the temple was on what we now call the Temple Mount [brackets in original quote, “sic” added by GWF].”

Unfortunately, the entire original letter was not read carefully, if it was read at all. The first paragraph said that the Moslems “brought with them Israelites who could show them the site of the Temple.” These Jews knew exactly where the Temple used to be because of an unbroken historical knowledge of the site since AD 70. The next paragraph described the cleaning of the Temple Mount by Moslems and Jews who worked together as they looked for the Foundation Stone. When it was uncovered, one of the Jewish sages: “ordered that the wall of the sanctuary be built and a dome be erected over the stone and overlaid with gold.” A walled sanctuary with a golden dome

was never built in the City of David over the Gihon Spring, but instead, the Dome of the Rock was indeed, built on the Haram el-Sharif, the Temple Mount!

The quote that Mr. Cornuke cited in his book was in the context of a controversy between the Jews and Christians in Jerusalem as to how many Jews would be allowed to return to Jerusalem and settle within the city walls. Omar settled the dispute by saying 70 Jewish families from Tiberias could return. When Omar asked where they would like to settle they said the southern part of the city. The letter goes on to give the reason: "Their request was to enable them to be near the site of the Temple and its gates, as well as to the waters of Shiloh, which could be used for immersion."

Two geographical points should be noted here. First, the Jews settled within the city walls of Jerusalem (for a map of this period, see Bahat 1990: 81). The 7th century Jewish Quarter was located south of the Temple Mount and extended at least down to the area of the present-day City of David Visitors Center (Pink Square on map). There was probably a synagogue in the area of Robinson's Arch, known by archaeologists as the "House of the Menorot," a reused Byzantine building (Mazar 2002: 92-104; 2003: 183-185; Reich 2011: 339-340).

Second, the waters of Shiloah were used for ritual immersions. The book interprets this to be the Gihon Spring (Cornuke 2014: 81), but as Professor Reich and Dr. Shukron have pointed out in their important articles on the history of the Gihon Spring (2004: 211-223; 2007: 211-218, 17*), the Gihon Spring was blocked up and not in use or visible at the beginning of the Islamic period, the time of this letter.

The waters of Shiloah could only be referring to the Pool of Siloam, not the Gihon Spring. For a 7th century AD Jewish person living in the area of today's City of David Visitor's Center, the Pool of Siloam to the south and the Temple Mount to the north were a short walk so they were "near" to the Jewish Quarter. If the Temples had been in the City of David (Pink Square on map), the letter writer would have said they were "on the Temple" site and not "near the site of the Temple and its gates" as stated in the letter.

The fact is, in the 7th century AD, Jews and Moslems co-existed peacefully in Jerusalem because the Jews of Tiberias had helped the Moslems rediscover and clean the area of Solomon's Temple on the Temple Mount. This goes contrary to the book's claim that the: "Jews had been prolifically ousted from their land as far back as the Romans and more comprehensively during the time of the seventh century by the Muslims" (2014: 148).

The Coin, Herod, and the Western Wall

The book tells a story about a private tour that Mr. Cornuke had with Eli Shukron in some of the underground tunnels excavated by him and Ronny Reich. Somewhere near the retaining wall of the Temple Enclosure, Eli dropped an archaeological bombshell on Mr. Cornuke, but he did not realize the real implications of it (2014: 117-119). The storyteller in the book revealed that Eli excavated one coin, dated to AD 20, "beneath a huge stone block down here under the very lowest layer of foundation stones" (2014: 118). Shukron then allegedly said, "I am telling you that Herod did not build the Western Wall" (2014: 118)! The book concluded that "Herod did not build what he has been so profusely credited with", referring to Herod's Temple (2014: 119). This "hear say" story is what was told in the book.

Eli Shukron should speak for himself. In an article that he published entitled, “Did Herod Build the Foundations of the Western Wall?” he described the actual excavations and his conclusions (2012: 13*-27*). The first course of the stones of the southwestern part of the Temple Enclosure near Robinson’s Arch was built on top of *Miqweh* 55 (these Jewish ritual baths are usually spelled “mikvah” in English). In the course of the excavations, three “Herodian” type oil lamps were discovered along with 33 bronze coins in the *miqweh* (2012: 18*). These coins were cleaned and identified by David Ariel of the Israel Antiquities Authority. Shukron reported that: “Among them he [David Ariel] identified eight coins that post-dated Herod’s time. The latest of these were four coins dated to 17/18 CE, from the period of the Roman governor Valerius Gratus, who ruled Judea at the time of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. The conclusion from this data – that ***the Western Wall in the area near Robinson’s Arch*** was built some 20 years after Herod’s death – came as a great surprise” (2012: 19*, highlighted italics by GWF). Notice the differences between the story in the book and what Dr. Shukron actually wrote in his article. First, Eli identified the latest four coins that were found were dated to AD 17/18, and not just one coin that was dated to AD 20 according to the storyteller. Second, the area of the wall built after Herod’s death was limited to the Western Wall near the area of Robinson’s Arch and not the whole Western Wall, or the “Wailing Wall” as the storyteller claimed.

