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## *Chapter 20*

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# THE ORIGINAL TEMPLE OVER THE GIHON SPRING

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**T**HERE ARE EARLY HISTORIANS who give abundant information of the actual location of the Temples in Jerusalem. It is time we look at the testimonies of these early eyewitnesses and their united witness that the Temples were positioned over the Gihon Spring. Let us first look at the account of Aristeas, a Jew from Egypt who visited Jerusalem about fifty years after the time of Alexander the Great. Aristeas gave a detailed description of the Temple and Jerusalem, and modern scholars and theologians should be aware of what he stated as an observer. His account is very instructive.

We of modern times possess the actual written words of Aristeas. Prof. Gifford of England translated an English version of this early writer, which gives a rendition preserved by Eusebius. Recall that Aristeas was speaking about the Jerusalem of his day (early third century *before* Jesus). In his description of Jerusalem and Temple, he tells us that in the interior of the Temple was an important geographical feature that serves as a topographical benchmark

to determine where the Temple was located. He said there was within the Temple a *natural spring* gushing up that gave an abundance of water to the Sanctuary. He could not be clearer.

“There is an inexhaustible reservoir of water, as would be expected from *an abundant spring gushing up naturally from within [the Temple]*; there being moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, of five furlongs [3000 feet away], according to their showing, all around the foundation of the Temple, and countless pipes from them, so that the streams on every side met together [at the Temple site]. And all these have been fastened with lead at the bottom and the side-walls, and over these has been spread a great quantity of plaster, all having been carefully wrought.”<sup>378</sup>

### **The Only Spring in Jerusalem Was the Gihon**

Within the biblical period, historical records show the original Temple was located over the Gihon Spring, and modern geological surveys reveal that the only spring within five miles of Jerusalem was the Gihon. It was because of this strategic location of this spring that the earliest settlement at Jerusalem was in that area.

The first name for Jerusalem was *Migdol Edar* (Tower or Citadel of the Flock). It was associated in history with Jacob and is mentioned in Genesis 35:21 and in Micah 4:8. This site later became equivalent to the original Mount Zion. The reason such a Citadel existed in the time of Jacob was because of the high elevation of the area, plus the existence of the perennial *spring* at its base. These factors provided the security that people needed to build and to defend an important city, which the Canaanites finally called Jebus.

Without doubt, the Gihon Spring was the essential feature (besides the fact that the area was elevated for protection from invaders) which prompted early people to pick this area for settlement. But note. There was no spring of any kind in the region where the later Dome of the Rock was situated. This is one major reason why no early settlements were made in that area north of the original Zion.

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<sup>378</sup> Eusebius' recording of Aristeas, *Preparation of the Gospel*, ch.38.

The only spring in Jerusalem was the Gihon, yet ancient historians said the area around the spring was desert-like. We have abundant historical evidence to show this was true. At the end of the first century B.C.E., Strabo the Greek geographer described the city of Jerusalem as “rocky, and although well supplied with water, it is surrounded by a barren and waterless territory.”<sup>379</sup> Dion Cassius in the second century said the same thing.<sup>380</sup> There was even more geographical precision given about Jerusalem in the period just before that of Simon the Hasmonean. Eusebius in his *Preparation of the Gospel* quoted from Alexander Polyhistor (who wrote in the early first century B.C.E.) who cited earlier writers concerning Jerusalem. Note what Eusebius quoted from Polyhistor.

“Timochares, in his *Life of Antiochus*, says that Jerusalem has a circuit of forty furlongs [including lands surrounding the city for 2000 cubits], and is difficult to take being shut in on all sides by abrupt ravines: and *the whole city is flooded with streams of water*, so that even the gardens are irrigated by waters which flow *from the city*. But the country from the city as far as forty furlongs [five miles] *is without water*: but beyond the forty furlongs [five miles] it is well watered.”<sup>381</sup>

This description by Timochares concerned Jerusalem before Simon the Hasmonean. Only within the City of Jerusalem itself was there abundant water. This had to come from the Gihon Spring. The next reference by Polyhistor quoted by Eusebius, shows that the only water at Jerusalem (again, before the time of Simon the Hasmonean) came from *a single spring* in the city.

“The author of the *Metrical Survey of Syria* says in his first book that Jerusalem lies upon a lofty and rugged site: and that some parts of the wall are built of polished stone, but the greater part of small stones [rubble]; and that the city has a circuit of twenty-seven furlongs [using the 1000 cubit scale], and that there is also within the place *a spring* which spouts up abundance of water.”<sup>382</sup>

This single “spring” (Jerusalem’s only water source) referred to

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<sup>379</sup> Strabo, Book XVI, 2:36.

