

Five Temple Location Theories

Which Theories Fit These Descriptions?

How big was the Temple and Fort Antonia compounds altogether?

Josephus says the Temple Mount was **"six furlongs around, including Fort Antonia"** A furlong was approximately 600 feet long. According to Josephus the Temple compound by itself was a square 4 furlong around, 600 X 600. and when combined the Temple and Fort Antonia compounds were a complex forming a rectangle of approximately 600 X 1200 feet. (Wars Of The Jews 5. 5. 2.)

Josephus quoted book 6; 5.4 an old Jewish prophecy that said **"When the Temple becomes four-square once again then will the Temple and city be destroyed."** By the destruction of Fort Antonia the Temple had once again become four-square and he begged them to make peace with the Roman's before it was too late. Of course they refused.

Where was the Moat Josephus spoke of?

According to Josephus there was a man cut moat between Fort Antonia and Bezetha hill (new city) separating the two hills. The moat was excavated by Charles Warren in the late 1800's and can be seen on his map of the Temple Mount.

Where did the water to cleanse the Temple Court come from?

It came from the Lower Aqueduct fed by **the Ein Etam** (the spring of Etam)

Talmud (Zebhachim 54b), and in the Jer. Talmud (Yoma' 3 fol 41)

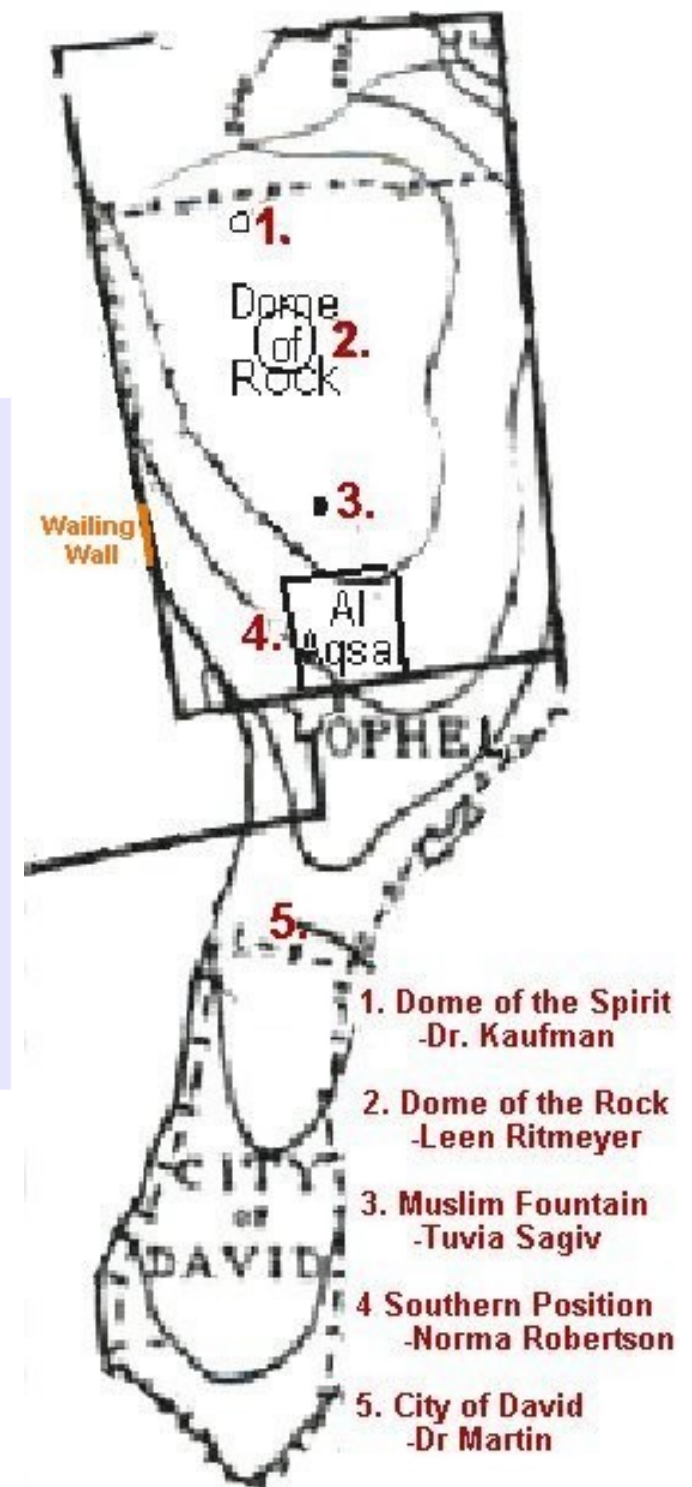
Tosefta Psachim, Ch. 3, Par. 12, asks ***"How is the Azara cleaned? Seal the area and let the water from the aqueduct enter till it becomes clean like milk."***