In the conclusion of the article, Eli puts all the pieces of the puzzle into a proper historical context and perspective which is not surprising if one takes the historical records at face value. He concluded: “From the archaeological data yielded by our excavation we may conclude that the first course of the Western Wall in the area of Robinson’s Arch was laid beginning about 20 years after King Herod’s death, and that construction of the Temple Mount complex went on for many years thereafter. This picture is also supported by the historical sources, which mention ongoing construction after Herod’s death (John 2:20). Josephus also says that Herod did not build the retaining walls of the Temple Mount” (2012: 25*; he then cited Josephus, *Wars* 5.187; LCL 3: 255-257). It is important to note that Shukron limited the area of the Western Wall that was not built by Herod the Great to the southwest corner, part of the Herodian enlargement of the Temple Mount near Robinson’s Arch, not the Western Wall where Jews gather today to pray. The title of his article was probably a deliberate, provocative title to get people to read the article and it worked! I read it with great interest!

Professor Benjamin Mazar, the excavator of the Southern Wall excavation of the Temple Mount observed: “Indeed, John 2:20 notes that the building of the Temple lasted 46 years (that is, till c. A.D. 27/8); in the Talmud (BT, Shabbat 115a and parallel texts) we find indications of building activities in the days of R. Gamaliel the Elder; Josephus (*Ant.* XX, 219) relates that construction was completed only in the days of Albinus, close upon the outbreak of the First Revolt” (1978: 231).

Unfortunately, the book missed the archaeological implications of what Dr. Shukron actually said. Mr. Cornuke was thinking of Herod’s Temple, but he failed to consider the fact that these coins destroyed his own idea that the Antonia Fortress, built only by Herod the Great, is the present-day Temple Mount! If the Temple Mount was just the Antonia Fortress, as the book claimed, then Herod the Great did not build the entire structure in his lifetime as the ancient sources indicated.

The Museum Clue

The book recounted a visit to the Israel Museum during one of Mr. Cornuke's visits to Israel. A broken inscription was observed in the Israel Museum that had a description plaque that said: "This Greek inscription, discovered in excavations south of the Temple Mount records the construction of pavement paid for with a donation by a man from Rhodes. It is possible that the pavement was a costly *opus sectile* floor, in keeping with Josephus' description: 'The open court was from end to end variegated with paving of all manner of stones' (*Jewish Wars* 5, 192)" (2014: 127; the quote is from LCL 3: 257). The book goes on to speculate, "But the most interesting fact about the stone mounted on the wall of the museum was that it was found south of the Temple Mount which only could be either on the Ophel or in the City of David. In any event, it is right where we were all now believing that the true temple area should be" (2014: 128).

Unfortunately there was no follow-up to this clue. Where exactly was it found? Was it from the Temple of Herod? What is the implication of this inscription? Does it help identify where the Temple was located? Did it fall down from the Temple Mount, or was it carried uphill from the City of David?

The inscription was published in 1983 by Benjamin Isaac (1983: 86-92; also 1985: 1-4). He described it as being made of "hard local limestone. The size of the inscription suggests that it was a plaque inserted in a wall: extant measurements height 20 cm.; width 26 cm.; thickness 12 cm. The height of the lettering is 2 cm." (1983: 86). It was found in the debris of a pool within a monumental building that was 90 meters to the south of the Triple Gate of the Temple Mount. This was Area 23, Locus 23005 in Benjamin Mazar's excavation (Isaac 1983: 86; map page 87; section of Locus 23005, page 88; picture, Mazar 1978, Plate 38; Mazar and Mazar 1989: 4-5, plans 6-8).