<sup>380</sup> Dion Cassius, 66:4.

<sup>381</sup> Eusebius, quoting Polyhistor in *Preparation of the Gospel*, Bk.IX, ch.35.

<sup>382</sup> Eusebius, *Preparation of the Gospel*, Bk.IX, ch.36.

by the author of the *Metrical Survey* was, again, the Gihon. Indeed, there is more information given by Polyhistor about early Jerusalem before the time of Simon the Hasmonean. He quoted a person named Philo (a man of the second century B.C.E. or even earlier). Polyhistor stated:

“Philo too says, in his *Account of Jerusalem*, that there is a *fountain* [a single *spring*], and that it is dried up in winter, but becomes full in summer.”<sup>383</sup>

Philo went on to say that this fountain produced a “joyous stream, flooded by rain and snow, [which] rolls swiftly on *beneath* the neighboring towers, and spreading over the dry and dusty ground ... the blessings of that wonder-working *fount* [the single *spring* in Jerusalem].”<sup>384</sup> Eusebius continued by stating that this Philo called that single *spring* “the High Priest’s *fountain* and the canal that carries off the water, he [Philo] proceeds as follows: “A headlong stream [from the fountain] by channels *underground*, the pipes pour forth.”<sup>385</sup>

This description by the early writer named Philo describes perfectly the Jerusalem before the time of Simon the Hasmonean. Not only was there *a single spring* (called the Spring of the High Priest, which connected the *spring* with the Temple), but it produced waters that ran “beneath [or, underneath] the towers” of the city walls. The waters from that spring were carried off in “underground channels” (an apt description of Hezekiah’s tunnel and the Siloam conduit that carried water from the Gihon Spring to the southern area of the city).

These geographical observations given by this writer named Philo show there was *only one water source* in Jerusalem, the Gihon Spring. There was, however, a place called the En-Rogel located about a third of a mile southeast of the City of David. This was NOT a spring. George Adam Smith in his celebrated survey of the city of Jerusalem, referred to the professional appraisal of Sir Charles Wilson. Sir Charles examined the En-Rogel site very

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<sup>383</sup> Eusebius, *ibid.*, ch.37.

<sup>384</sup> Eusebius, *ibid.*

<sup>385</sup> Eusebius, *ibid.*, emphasis mine.

closely. He determined it was actually a 135 foot *well*. It is NOT (nor had it ever been) a spring like the Gihon.<sup>386</sup> Prof. Avigad confirms this:

“The Gihon Spring is Jerusalem’s only supply of fresh water in early antiquity. South of this hill is another minor water source, the Rogel Spring, which is actually *only a well*.”<sup>387</sup>

The single spring in the Jerusalem area was the Gihon, and Philo associated that spring with the High Priest who, of course, governed all Temple activities.

This dovetails with the description given by Aristeas about 50 years after Alexander the Great, and Tacitus 300 years later. Both Aristeas and Tacitus dogmatically state this *natural spring* was found within the precincts of the Temple at Jerusalem. These geographical facts from eyewitness accounts totally disqualify the area around the Dome of the Rock as having any relevance in locating the site of the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod.

Without any doubt, the historical sources are consistent in placing the original Temples over the Gihon Spring located in the *center* part of the “crescent-shaped” city of Jerusalem. All these reports place Jerusalem solely on the southeast ridge which, in the time of Josephus, had become known as the “Lower City.”

### **God’s Spring Waters**

The Holy Scriptures consistently proclaim that the Temple at Jerusalem represented a physical replica on earth of God’s official residence in heaven. The various rooms, furniture and household items in God’s heavenly palace were exactly reflected in God’s residence on earth in the Tabernacle and the later Temples in an anthropomorphic way. Regarding these amenities, we read in the Scriptures that God has in His heavenly residence what we would call “spring waters.” These waters are supposed to supply God and His household with the essential “waters” that we on earth associate with the creation and perpetuation of life, and what is required to maintain ordinary cleanliness as well as ritualistic purity.

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<sup>386</sup> George Adam Smith, *Jerusalem*, Vol.I, p.99.

<sup>387</sup> Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem*, p.26.

The authors of the Scriptures give many descriptive accounts that relate these symbolic agreements between God's earthly "House" (the Tabernacles and Temples) and His heavenly Sanctuary.