The main concern for people trying to decide where the Jewish Temple was once located should begin with the eastern ridge itself. What did it look like in the time of King David and Solomon? We now look at it and see a huge flat surface but that wasn't always the case. The place of the Dome of the Rock was the peak of a very high mountain, the highest point of the eastern ridge. From there it sloped down towards the south reaching a lower level called the Ophel, and then down to the level of the old City of David. Josephus claimed that one could not see the Temple from New City (Bezetha hill) because Fort Antonia blocked the view of it. This would only be the case if the Temple were on a lower point on the eastern ridge. Josephus places Fort Antonia on the highest peak of the Mountain, saying the fort overlooked the Temple, and the Temple overlooked the city. This tells us that the eastern ridge had three distinct levels, the rocky peak, the middle level, with a very large flat rock, which was used as a threshing floor, and the lower level where the City of David was located. Also a threshing floor was never located on the rocky peak of the mountain.

Two theories place the temple at the peak of the Mountain, the Dome of the Spirit, **(#1 on the map)** the other at the Dome of the Rock **(#2)**.

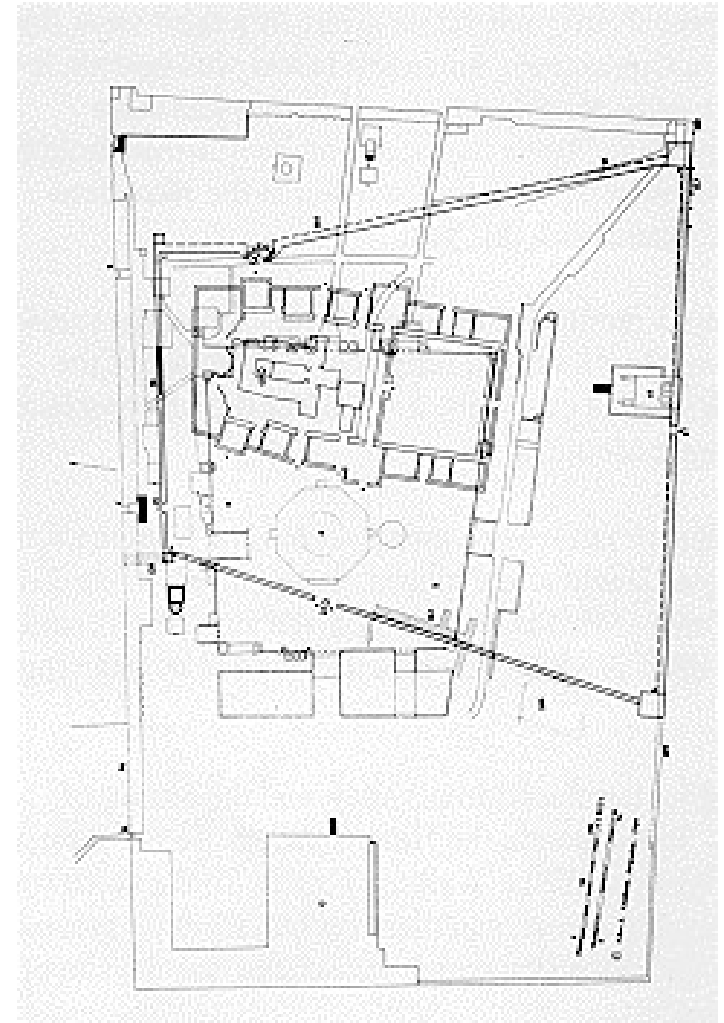
Two theories show the Temple located on the middle level of the eastern ridge, Tuvia Sagiv's **(#3)** and Norma Robertson's **(#4)**.