Isaac summarized his conclusions thus: "[The] inscription records a benefaction made by Paris (or Sparis) son of Akeson, presumably a (Jewish) foreign resident at [the island of] Rhodes, for a pavement of the southern court. The date is year 20 of a king who cannot be other than Herod, i.e. 18-17 B.C.E. [18-17 BC]. This is the period in which just the Temple itself was rebuilt. The inscription may support the earlier of the two dates given by Josephus for the commencement of the work [23/22 BC; 1983: 88]. This is a rare record of donation made for the building of the Temple complex and raises the question of whether such donations were more important as a means of financing the work than Josephus admits. The inscription is important as one of the few extant epigraphical documents related to the Temple in Jerusalem" (1983: 92; brackets added by GWF).

Isaac acknowledged that "[Since] the inscription was not found *in situ*, we cannot be certain what pavement is meant. It could have been somewhere near the find spot, south of the Temple Mount. Prof. Mazar has found abundant remains of fine Herodian paving in the area. A pavement, however, for which a considerable sum was donated is more likely to be found on the Temple Mount itself, particularly since during the Herodian period the find spot was in the area of a palace. The spot is only 90 m. from the southern retaining wall of the Temple Mount and it is therefore quite possible that the inscription derives from the superstructure, perhaps from the Royal Stoa. In the excavations south of the Mount, architectural members have been found which certainly originate from the upper courses of the walls, from the gates and from the Royal Stoa. The open, southern court of the Temple was, according to Josephus, 'completely paved with a variety of all kinds of stone'. It is quite possible that this is the pavement to which the inscription refers." (1983: 89). Isaac quoted the same passage from Josephus that

was on the plaque in the Israel Museum. It would make sense that the plaque fell down from the Temple Mount.

Vitruvius, a 1st century BC architect and engineer, described in his book, *On Architecture*, how *opus sectile*, marble in geometric forms, was made and used for floor pavement (7.1.3-4; LCL 2:83). Within the last ten years, Josephus' statement has been verified and confirmed by archaeological research. The Temple Mount Sifting Project has found tens of thousands of *opus sectile* paving stones of different colors. These paving stones originated from the southeast corner of the Temple Mount and would have been part of the southern court of the Temple (Avraham 2007: 87-96, 22*-23*). The inscription in the museum and the multi-colored paving stones from the southern part of the Temple Mount all point to Herod's Temple being located on the Temple Mount and not in the City of David. The inscription would have fallen down from the Temple Mount. That's the law of gravity!

The Chamber of Gemariah

Mr. Cornuke stood overlooking Area G of the City of David Excavations (2014: 100-102) with his research team of Bonnie Dawson and Paul M. Feinberg, an adjunct geology professor at Hunter College in New York City (not to be confused with the late Dr. Paul David Feinberg of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School). The geologist Paul M. Feinberg mentioned to Mr. Cornuke a bulla that was found below where they were standing that had the name "Gemaryahu son of Shaphan" on it (Shoham 2000: 33). Feinberg read Jeremiah 36:10 and suggested that the bulla was found in the "chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court at the entry of the New Gate of the Lords House."

From his vantage point, Mr. Cornuke would have observed above the "House of the Bullae" where the Gemaryahu bulla was found, the "Ahiel House", a typical Israelite four-room residential house (Shiloh 1970); and to the north of this house was the "Burnt Room", part of another Israelite four-room house (Shiloh 1984: 17-20). The excavator of Area G, Dr. Yigal Shiloh, described this area as: "[A] complex of houses and several auxiliary rooms, all from the last phase of the Israelite period, 7th-6th centuries B.C. These structures cover the upper terrace between its main retaining wall on the east, and the fortification system at the top of the slope on the west. The main structure in this area is a house, typical of the Israelite city in Judah and Israel, built according to the 'four-room house' plan. The plastered walls of the house were preserved to a surprising height of about 3 m. North of this house, we uncovered another series of auxiliary structures, courtyards, and storage rooms which might belong to another unit located north of the 'four-room house'" (Shiloh 1981: 164-165).

The facts are this was a residential area with domestic dwellings from the 7th-6th centuries BC, with even a toilet, built on terraces (the ancient Millo) with a staircase going up the eastern slope of the City of David. The date of this residential structure creates a major problem for the alleged First Temple "500 x 500 cubit square platform" that was built over it. Either the house was built under the "square platform" in the basement of Solomon's temple in the 7th century BC, or the "square platform" over the City of David never existed! Having worked in Area G of the City of David excavations in 1979, I would opt for the latter. It was NOT part of Solomon's Temple, as the geologist Feinberg claimed, because the houses were not built into the basement of his Temple, thus the Temple was not over the Gihon Spring in the City of David.

Underground Sanctuary?