This is one main reason why it was deemed essential by the biblical writers that there be a *spring* within the interior of the Temples. A New Testament reference indicates this essential feature in association with God's divine domicile.

"And I John saw the holy city new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.... I will give to him that is *athirst* of the *fountain [spring]* of the *water of life* freely.... And he showed me *a pure river of water of life*, clear as crystal, *proceeding out of the throne of God* and the [throne of the] Lamb.... And let him that is *athirst* come. And whosoever will, let him take *the water of life* freely."<sup>388</sup>

The symbolism on earth of the heavenly House of God would not be complete without *spring waters* being within the earthly Temple. It was believed by the early kings and prophets of Israel that if God's House had no *spring within it*, it would not be supplied with an appropriate water supply to perform the rituals of purification, and provide other life-giving therapeutic features that issue from the throne of God. This is why biblical writers leave us with no ambiguity concerning this matter. The scriptural description of God's House in heaven (and its counterpart on earth) consistently shows that the Sanctuary has (or must have) *spring waters* emerging from within its interior.

"His [God's] foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.... The singers as the players on instruments shall be there [in the Temple]: ALL MY SPRINGS ARE IN THEE [Zion]."<sup>389</sup>

This description by the Psalmist of the Temple shows there were *SPRINGS* within Zion. In God's symbolic Temple on earth, there was also a "spring." It was the Gihon — the only spring within a 5 miles' radius of Jerusalem.

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<sup>388</sup> Revelation 21:2,6; 22:1,17.

<sup>389</sup> Psalm 87:1-3 and 7.

The fact that the Psalmist states that there were “*SPRINGS*” (plural) in Zion and though the Gihon is only “one spring” is no problem. The Gihon is clearly called “*SPRINGS*” (plural) in II Chronicles 32:3–4. The fact that this “one spring” is pluralized (if it is not an idiomatic usage) can be accounted for because of the peculiar manner in which the Gihon produces its waters. Though the Gihon is a perennial spring, it is a karst-type of spring that thrusts out its water as much as five times a day in the Springtime when water is plentiful (with time intervals in between when no water comes forth at all). Thus the Gihon is a siphon type of *spring* that gushes forth intermittently. In the dry season the flow may occur a few minutes once a day. This oscillating effect of the Gihon could be a reason the ancients called this single water source with the plural word “springs.” Whatever the case, both Aristeas and Tacitus state the Temple at Jerusalem had an inexhaustible spring in its interior. This has to be the Gihon Spring.

### **David Placed the Ark of the Covenant at the Gihon**

Let us look at one of the most important theological events that occurred during the time of King David. To show the symbolic importance of the Gihon Spring in association with the throne of God, look at the incident when King David transported the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Before the king brought the Ark to the City of David, he built a Sacred Tent to house the Ark, not to be confused with the main Tabernacle. The actual Tabernacle at that time was pitched at the great waters at Gibeon, about 6 miles north and west of Jerusalem.<sup>390</sup> But to house the Ark, David pitched a special Tent before which he and Israel could worship God and offer animal sacrifices.

“And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it.”<sup>391</sup>

“So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and

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<sup>390</sup> I Chronicles 16:39.

<sup>391</sup> I Chronicles 15:1.

peace offerings before God [who was considered to be anthropomorphically “in” that special tent].”<sup>392</sup>

Where did David place this Tent which contained the Ark of the Covenant? This was shown when Solomon was made king. David actually pitched the Tent for the Ark (called a “Tabernacle” in the King James Version) on a terrace region directly above and within the immediate of view of the Gihon Spring. Note that when Solomon was crowned “King,” Zadok the priest led Solomon to the Gihon Spring and then “Zadok the priest took a horn of oil *out of the tabernacle* [wherein was the Ark], and anointed Solomon.”<sup>393</sup> Later Jews came to recognize from this example of Zadok that kings were not only anointed with olive oil but that the coronation itself had to be conducted at a place where there was a *spring*. “Our Rabbis taught: Kings are anointed only by the site of a spring.”<sup>394</sup> So, the first “Temple” at Jerusalem erected by King David (before Solomon finally built the permanent Temple) was placed on the terrace directly at and just above the Gihon Spring. This made the site equivalent in a symbolic way with God’s House in heaven because it was believed that God had what we call *spring water* associated with His heavenly abode.