Dr Martin's theory **(#5)**, with the Temple located at the lower level of the eastern ridge in the City of David, and centers around the Gihon spring.



The first two theories, Kaufman's and Ritmeyer's, incorporates the whole Temple Mount as the size of the Herodian extended walls to the West, North and South, making it double the size of Josephus' description. In these theories the actual ruins of the moat on Warren's map is also not acknowledged at all. Fort Antonia is also not a furlong by a furlong in this theory, but claims it to have been where the Muslim School is located **on** Bezetha hill.

Kaufman's Dome of the Spirits theory would actually have the northwest corner of the Temple compound in the excavated moat. In this theory the ruins of the moat (foss) on Warren's map is not acknowledged. Fort Antonia is not a furlong by a furlong in this theory. He also doesn't confine the Temple to a square of one furlong by one furlong. There doesn't appear to be a fresh water source in the area, only cisterns.



Ritmeyer - Dome of the Rock theory shows Solomon's Temple compound in, blue on the map, as being 500 x 500 cubits (according to the Mishna Middot 2.1 which says "The Temple on the Mount was 500 x 500 ama,"). However I find it quite a coincidence that if this were referring to a Babylonian cubit of 14.4 (used for buildings) then 500 ama equals 600 feet, or one furlong, which fits the size of the Herodian Temple given by Josephus. The Mishna is of course speaking of Herod's Temple, not Solomon's.

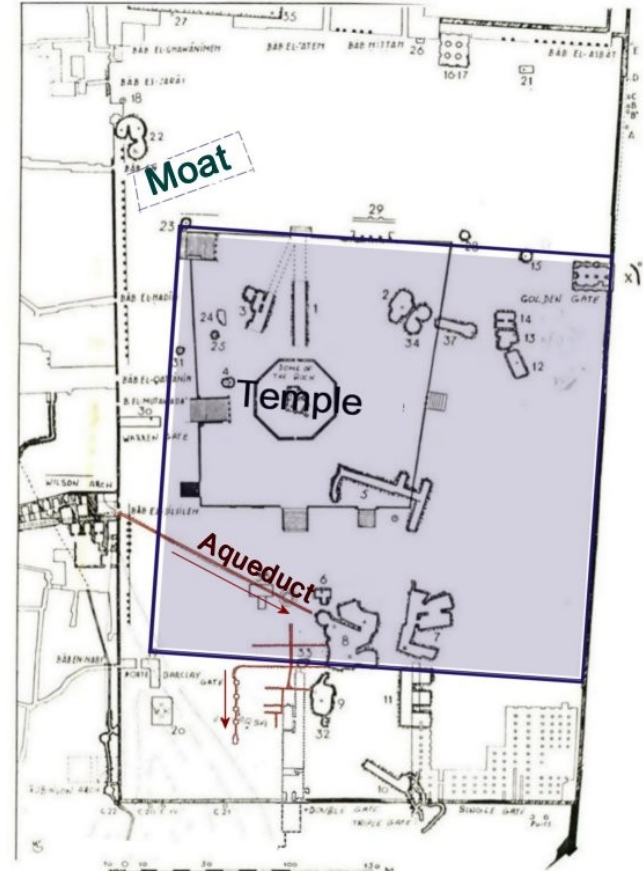
But somehow Ritmeyer claims that Solomon's Temple was an ama x ama and shows the remainder of the mount as Herod's extended courts..

Ritmeyer claims the whole east wall of the mount today, which is 1470 feet long, as the east wall of the Herodian Temple compound, over double the size claimed by Josephus. All a bit confusing, since there is not a furlong to be found amongst his numbers.

In simple terms, Ritmeyer is claiming the Mishna is speaking of "Solomon's Temple" compound and then applying a Royal Cubit of 20.67 inches to it so that it comes out to be 500 royal ama.

The Dome of the Rock area did not have a fresh water source, only cisterns.