The book described a visit by Mr. Cornuke and his team to an “underground sanctuary” situated just above the Gihon Spring (2014: 12-16, 128-134). This complex of rock-cut rooms was excavated by Reich and Shukron in 2009 (Reich and Shukron 2011b: 78-95; 2012: 39-43).

Room 1 had a straight channel, which the book recorded that Eli said, “This is a channel for blood and, as you can see, this room is raised. It is here there was an altar for sacrificing small animals, such as sheep” (2014: 129; cf. Reich and Shukron 2012: 40). In Room 2 a depression and a hole in the wall indicated the room was used as an olive press. The book speculated, based on Lev. 21:12, that “this well may be the actual temple location” (2014: 129; cf. Reich and Shukron 2012: 40-41). In Room 4 an “upright stone” was shown, later spoken of as a stele in Mr. Cornuke’s presentations (2014: 131-132; cf. Reich and Shukron 2012: 41*). In Room 5 there were three “V”s carved into the bedrock. In the book, this is interpreted as the “legs of the slaughter tables” (2014: 133). All this led Mr. Cornuke to write: “I knew where I was – somewhere in the complex of Solomon’s temple” (2014: 132).

Was Mr. Cornuke really standing in the complex of Solomon’s Temple? What are the facts? In 2011, a preliminary article was published in *New Studies in the Archaeology of Jerusalem and its Region* in Hebrew (2011b: 78-95). In 2012, Professor Reich and Dr. Shukron published another article, in English, on the Parker-Vincent excavation in the area of the Gihon Spring and briefly summarized their findings from the 2009 excavations near the Gihon Spring. The section about the “underground sanctuary” is entitled: “Complex of Rock-Cut Rooms Dating from the Iron Age II” (2012: 39*-43*). We should let Ronny and Eli speak for themselves.

The so-called stele in Room 4 is described as “a thin, flat, standing stone, which is almost round at the top. (5 cm thick, 80 cm long, maximum height 40 cm above the base)” (2012: 41* [ca. 2 inches thick, 31.5 inches long, ca. 16 inches high]) and called a “small marker” by the excavators. They suggest that this small marker “expresses quite simply in stone some spiritual aspect of life.” They concluded that the small marker “at most, might have served in a private household ritual of some sort. Since the nearby rooms revealed installations some of which were certainly involved in agricultural activities, the marker may have been connected to these activities” (2012: 43*). The stele in the drawing in the book is way out of proportion. Judging from the man in Room 4 it is much too big for the description of a small stele (2014: 141, top diagram). At best, this stele is part of a small, private, cultic site in the basement of an 8th century BC house, but it has nothing to do with Solomon’s Temple. A stele in the Temple would be completely against the commands of the Torah and the construction of the Temple. It’s presence in a private dwelling of the 8th century BC, however, would make sense in light of the rampant paganism and the religious syncretism of the Divided Monarchy.

The V-shaped cuttings on the floor of Room 5 have baffled scholars and the public when the news of this discovery was announced on Yahoo. Among other things, there was a well-used basalt grinding stone found in the room (Reich and Shukron 2011b: 87). Reich and Shukron add another detail about this room. They observed: “In the southwestern corner is a rectangular opening leading to a small chamber. The chamber was found full of soil containing a concentration of perforated loom weights made of mud, which disintegrated when removed” (2012: 42*). The excavators admit they have no reasonable explanation for the V-shaped cuttings, but they hazarded a guess “that the wooden frame of a loom was inserted into these cuttings, based on the

group of perforated mud loom weights found in the nearby room cut into the western rock face” (2012: 43*).

Like the “House of the Bullae” and the “House of Ahiel” mentioned above, the dating of this structure is yet another major problem for the advocates of the Temple being over the Gihon Spring in the City of David. This house existed in the 8th century BC and would have been directly under the alleged “500 x 500 cubits square platform” built during the First Temple Period! There are only two options to consider for this house. Either the house was built in the basement of Solomon’s Temple under the alleged “square platform,” or the Temple of Solomon was not over the Gihon Spring in the City of David. The facts fit the latter option. The Temple of Solomon was not built in the City of David, but further up the hill on Biblical Mount Zion, outside the City of David and the Stronghold of Zion.

There has been some speculation on the Internet that this structure was the Temple of Melchizedek (cf. Gen. 14: 18-20; Ps. 110: 4; Heb. 7:1-28). It would be wise not to speculate on the identification of the structure and it would be best to wait for the final excavation report to be published before any conclusions as to the identification of this structure can be drawn. It should be kept in mind that Bronze Age temples were typically located on the acropolis, located on the highest parts of cities and not situated at the lowest parts as where this “underground sanctuary” was located. But I think we can safely conclude, Mr. Cornuke and his team were not standing in the “complex of Solomon’s temple” when they visited this “underground sanctuary” but the basement of a domestic house connected with agriculture (the two olive presses and basalt grinding stone) and weaving.