This means that for the last twenty-seven years of David’s reign and the first eleven years of Solomon reign (that is, for 38 years before Solomon built the Temple), all Israel resorted to this holy spot at the Gihon Spring to worship God and to offer sacrifices. And what was this place called? Look at Second Samuel 12:20. “Then David arose from the earth. and washed, and anointed himself, and came *into the House of the Lord*, and worshipped.” David was in Jerusalem when this event occurred. It was at the Tent of the Ark of the Covenant. Wherever the Ark was located was called the “House of the Lord” — another name for the Sanctuary.<sup>395</sup> David also called the place of the Ark “his [God’s] habitation” — it represented the “House of God” — the Temple.<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> I Chronicles 16:1.

<sup>393</sup> I Kings 1:38–39.

<sup>394</sup> Kerithoth 5b.

<sup>395</sup> Exodus 34:26; Deuteronomy 23:18; Joshua 6:24; 9:23; Judges 18:31.

<sup>396</sup> II Samuel 15:25.

For 38 years before the permanent Temple was dedicated by Solomon, the official “House of the Lord” (the holy Sanctuary in Jerusalem) was located in the city district of Gihon where there was the only spring of Jerusalem . See First Kings 1:32–40. This means that the Gihon Spring was a Temple site. As we will soon see, Solomon (after building the Temple) simply moved the Ark up to the top of the *Ophel* hill to his new Temple located a little higher above the Gihon Spring.

### **The House of God (His Throne) Required Water**

It is of utmost importance that scholars and biblical students understand that the Temple was a physical symbol on earth of God’s House (or Palace) in heaven. It was an exclusive anthropomorphic representation. God’s heavenly House was reckoned as having *spring waters* associated with it. King David knew this. Since he realized he was making a replica of God’s “House” on earth, he deemed it necessary to have a water source *inside the House* in order to duplicate those heavenly facilities on earth. The Gihon Spring provided the earthly counterpart. Look at Psalm 29:2–3, 9–10 (verses written when the Ark was at the Gihon Spring).

“Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The voice of the Lord is upon [*over*] the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon [*over*] many waters.... In his Temple doth everyone speak of his glory. The Lord sitteth upon [*over*] the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.”

Note the symbolism. God resides anthropomorphically in His Temple *OVER* [on top of] the waters. These are waters that various scriptural verses show springing from underneath His throne. Indeed, His throne is positioned (as the Ark of the Covenant depicted at the Gihon Spring) *OVER* the flood of waters. God even issues His decrees and commandments with His voice of authority from a position in His Temple that is *OVER* the waters.

David in the above Psalm not only described the actual abode of God (His throne room) in heaven, but David recognized that the

pattern and replica of God's House on earth also had to depict *waters* directly under the feet of God. David believed God appears as a glorified human being. That is why he placed the Ark of the Covenant (once it was brought to Zion) directly at and *OVER* the Gihon Spring (where sacrifices were offered even in David's time).

There is even more. David is consistent in associating *waters* with God's House and God's Throne. Look at Psalm 93, verses 1 & 5 with 2-4.

"The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty.... Holiness becomes *thine house* [thy Temple], O Lord forever. Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting. *The floods* have lifted up [thy throne], O Lord, *the floods* have lifted up their voice [of authority]; *the floods* lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than *the noise of many waters*, yea, than *the mighty waves of the sea*."

In order to have "majesty and holiness" in "thine house," David associated God's throne with an abundance of waters. Here again we find *waters* and noise of waters as essential features in the House of God. They are located *underneath* His heavenly throne because God is "lifted up" over them. Understanding this fact that waters were reckoned to be located under the feet of God as He sat on His throne in the Holy of Holies, it was acknowledged by Jewish authorities that even the waters that came from the Gihon Spring had their origin at the site of the Holy of Holies. Let us note the common belief among the Jews regarding the headwaters of the Gihon Spring. In the *Book of Legends* we read:

"R. Phinehas said in the name of R. Huna of Sephoris: The Spring that issued from the Holy of Holies resembled at its source the (tiny) antennae of locusts; when it reached the entrance to the Temple Hall [further east], it became wider, as wide as a thread of warp; when it reached the entrance to the Porch [even further east], it grew as wide as a thread of weft; when it reached the entrance to the Temple Court [even further east], it became as wide as the mouth of a small narrow-necked jug. From there onward [in an underground channel], it grew wider and wider as it rose, until it reached the entrance to the House of David [at the bottom of Mount Zion]. After it reached the entrance to the House of David,

it became a swiftly flowing brook in which those (who were ritually unclean) immersed themselves in order to become clean."<sup>397</sup>