Fort Antonia

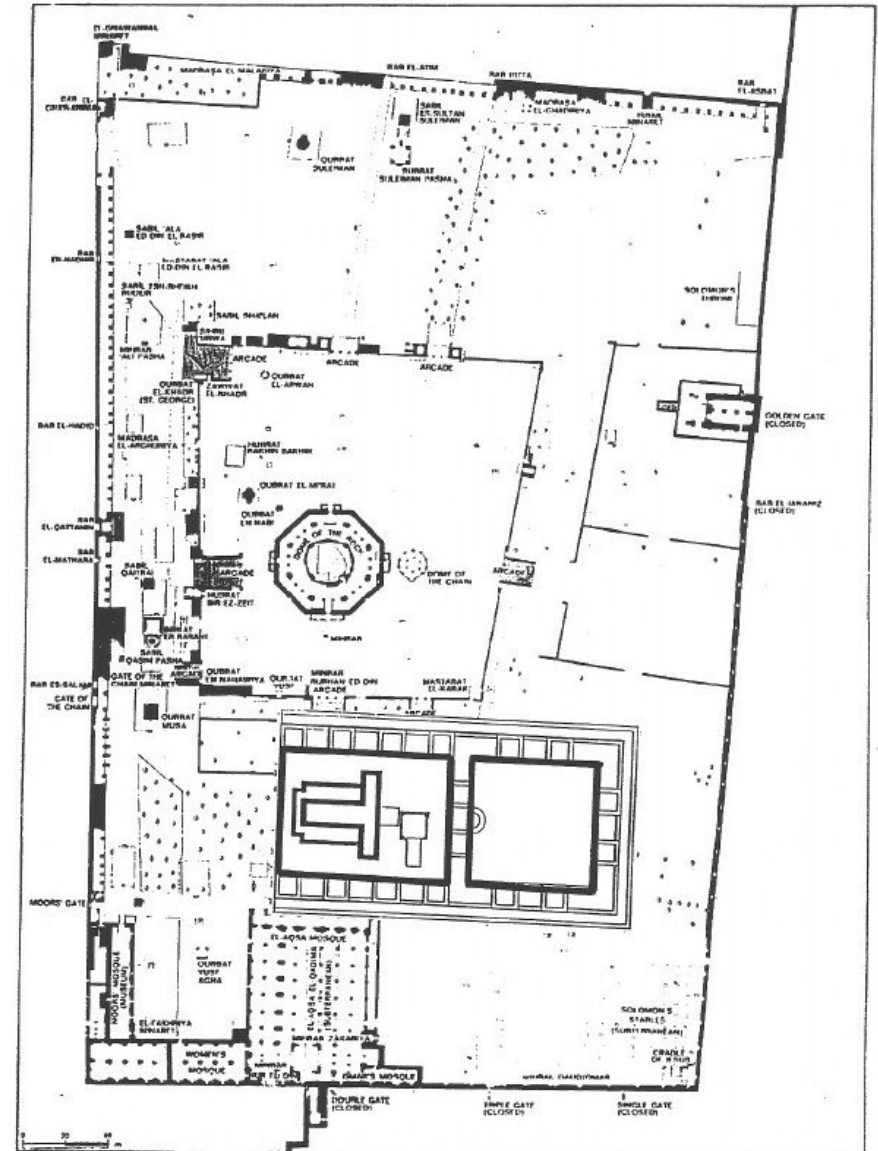


Dome of Rock Theory

In **Tuvia Sagiv's Muslim Fountain theory** the moat is in the proper place. A 600 x 600 foot Fort Antonia would fit well, leaving the moat as separating Fort Antonia from Bezetha hill, but I don't know what Mr. Sagiv shows as Fort Antonia in his theory.

In his theory the walls of the Temple Mount today were built by Hadrian for the Temple of Jupiter, and none of them on the west at least, are Herodian walls. He states that the Wailing wall was not a wall of the Temple.

I am agreement with much of what Tuvia Sagiv gives for a lower location for the Temple on the Mount, such as the view into the place of the sacrifices from both the high tower of Fort Antonia and also the balcony of Agrippa II, also water levels of the mount. His Temple location allows for the aqueduct as the source for water.



City of David theory

(Dr. Martin and all others that claim the location of the Temple was in the City of David.)