The Battle of the Bulge and the Warning Stones

Advocates of the Temple over the Gihon Springs in the City of David claimed that no artifacts or objects from the Temples have been found from the area of the Temple Mount. This is simply not an accurate statement. Josephus described warning inscriptions that were placed around the Temple on the Temple Mount. He wrote: “Proceeding across this toward the second court of the Temple, one found it surrounded by a stone balustrade, three cubits high and of exquisite workmanship; in this at regular intervals stood slabs giving warning, some in Greek, others in Latin characters, of the law of purification, to wit that no foreigner was permitted to enter the holy place, for so the second enclosure was called” (*Wars* 5.193-194; LCL 3: 257-259). And again: “[First Court]. Within it and not far distant was a second one, accessible by a few steps and surrounded by a stone balustrade with an inscription prohibiting the entrance of a foreigner under threat of the penalty of death” (*Antiquities* 15.417; LCL 8: 203).

There are archaeological confirmations of these statements by Josephus. Clermont-Ganneau discovered a complete Greek inscription in 1871 near the St. Stephen’s Gate to the north of the northeastern corner of the Temple Mount. It is translated: “No foreigner is to enter within the balustrade and embankment around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death which follows.” (1871:132-133). This inscription is in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum in Turkey. A second inscription was found in December 1935 just outside St. Stephen’s Gate, also known as the Lion’s Gate, and is in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem (Ilfie 1938: 1-3).

These two inscriptions are from the Temple area as attested by Josephus and indicate that Herod’s Temple was on top of the Temple Mount and not above the Gihon

Spring in the City of David. When General Titus and his troops pushed the debris of the Temple from the Temple Mount, they pushed debris and materials in a north-east direction that created an un-natural bulge in the topography of the Muslim Cemetery to the northeast of St. Stephen's Gate. This can be seen today in any aerial photograph of the eastern side of the Old City of Jerusalem. It does not make geographical sense, if Herod's Temple was above the Gihon Spring, to push all the debris from the Temple up over the Antonia Fortress (the Temple Mount, which was still standing according to Mr. Cornuke's and Ernest Martin's understanding) to become this massive bulge to the northeast of the St. Stephen's Gate where the two Warning Inscriptions were found.

The Place of the Blowing of the Trumpet

Another object from Herod's Temple that was not discussed in the book was a large stone found on the First-century AD pavement below the south-west corner of the Temple Enclosure by Professor Benjamin Mazar. On it was an inscription that said: "To the place of trumpeting to [declare]" (B. Mazar 1978: 234; see also E. Mazar 2002: 42-45; Ritmeyer 2006: 57-60). This was the place described by Josephus thus: "... at another corner opposite the lower town [At the Southwest angle of the Temple]. The last was erected above the roof of the priests' chamber, at the point where it was the custom for one of the priests to stand and give notice, by sound of trumpet, in the afternoon of the approach, and on the following evening of the close, of every seventh day, announcing to the people the respective hours for ceasing work and for resuming their labours" (*Wars* 4.581-583; LCL 3:171-173). Here you have another direct connection between an archaeological discovery and an ancient literary source. This fact should not be ignored.

The excavator of the stone observed: "On the paving of this street, near the south-western corner of the Temple Mount, a large ashlar was found, with a niche on its inner face and, on its edge, [a] Hebrew Inscription. ... This stone had been toppled down from the peak of the corner, from a spot atop the Temple chambers where one of the priests would blow trumpet on Shabbat Eve, to announce the entrance of the Shabbat and the cessation of all labours, and on the exit of the Sabbath, to announce the resumption of labours." He goes on to say: "We may also note that this spot provided a view of the entire city, and the sound of the trumpet would have been heard clearly throughout the markets of the city" (B. Mazar 1978: 234). The fact that the trumpeting stone was found directly on top of the First-century pavement indicates it was one of the first stones pushed from the top of the wall above it by the Roman soldiers and other stones, found on top of the trumpeting stone, were toppled on top of it. This stone was not carried up the hill and placed in this location as one advocate of the temples over the City of David view has stated. This is another important indicator that Herod's Temple was on top of the Temple Mount and not below in the City of David.

Prophetic Implications?