The above description was believed to be a compatible explanation from the Holy Scriptures regarding waters coming from the top of the mountains where the Temple stood (like the waters that will come forth from Ezekiel's Temple).<sup>398</sup>

The precise symbolism (which the Temple endeavored to show) demanded that a *water source* be located below or near the feet or the throne of God and that God be enthroned *OVER* those waters. David also described the singers and musicians of the Temple as performing before "*the fountain of Israel*" associated with God's throne within the Temple precincts. Notice Psalm 68:24–26, 29, which described ceremonial services in the Temple.

"They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary [in Zion]. The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels playing on timbrels. Bless ye God in the congregations [who assemble at Zion], even the Lord, *from the fountain of Israel* [located in the Temple] ... Because of thy Temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee" (italics mine).

This theme of a *fountain* or a *water spring* in Zion, representing the holy sanctuary and mountain of God, is a recurring one in the Psalms of David. Note Psalm 36:7–9.

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<sup>397</sup> Bialik and Ravnitzky, *The Book of Legends* (NY: Schocken Books, 1992), p.161, sect.10, words in parentheses are in the text, the words inside the brackets are my additions given for clarification.

<sup>398</sup> There were also beliefs among the Jews that the waters of the Gihon actually came from the Garden of Eden because the river Gihon was an Edenic stream and that is how the Gihon Spring got the name "Gihon." Another belief was that different name for the Spring was the Shiloah in Isaiah 8:6. They thought it came from the geographical spot "Shiloh" where the Tabernacle was first permanently pitched. See the "Work on Geography," in John Wilkinson's *Jerusalem Pilgrimage 1099–1185* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1988), p.200. The Christian traveler Theodoric in 1169 C.E. reported the same belief of the Shiloh origin of the waters among Jews in his time, though he did not believe the waters came from that far off (*Ibid.*, p.295). Another belief of the Jews was that the waters of the Gihon originated at an elevated area 'Ayn 'Eytiam south of Bethlehem. But the main belief was the one mentioned in the text.

“How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house [the Temple at Zion]; and thou, shalt *make them drink of the river* of thy pleasures. For with thee *is the fountain of life* [from the Temple]; in thy light shall we see light” (italics mine).

Thus we are informed in the above Psalm that the Temple at Zion was associated with “*the fountain of life*” producing a stream of spiritual abundance issuing from the throne of God. The simple fact is, there can be no proper Temple on earth, which is a pattern or replica of God’s Temple in heaven, without there being within its precincts a “*fountain of life*” which represents the actual “*fountain of life*” found in God’s heavenly Sanctuary.

This is why Solomon felt it incumbent to follow David and position the original Temple directly over the Gihon Spring which was near the northern foot of the original Mount Zion (the *Akra*) and just below the *Ophel* summit. The truth is, the *Ophel* was where Ornan had his “threshing floor.” In order to reach the waters of the Gihon from the summit of the *Ophel* (before building the Temple), Solomon had engineers design and then chisel out of the rock a shaft which led down to the Gihon Spring. This may or may not be what is now called “Warren’s Shaft” after the man who discovered it in the middle of the 19th century. Earlier archaeologists normally dated the carving of this vertical shaft to the 10th century B.C.E. — the exact time of Solomon. It was constructed to reach the Gihon from the *Ophel* summit (where the Temple was built). Some archaeologists think the “Shaft” is natural and not manmade.

There were facilities to bring the spring waters by mechanical means into the laver that Solomon built within the Temple courts. This brazen laver was a large reservoir containing 3000 “bats” when brim full (probably about 18,000 gallons of water — no one knows the exact measure of the “bat”), or 2000 “bats” at its lowest level. It obtained its water supply from the only perennial source of water in Jerusalem — the Gihon Spring — far below the laver. It was common at that period to use a wheel, or conveyor belt apparatus with water containers attached to the belt at specific intervals,

to lift the water into a receptacle (in this case, the laver). Animal power was no doubt used to elevate the spring water into the laver. Oxen were probably harnessed and located just outside the Temple but were capable of pulling long ropes attached to the apparatus to elevate the water. Remember too the laver was positioned on the backs of twelve model oxen.