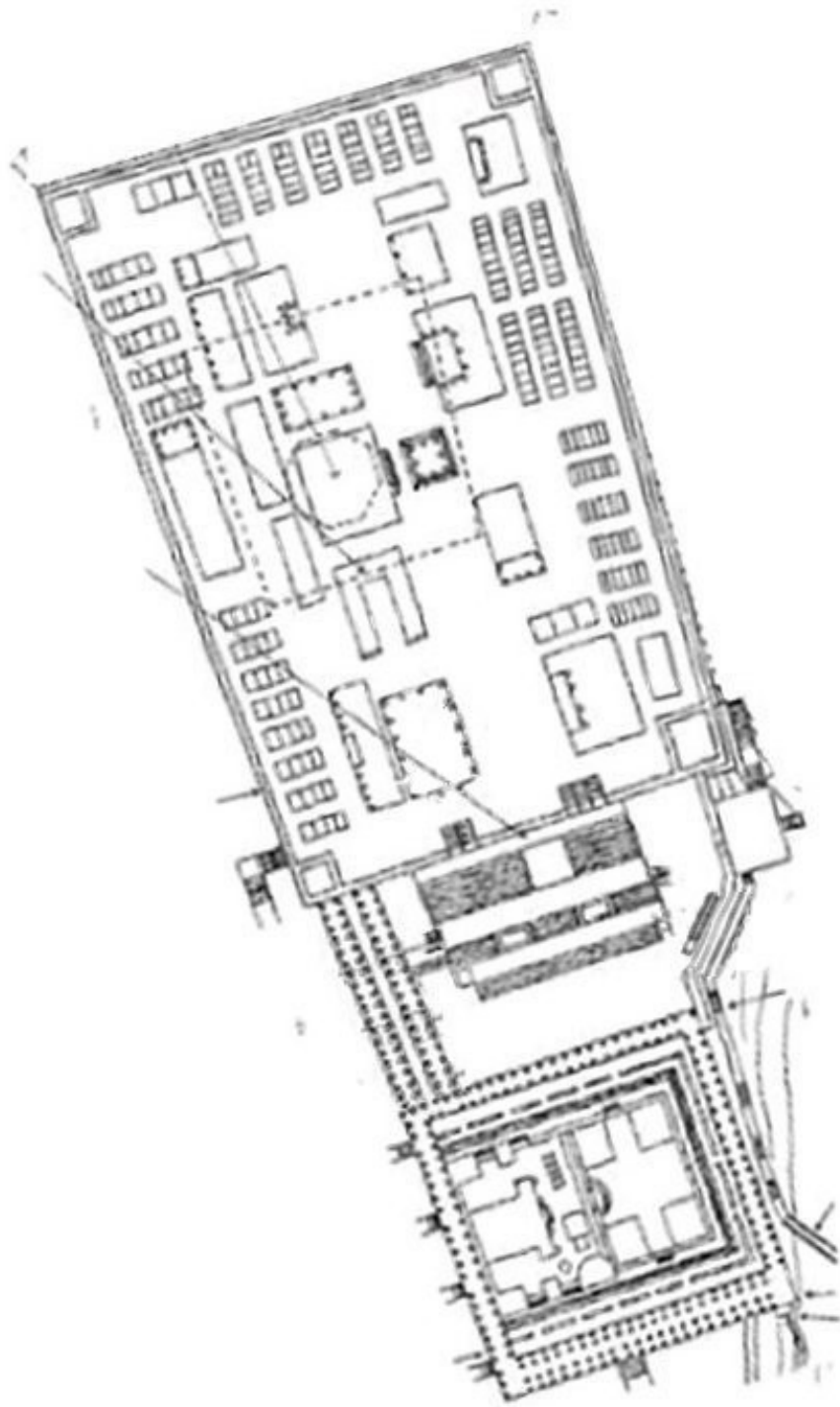
One of the main problems with this theory is that the Place of the Trumpeting stone was found at below the Southwest corner of the Temple Mount. It fell during the destruction of the Temple and cracked the paving stones on the first century street below. This makes it irrefutable that this corner was part of the Temple.

Another problem arose when recently a “place for sacrificing” was found underground in the City of David. It is believed that the place of sacrifice found in the City of David was in use pre-David, perhaps dating back to the time of Melchizedek (2000 BC).

