

Ancient Walls Date Back to Solomon Era

✖ A section of ancient walls recently uncovered in Jerusalem dates back to the time of King Solomon and supports the existence of the first temple, according to Israeli archaeologists, who call it “the most significant” find from the era of the first temple.

“This is the first time that a structure from that time has been found that may correlate with written descriptions of Solomon’s building in Jerusalem,” said Eilat Mazar, director of the excavation team for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem .

“The Bible tells us that Solomon built—with the assistance of the Phoenicians, who were outstanding builders—the temple and his new palace and surrounded them with a city, most probably connected to the more ancient wall of the City of David.”

Mazar cited 1 Kings 3. The walls date back to the 10th century BC.

The section of the city wall that has been revealed is 70 meters long and 6 meters high and is located between the City of David and the southern wall of the Temple Mount. Within the city wall complex is an inner gatehouse for access into the royal quarter of the city, a royal structure adjacent to the gatehouse and a corner tower that overlooks a substantial section of the adjacent Kidron valley.

“The city wall that has been uncovered testifies to a ruling presence. Its strength and form of construction indicate a high level of engineering,” Mazar said. “A comparison of this latest finding with city walls and gates from the period of the first temple, as well as pottery found at the site, enable us to postulate with a great degree of assurance that the wall

that has been revealed is that which was built by King Solomon in Jerusalem in the latter part of the tenth century B.C.”

Babylonians destroyed the first temple. King Herod built another temple 2,000 years ago, and the Romans subsequently destroyed that structure in 70 A.D. The compound became a pagan shrine and then eventually home to the Muslim Dome of the Rock shrine and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The dig also turned up pottery shards, which helped to date the wall, and jars, one with a Hebrew inscription.

“The inscription that was found on one of them shows that it belonged to a government official, apparently the person responsible for overseeing the provision of baked goods to the royal court,” Mazar said.

Between the large tower at the city gate and the royal building the archaeologists uncovered a section of the corner tower that is eight meters in length and six meters high. The tower was built of carved stones. East of the royal building, another section of the city wall that extends for some 35 meters also was revealed. This section is five meters high, and is part of the wall that continues to the northeast and once enclosed the Ophel area.

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