The laver itself had such large dimensions in order to provide a continuous and abundant supply of water to the Temple. This was because the Gihon Spring spouted forth water only at intervals throughout a twenty-four hour period. It was dormant at other times. The Temple ceremonies, however, demanded a constant supply of running *spring water* for the Temple ceremonies to proceed properly. One such ceremony was the anointing of kings that had to be performed at a place where *spring waters* were flowing. "Our Rabbis taught: Kings are anointed only by the side of a spring."<sup>399</sup> This tradition began because Solomon was anointed as king at the Gihon Spring.<sup>400</sup> Later when Joash was made king *in the Temple itself*, the ceremony was performed beside the Altar of Burnt Offering, where the laver of Solomon was positioned providing *spring water* from the Gihon.<sup>401</sup> This shows that the laver in the Temple was acknowledged as part of the Gihon system and was reckoned as an official place where kings could be anointed and crowned.

### **Temples Had Springs Emerging from their Interiors**

Spring waters were always associated with the earthly Temples. Indeed, when the prophet Ezekiel described the ideal Temple (or House of God), he showed that a central characteristic of God's Temple was that *spring waters* could be seen emerging from the threshold of the interior of the Temple. Ezekiel saw the waters springing from the same general area where Solomon placed his large "laver," built as a reservoir to contain the *spring waters* pulled up from the Gihon. Notice how Ezekiel 47:1 illustrates this.

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<sup>399</sup> Kerithoth 5b.

<sup>400</sup> I Kings 1:32–34.

<sup>401</sup> II Chronicles 23:10–11.

“Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house [the Temple]; and, behold, *waters* issued out from under the threshold of the house [the Temple] eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the *waters* came down from under *the right side* of the house at *the south side* of the altar [the precise position where Solomon placed his ‘laver’].”

There is more biblical evidence for the use of *spring waters* in connection with the Holy Places and where God will one day have His throne of sovereignty. Look at Zechariah 14:8–9. We read about a future time when God will establish His throne on earth. Note what will once again emerge from Jerusalem.

“And it shall be in that day, that *living waters* [*spring waters*] shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth ...”

The *waters* described are clearly *spring waters* coming directly from the City of the Great King [the new Zion].

There are other prophecies that speak of *living waters* emerging from the holy places of God when God establishes His throne on earth. Look at Joel 3:16–18.

“The Lord also shall roar out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall you know that *I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain*: then shall Jerusalem be holy. ... all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a *fountain* [a spring of water] shall come forth of the House of the Lord.”

This prophetic description in the Book of Joel is very important to our present research. As one can easily observe, there is prophesied to be (once again) *a single fountain of water* giving forth pure *spring water* which will well upwards from *within* the House of the Lord (God’s Temple). This same requirement was viewed by David and Solomon as a necessary feature of the Temple at Jerusalem to precisely duplicate the pattern or replica of God’s Temple in heaven. This is why King Solomon took the Ark of the Covenant located in its special Tent at the Gihon, and placed it within

the Holy of Holies that he built on the top of the *Ophel* directly above the Gihon.<sup>402</sup>

There is even more information in the Holy Scriptures to show that *spring waters* are again destined to come forth from the sacred land of Israel. This will occur when the idols are destroyed from Israel and all wars will cease within the land. Look at Isaiah 30:19–26, especially verses 19 and 25 where it says waters will come forth from the tops of mountains when idolatry is destroyed from the territory of Israel. Isaiah gives us information about these *spring waters*:

“For the people shall dwell in [Mount] Zion at Jerusalem. ... there shall be upon every high mountain [of Israel], and upon every high hill, *rivers and streams of waters* in the day of the great destruction [of idols from Israel], when the towers [built for war] fall.”

This same theme is also shown in the New Testament. Speaking about New Jerusalem and the time when God will reign over the earth, we have symbolism of fresh *spring waters* emerging from the throne of God — directly from underneath the feet of God as He sits anthropomorphically on His throne. Note what the apostle John wrote in Revelation 21:2,6; 22:1,17:

“And I John saw the holy city new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.... I will give unto him that is athirst of the *fountain [spring]* of the *water of life* freely.... And he showed me *a pure river of water of life*, clear as crystal, *proceeding out of the throne of God* and the [throne of the] Lamb.... And let him that is *athirst* come. And whosoever will, let him take *the water of life* freely.”