The book suggests that this new idea has some prophetic implications concerning the rebuilding of the Third Temple in Jerusalem (2014: 35-37, 147-154). Mr. Cornuke, however, does not commit himself to any particular eschatological scheme. In fact he says: "Many say that the church will need to be raptured first for any of this to happen [the revealing of the Antichrist], thus creating a spiritual vacuum that the antichrist can more easily fill. But whether the rapture is pre-tribulation, during, or after

it, it will be God's plan that will unfold for His glory and for His purpose" (2014: 149, brackets added by GWF). But he and others have suggested that the Jewish people can build the Third Temple over the Gihon Spring because the Moslems do not control that area and the Dome of the Rock can stay on the Temple Mount and everybody can peacefully coexist!

As an archaeologist, I always tell my students when prophetic issues are raised: "If you do not understand the past, you will not understand the future." It is obvious from the book that the past was not understood by this author because Solomon's and Herod's Temples were located on the Temple Mount and not in the City of David over the Gihon Spring. Whatever is speculated about the future, based on the book's idea that the Temples were built over the Gihon Spring, is irrelevant and wishful thinking on the part of the advocates of the Temple over the Gihon Spring. The Temples were on the Temple Mount. These are the facts and ones prophetic views must conform to the facts on the ground and the Temples having always been up on the Temple Mount.

Who Else was Interviewed and What did They Say?

The book described several trips to Jerusalem by Mr. Cornuke and his team to investigate his ideas concerning the Temple Mount. He claims to have conducted "interviews" with people in Israel (2014: 96). The only two interviews / conversations that he had in Jerusalem that are described in his book are with Eli Shukron, the co-director of the City of David excavations; and Nissim Mizrahi, an administrator at the excavation. Who else was "interviewed" and what did they say about the idea that the temples were built in the City of David over the Gihon Spring?

Did Mr. Cornuke interview Dr. Gabriel Barkay, the co-director of the Temple Mount Sifting Project and one of the world's experts on the archaeology of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount? Was Dr. Shimon Gibson, an expert on the cisterns and water system of the Temple Mount (Gibson and Jacobson 1996), and one who has conducted numerous excavations in Jerusalem, consulted? How about Eilat Mazar, the archaeologist who discovered a 10th century BC monumental building that she identified as the palace of King David in the City of David (Mazar 2009). She is also responsible for the publication of her grandfather's, Professor Benjamin Mazar, excavation reports of the Southern Wall (Ophel) Excavations (Mazar and Mazar 1989). She also knows from personal knowledge what her grandfather thought about the location of the Temples on the Temple Mount. Was she interviewed?

Did Mr. Cornuke reach out to Dr. Leen Ritmeyer, probably the foremost expert on the Temple Mount and the author of the book, *The Quest* (2006), the most comprehensive book on the Temple Mount to date? Interestingly, Mr. Cornuke does not interact with these scholars or their important work on the Temple Mount in his book, nor is any of it even cited in the bibliography. Why not?

Was Professor Ronny Reich, the co-director of the City of David Excavations with Eli Shukron, interviewed? Dr. Reich wrote the most up-to-date and comprehensive book on the history and excavations of the City of David entitled, *Excavating the City of David. Where Jerusalem's History Began* (2011). Again, this book was not quoted in the book, or cited in the bibliography.

I observed that Mr. Cornuke quoted twice (2014: 39, 153, 201, footnote 6 of chapter 3; 204, footnote 1 of chapter 14) from the monumental work by Dr. Randall Price of Liberty University entitled, *The Temple and Bible Prophecy. A Definitive Look at Its Past, Present, and Future* (2006). Carefully sandwiched between these two quotes is

the ignored chapter 15, “Searching for the Sacred Site,” where Dr. Price discusses the possible locations of the Temple on the Temple Mount (2006: 327-360). Mr. Cornuke does not interact with this chapter at all in his Temple book. Why? Did Mr. Cornuke call, or discuss, his own research with Dr. Price before he published his book? I am sure Dr. Price would have caught many of the same mistakes that are mentioned in this review!

I would venture to guess that all of the above people would have told Mr. Cornuke in their own ways that his ideas concerning the Temple Mount, following Ernest Martin, are flawed and not based on facts.

The book also mentioned that some “top scholars” would agree with the book’s conclusion that the Temples were not on the Temple Mount, but rather, over the Gihon Spring in the City of David (2014: 37). Unfortunately no names are given. The only person mentioned by name in the book is the late Ernest L. Martin, the originator of this idea. Who are the other “top scholars” and are they archaeologists working in Jerusalem?