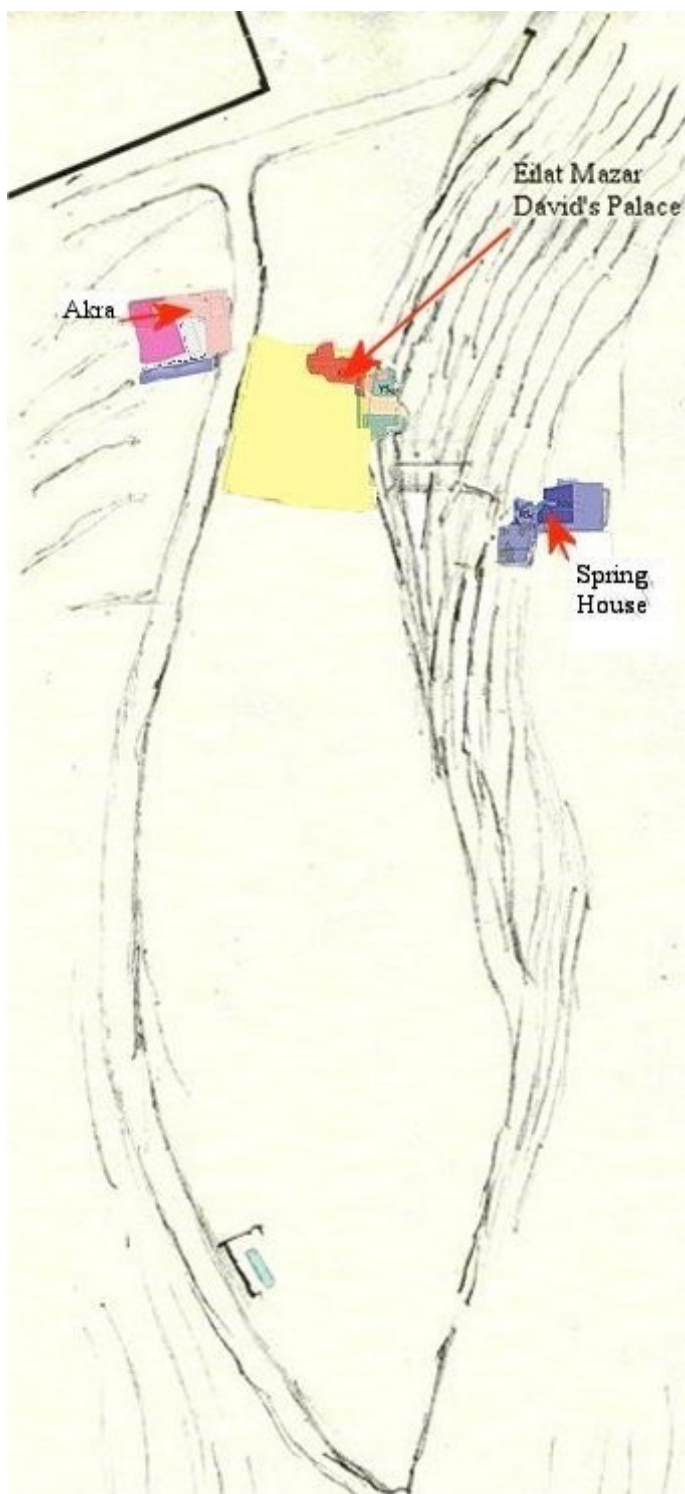
This means it was already there during the time of David.... **If so then it can not be “the threshing floor” that David purchased.**

In **Martin's theory**, it is apparent that Fort Antonia would have been the entire size of the Temple Mount. This theory does not comply to the Temple and Fort Antonia together being **"six furlongs around, including fort Antonia"** (600 x 1200 ft) Instead he claims the area between the Fort and the Temple was 600 x 600 feet, which distorts the text of Josephus. This also ignores the moat on Warren's map and extends the fort right up to Bezetha hill.

I will spend the most time on this theory because Christians seems to be drawn to this theory since many believe it would not cause problems with the Muslims to rebuild a Temple here.



You will recognize this drawing as Dr. Martin's theory, and is also what Bob Cornuke claims to be correct. I rotated in it's proper proportions so the image will fit correctly over Charles Wilson's survey map.



Dr Martin's Temple placed over the top of The City of David excavation sites. Eilat Mazar excavated a 1000 to 900 BC building according to the artifacts found at that layer. She believes this to be David's Palace. This huge building and the Temple can not occupy the same place, which puts an end to Dr. Martin and Robert Cornuke's theories



Charles Wilson map with overlay of archeology excavation map, and Martin's location map.