A similar description is given in the Book of Enoch (referred to

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<sup>402</sup> Let's be honest with truth. The terms “Mount Zion” and “Temple Mount” are synonymous. They refer to the same place — to the spur of the southeast ridge where the original “Mount Zion” and its northerly extension called the “Ophel” were located. For accuracy's sake, all the Temples were located on the “Ophel” prominence situated over and around the Gihon Spring. Note also Isaiah 32:14 (where “Ophel” is translated “forts” in the KJV), Isaiah said some of the main geographical features of the Ophel were its “caves” (KJV: “dens”) located underneath and within the mountain ridge. These caves and tunnels were carved out of the subterranean rock to reach the waters of the Gihon.

by Jude in the New Testament). That *spring of water* issuing from the throne of God is reckoned to be symbolic of righteousness and wisdom that God will impart to his chosen ones. In an apocalyptic vision the author said in First Enoch 47:3 and 48:1:

“In those days I saw the Head of Days sit down on the throne of his glory, and the books of the living were opened before him, and all his host [of angels] which dwells in the heavens above, and his council were standing before him.... And in that place I saw *an inexhaustible spring* of righteousness, and many *springs* of wisdom surrounded it, and all the *thirsty drank* from them and were filled with wisdom, and their dwelling was with the righteous and the holy and the chosen.”

Notice again it is *spring water* associated with the throne of God, symbolic of righteousness and goodness, and representing the *water of life*. To show this on earth in the replica of God’s heavenly Temple, it was necessary to have a literal *spring* within the Temple at Jerusalem that duplicated this heavenly scene. That *fountain* was clearly the Gihon, as Aristeas and Tacitus state was located in the Temple precincts. It was the only *spring* in Jerusalem and David referred to it. Recall Psalm 36:7–9 as above.

“How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of *thy house* [the riches of thy Temple]; and thou shalt make them *drink* of the *river* of thy pleasures [from the Temple]. For with thee is the *fountain* of life [the *fountain* within God’s House].”

It was reckoned in the symbolism of the Temple (and the City of God) that from the holy area a *water source* produced *streams* of water. Psalm 46 also shows a *river* comes from the City of God that produced *streams*. The *river* emerges from “the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.” This place for the springing forth of the *river* was where “God is in the midst of her [Zion].” Note the verses in Psalm 46 that also show this theme.

“There is a *river*, the *streams* whereof shall make glad the city of God, in the holy place [a *river* within the Temple] of the taberna-

cles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her [the City of God, Zion].”<sup>403</sup>

Similar evidence is given in Psalm 65 where David said there was “the *river* of God” full of water. Where did this abundant water have its origin? It provides riches and welfare for all who would drink. David called it “the *river* of God.” It was “God’s own *river*” coming from the courts of the Temple. See Psalm 65:4,9.

“Blessed in the man thou choosiest, and causest to approach unto thee [in thy House], that he may dwell in thy courts [of the Temple]: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.... Thou visitest the earth, and *waterest* it: thou greatly enrichest it with *the river of God* [God’s own river], which is full of *water*.”

This was no ordinary *river* David was talking about. It was “*THE River of God*.” He illustrated the use of the river in contexts in which he was speaking about the courts of the Temple at Zion. This was a special “*River of God*” that came forth from God himself who, of course, resided symbolically in the Temple at Jerusalem. This *river* had to be a part of Temple apparatus in Zion.

David also made it as clear that there was a *fountain* (a *spring*) within the precincts of the Holy Temple in heaven, and there was also a *fountain* (a *spring*) positioned in the replica of God’s House in Jerusalem. David related these things in his Psalms when the “House of the Lord” was reckoned to be the Tent of the Ark located at the Gihon Spring. That special Sanctuary for the Ark remained at the Gihon for 38 years.

“They have seen thy goings, O God; even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary [in the Tent at Gihon]. The singers [of the Sanctuary] went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them [in the Temple] were the damsels playing with timbrels. Bless ye God in the congregations [assembled in the Temple at the Gihon Spring], even the Lord, from the *fountain* [the *spring*] of Israel.”<sup>404</sup>

Look at the Psalm carefully. Where is God described as having

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<sup>403</sup> Psalm 46:4–5.

<sup>404</sup> Psalm 68:24–26.

his abode? He was living as a King “in the sanctuary” (in the Tent at Gihon). From where did the Lord bless Israel and their congregations? The blessings came directly “from the *fountain* of Israel.” This *fountain* was, of course, reflective of that *fountain* within the precincts of the Temple or God’s divine palace in heaven. The earthly symbol for this *fountain* was the Gihon Spring.