On Chuck Missler’s television show (Aug. 27, 2014), Mr. Cornuke claimed that he talked with three archaeologists from an unnamed university in California and said they accepted his ideas for the location of the Temple. What are the names of these three university professors and have they excavated in Jerusalem?

It is critical to consider that there are no Israeli archaeologists working in Jerusalem that accept the idea that the Temples were built over the Gihon Springs in the City of David. Not one, and there are very good reasons for this. First, these archaeologists live in Jerusalem. They know the topography and archaeology of the city very well because they walk over the city every day. Second, they have studied the history, archaeology, and topography of Jerusalem in Jerusalem. Third, they know the ancient languages – Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and in some cases classical Arabic – so they are able to read the ancient sources in their original languages. Fourth, they have excavated Jerusalem so they know what has been discovered and its implication. They also know the archaeological literature – the archaeological journals, excavation reports - plus they have discussed their excavations over time with other archaeologists and learned about what others have excavated. These archaeologists know from first-hand experience that the view of the temples over the Gihon Springs in the City of David goes contrary to Scripture, contrary to the Rabbinic sources, and the other ancient sources, and the archaeological facts on the ground. Jerusalem is their life!

Footnote Frustrations

As a careful and meticulous researcher, I read footnotes and chase them down to make sure they say what the authors’ claimed they said. Unfortunately many of the claims in this book are not documented or properly footnoted, or else they are incomplete and inaccurate, thus making it difficult to verify what the book claimed.

There are a number of quotes or statements that are not footnoted. For example, see: Page 23, top paragraph (henceforth “para.”); page 37, 1st full para.; page 38, 3rd para.; page 40, 3rd para.; page 42, 2nd para.; page 43, 1st and 2nd para.; page 46, 3rd para.; page 48, 1st and 2nd para.; page 50, 1st and 3rd para.; page 51, 2nd para.; page 52, 2nd para.; page 56, 3rd para.; page 59, 4th para.; page 67, 2nd para.; page 81, 3rd para.; page 82, 3rd and 4th para.; page 86, 5th para.; page 91, 3rd para.; page 100, 2nd and 4th para.; page 106, 5th para.; page 107, 3rd para.; page 108, 1st para. [the quote was not footnoted, but it was from *Antiquities* 20.189-190; LCL 10: 103]. Also in the footnotes there are page numbers that are missing and incorrect citations of Josephus (2014:

201-204). On page 56 of the book an article by Hillel Geva and Hanan Eschel [sic] in *Biblical Archaeology Review* is cited, when in fact there were two separate articles by these two archaeologists in that issue of *BAR* (Geva 1997: 34-45, 72-73 and Eschel 1997: 46-49, 73). The quote in the book came from page 38 of Geva's article.

On pages 82 and 83 of the book, it is claimed that: "Flavius Josephus wrote that the temple could not even be seen from the north of the city of Jerusalem" thus the conclusion that should be reached is that the temple was south of the Temple Mount and out of the line of view. The footnote 2 cited "Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, V.8." When I looked up that passage I could not find any statement about not seeing the Temple from the northern part of Jerusalem. Someone drew my attention to the correct passage that the book was trying to cite. It was found in *Wars* V.5.8 (Cornfeld); or, *Wars* 5.246 (Loeb). Both editions of Josephus will be cited: "The hill Bezetha was, as I mentioned, cut off from Antonia. It was the highest of all the hills, and its rising ground was encroached on in part by the new town; it formed in the north the only obstruction which obscured the view of the Temple" (Cornfeld 1982: 364). "The hill Bezetha was, as I said, cut off from Antonia; the highest of all the hills, it was encroached on by part of the new town and formed on the north the only obstruction to the view of the Temple" (LCL 3: 277).

A careful reading of the text would indicate that the Hill Bezetha was obscuring the view of the Temple and not the Antonia Fortress or the Temple Mount. The Hill Bezetha is the "Golgatha (Skull Hill)" connected with the Iron Age "Garden Tomb" to the north of Damascus Gate. The hill was cut off by the fosse (moat) which Sultan Suleiman Street runs through just to the north of the Old City. This fosse was quarried out during the Iron Age and was possibly the source for the rock used to build Solomon's Temple. On the escarpment above the south side of the fosse would have been the Second Wall build by Herod the Great (*Wars* 5.146; LCL 3: 243; Bahat 1990: 35, 41). This wall basically following the line of the Old City Wall between Damascus Gate and to the east of the entrance to "Zedekiah's Cave". The New City, as mentioned by Josephus (see also *Wars* 5.149-152; LCL 3: 245), would have been the area to the north of Damascus Gate up to the Third Wall (just south of the former American Consulate of Eastern Jerusalem), around the area of the Ecole Biblique, the French School of Archaeology (Bahat 1990: 13, 35). From the area to the north of the Hill Bezetha one cannot even see the Dome of the Rock today.