I read where Dr Martin said that the southeast corner was 300 cubits high according to Josephus and was built into the bedrock of the Kidron valley. The text does not say that at all. Josephus tells us.

“The lowest part of this (lower court of the temple) was erected to the height of 300 cubits, and in some places more; yet did not the entire depth of the foundations appear, for they as being desirous to make them on a level with the narrow streets of the city; wherein they made use of stones of forty cubits in magnitude;”

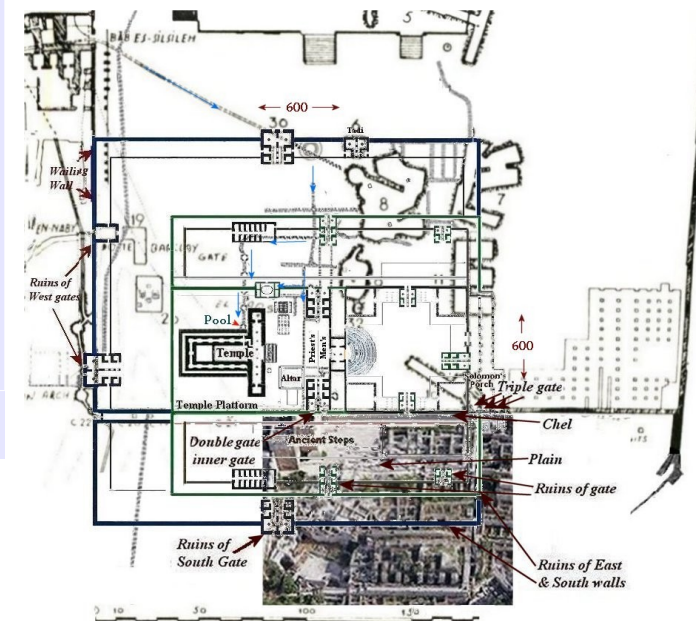
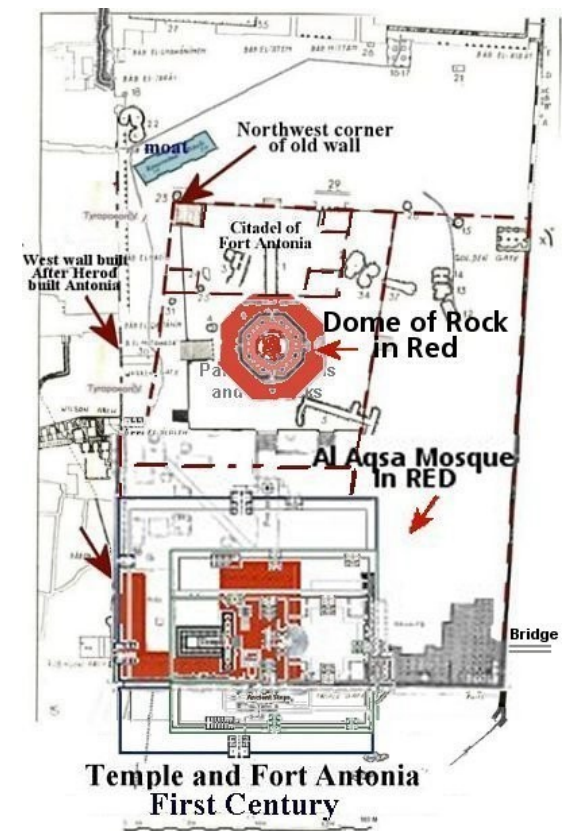
This of course was speaking of the southwest corner where there were **"narrow streets of the city;"** to bring the level up to. Not the Southeast corner where there were no streets.

There was no way to bury the foundation stones of the **southeast corner** if they had been built clear to the bottom of the Kidron Valley. The first century Herodian street uncovered along the western wall lays far above the foundation stones that were laid on the bedrock of the Tyropoean valley and that is the valley Josephus was speaking of. There was no aqueduct to cleanse the Temple court in the City of David location.

These are just a few of the reasons that this City of David theory does not work.