## **Water Springs and the Temples**

We find Zion is always shown as having a water source within it. This is indicated in the eschatological description of God’s new Zion spoken of by the prophet Isaiah as an elaboration of his prophecies concerning the Suffering Servant of God (which Christian teaching from the very beginning associated with Jesus as the Christ). Isaiah provides a prophecy about the Suffering Servant beginning in Isaiah 52:13 and without a break in context on through Isaiah 53 to 56:9.

After referring in the first fifteen verses about the role of the Suffering Servant in granting Israel a freedom from sins through his actions, the prophecy in Isaiah continues with a description of the wonderful period when the Suffering Servant is finally glorified and *everyone can drink from the WATERS of Zion*. Let us look at selected verses of this long prophecy that pertain to the new Zion once the Suffering Servant has established sovereignty over the earth. It is much like what the Book of Revelation says will occur when Christ returns to earth and establishes his rule.

“Sing, O barren [because of the Suffering Servant’s actions], thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate [women without children] than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent [make Zion larger to hold more people], and let them stretch forth the curtains [make the Temple curtains larger] of thine habitations [make larger your Temple courts]: spare not, lengthen thy cords [enlarge your Tent so more people can enter], and strengthen thy stakes [secure this enlarged habitation of God]....

Ho, *everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters* [of Zion], he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price....

[Do not let] the son of the stranger [the Gentile], that hath joined himself to the Lord, saying [in dejection], ‘The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people’: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree....

Even unto them [even rejected Gentiles and eunuchs] will I give in mine house [within my new Zion] and within my walls a place [a high position] and a name better than of [my legitimate] sons and of daughters: I will give them [even Gentiles and eunuchs] an everlasting name [of fame and legitimacy], that shall not be cut off.... even them [Gentiles and eunuchs] will I bring to my holy mountain [my new Zion], and make them joyful *in my house of prayer* [inside the House of God].... My house [the Temple or Palace] shall be called *a house of prayer for all people* [not just Israelites, but even Gentiles and eunuchs drink its waters]. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, *Yet will I gather others* [besides Israel] *to him* [to the Suffering Servant], beside those [of Israel] that are gathered to him [all races will be gathered to his new House of God].”<sup>405</sup>

This new Zion established by the Suffering Servant would have an enlarged House of God to gather all peoples into it (including even Gentiles and eunuchs formerly the desolate and rejected). All will be allowed to drink *of the waters* associated with this new House of God. As prelude to this future acceptance of eunuchs and Gentiles, the New Testament shows the first non-Jewish convert to Christianity was an Ethiopian eunuch.<sup>406</sup> This incident was symbolic of what will occur when *all races* and *all social distinctions* will be allowed to enter God’s Temple and *drink* the waters of salvation to be found in God’s Sanctuary.

That is why all Temples of God on earth must have natural *spring waters* within their enclosures. The symbolism of all Temples is to show the future role of the actual abode of God that He will have on earth. This is why it is necessary for *spring waters* to emerge from *within* any Temple to secure a proper symbolism of the *fountain of salvation* from God in heaven. Only the area of the Gihon Spring could supply the needed symbolic spring waters.

Even in the description of the future Temple in the “Temple

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<sup>405</sup> Isaiah 54:1–2; 55:1; 56:3,5–8, italics mine.

<sup>406</sup> Acts 8:26–39.

Scroll” of the Dead Sea sectarians, there was water in its interior. Its laver was supplied with a constant quantity of water.

“You shall make a channel all round the laver *within the building*. The channel runs [from the building] of the laver *to a shaft*, goes down and disappears in the middle of the earth so that the water flows and runs through it and is lost in the middle of the earth.”<sup>407</sup>

Interestingly, in Solomon’s Temple there were shafts in the rock used to elevate spring water from the Gihon to the Laver of the Temple. The shafts also allowed the used water of the Temple to return to the Gihon water system. One of these was no doubt the “shaft” the “Temple Scroll” was referring to.

This shows that the original Sanctuaries at Jerusalem were built either at or over the Gihon Spring located in the *center* of the “crescent-shaped” city situated on the southeast ridge. There can be no doubt, the early Temples were not located near the northern area of the Dome of the Rock, then outside the walls of Jerusalem. That lop-sided area is totally disqualified from being considered as the Temple Mount. It is time people return to the biblical and eyewitness descriptions, and look for the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod where they were actually built over the Gihon Spring.

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<sup>407</sup> The “Temple Scroll,” Col. xxxii, 12–13, Martinez’ trans., italics are mine.