It has also been my observation that the author of this book has a habit of spelling people's names incorrectly, for whatever reason. This is true in his previous books as well as this one. For example, in the bibliography, Ernest Martin is called "Edward" and also the date of publication of Martin's book is incorrect. It should be 2000, not 1994 (2014: 201, chapter 4, footnote 1). Sandra Benjamin was incorrectly identified as Sarah (2014: 202). In the text of the book, Eleazar Ben-Yair, the commander of Masada, was misspelled as Eleazar Bin Jari (2014: 60). Hanan Eschel's last name is misspelled as Eschel in the book (2014: 56; most likely he copied the mistake from Martin's book, 2000: 40, footnote 43; 46, footnotes 57 and 59). The Oxford Study Bible is misspelled as "Oxord" (2014: 80). A good fact-checker and editor, hired by the publisher, would have caught these mistakes.

The Conclusion of the Matter

I will stop my review and critique at this point. This essay is long enough already and it was not my intention to write a book length review. There are a number of other

topics that were misunderstood in the book that have not been discussed. For example, the meaning of the Greek word “tagma” (2014: 48); the “Flawed Theory” (2014: 49-51); the “Mount is the Fort” (2014: 51-52); Benjamin of Tudela, Eusebius, and Hecateus of Abdera (2014: 71-72); the anointing of Solomon at the Gihon Spring and 1 Kings 1:38-39 (2014: 76); Aristeeas (2014: 83-84); Tacitus (2014: 84-85); the Temple Scroll (2014: 85-86); the cleansing stream for the high priest’s ritual cleansing (2014: 87-88); the number of soldiers taking the Apostle Paul to Caesarea (2014: 90-95), the simple answer to this problem is, however, that the 470 Roman soldiers were part of a reinforcement unit that came up to Jerusalem for the Feast of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) and were returning to Caesarea after the feast was over; King Herod Agrippa II’s view into the Temple area (2014: 108); and Nehemiah’s Walls (2014: 121-123; but see Ritmeyer and Ritmeyer 2005 for an excellent scholarly discussion of these walls).

Also, why are there so many *mikvaot* [Hebrew plural] (Jewish ritual baths) on, or in close proximity to, the Temple Mount (Zweig 2008: 295-296, 49*, Plate 1A-1B) if the site was only the Antonia Fortress controlled by the Gentile Romans? These *mikvaot* would make perfect sense where they are if Jewish people wanted to immerse themselves in the ritual baths just before entering Herod’s Temple on the Temple Mount. Perhaps I could address these issues, and others, sometime in the future, but for now, I will leave them for another time.

The subtitle of the book says: “*Amazing New Discoveries that Change Everything About the Location of Solomon’s Temple.*” As was shown in this essay, the so-called “amazing new discoveries” do not change anything about the location of Solomon’s Temple. It was still originally located up on the Temple Mount. Because of his lack of archaeological training and his lack of understanding of the archaeological, historical, and Biblical information of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, Bob Cornuke’s book does not change anything about the location of Solomon’s or Herod’s Temples. They were still originally located on the Temple Mount.

This was not a “highly-researched” book, as the back cover of the book claims, nor was it carefully researched and written. As was shown above, there was a serious lack of any scholarship and the author did not grasp the archaeology, topography, geography, and literary sources of the ancient city of Jerusalem. Only a handful of secondary sources were used, but they were not critically read and followed-up on to check to see if those authors had gotten their facts correct.

The book cover also asks the provocative question: “Could history be so stunningly wrong?” The simple answer is no, history is correct on the original location of the Temples on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The facts are: Solomon’s and Herod’s Temples were on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. It is those individuals who try to move the Temples to the City of David above the Gihon Spring who are so stunningly wrong. The facts are: The probability of the Temples being above the Gihon Spring in the City of David is ZERO. This is the greatest archaeological blunder of all time. Case closed!

For Further Study

Again, as in his previous books, Mr. Cornuke has produced no credible historical, archaeological, geographical, geological, or Biblical evidence for his claims. For reviews and critiques of his other claims, see: “How Accurate are Bob Cornuke’s Claims?”

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