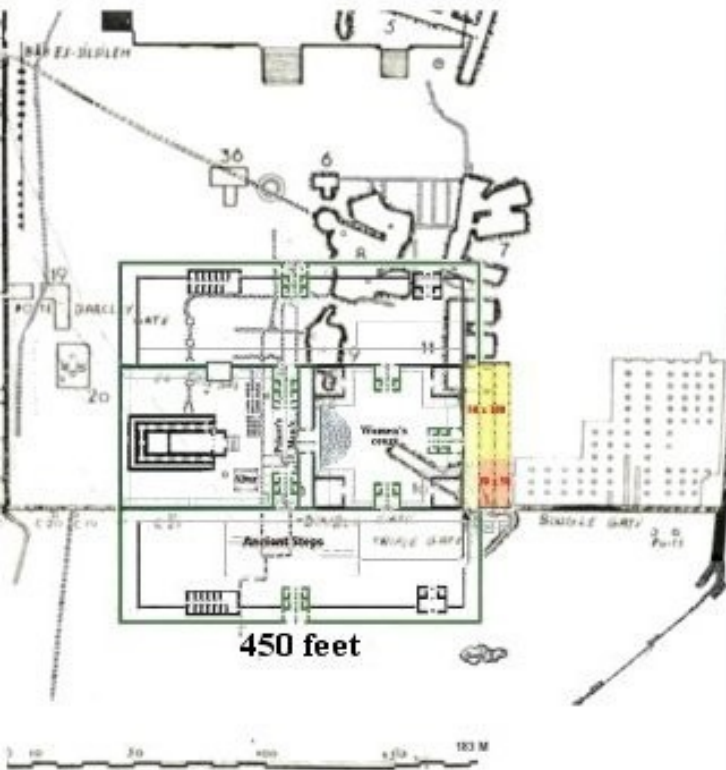
In the **Robertson theory** the moat is located between Fort Antonia and the Bezetha hill. Fort Antonia was on the highest of the hills as recorded by Josephus. The aqueduct and existing underground water system brings the living water to the Priest's court. This theory relies on the water source of the lower aqueduct. Solomon, bringing fresh water to the Temple Mount, originally built the lower aqueduct. It enters the Temple Mount at Wilson's Arch and angles southward, down hill, to the place of the Muslim Fountain. It then continues southward, through water Channels, ending at the location for this theory. The ruins on the top of what is referred to as Ophel Hill fit into the layout and so do the underground structures below the surface of the Mount. This level is defined by a large outcropping of bedrock protruding out of the hill which is called Ophel hill. This can be seen by the huge steps, which were cut into that bedrock at the southern wall of the Temple Mount. At the top of the steps the rock levels out where the threshing floor would have been located deep below the surface of the Mount we see today.

It is a real plus that it also agrees with the measurements given by Josephus for the temple. In this theory the Wailing Wall was part of the Herodian extended courts of the Temple to the West.

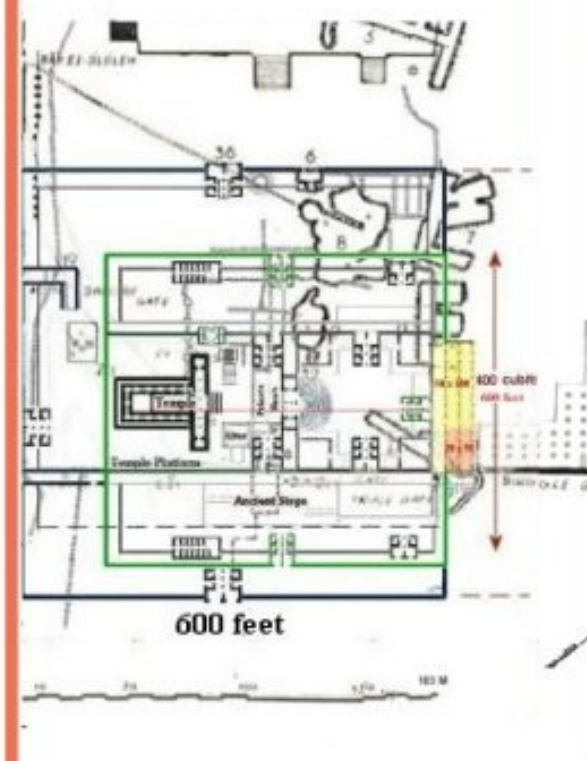


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Solomon's Temple



Herod's Temple
Solomon's north and south walls would be removed



Herod's Temple 1st Century

