
Chapter 34

THE PROPER COMPARISONS OF THE TEMPLE

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT that the Haram esh-Sharif is not the place of the former Temple. We now realize what that structure really was. But an interesting feature of the Haram is its astonishing resemblance to other permanent Camps of the Romans — and without doubt Fort Antonia was a Roman Camp. Note in the description of Josephus given in the previous chapter that the walls of Fort Antonia were said to be “square.” This is a clear indication that Fort Antonia was built in the form of a Roman Camp. Josephus himself said that Roman Camps were accustomed to be designed in the form of a “square.”⁶⁷¹

⁶⁷¹ Josephus said: “They [the Romans] do not begin to fight till they have walled their camp about; nor is the fence they raise rashly made, or uneven; nor do they all abide in it, nor do those that are in it take their places at random; but if it happens that the ground is uneven, it is first leveled: their camp is also four-

Josephus did not mean, however, that the camps were always a perfect square. For example, we can still see the Roman Camps set up around Masada by General Silva in 73 C.E. Though they are certainly “square-like” as Josephus stated, none of them was precisely “square” in shape. There are many remaining archaeological examples and historical accounts that show many Roman camps (though square-like) were actually rectangles. Even the dimensions of the Haram esh-Sharif are not precisely a square. Even people who for the first time have viewed the Haram from the Mount of Olives are clearly able to notice that the enclosure is not a square. It has the appearance of being a rectangle, and of course, that is what it looks like from afar. Up close, it can be seen that the Haram is not even a precise rectangle.

The Haram is actually a trapezium (a quadrilateral without parallel sides). It has the following dimensions: “929 feet on the south, 1041 feet on the north, 1556 feet on the east, and 1596 feet on the west.”⁶⁷² This represents about 36 acres in area. Remarkably, it is comparable in size to most permanent camps of the Romans. These dimensions, however, do not fit either the Temple of Solomon or that of Herod according to Josephus or in other early records of the Jews. Herod’s Temple was, on the other hand, a perfect square.

The Temple Was A Perfect Square

The walls of the Haram esh-Sharif could not be those that surrounded the Temple in the time of Josephus. He stated dogmatically the Temple walls were in the shape of an exact square and that each side had the length of a *stadium* (Greek: a *stade*).⁶⁷³ Modern scholars dispute the length of the *stade*. Though most would accept its length as about 600 feet, various lengths from 585 to 660 feet have been suggested.⁶⁷⁴ In this book, I take the *stade* to be 600 feet (or 400 cubits). This means the Temple of Herod was just

square by measure, and carpenters are ready, in great numbers, with their tools, to erect their buildings for them” (*War* III.5,1 italics mine).

⁶⁷² Josephus, *Antiquities*, Loeb edition, vol. VIII, p.193.

⁶⁷³ *Antiquities* XV.11.3.

⁶⁷⁴ The distance of the *stade* often depended on the length of local stadiums.

about eight and one quarter acres in size.⁶⁷⁵ That is a reasonable average and one most scholars would certainly accept.

The much smaller lengths of the walls around the actual Temple of Herod are ample proof in itself that the Haram esh-Sharif cannot enclose the original Temple Mount. The larger dimensions of the Haram esh-Sharif, however, do fit the description concerning Fort Antonia that he said “dominated the Temple.”⁶⁷⁶ We are told that Fort Antonia also occupied the whole north side of the Temple.⁶⁷⁷ As anyone can see, these plain eyewitness accounts by Josephus (which modern scholars are at a loss to explain) show the measurements of the Haram esh-Sharif are much larger than those associated with the Temple of Herod and Jesus. They clearly belong to another edifice — NOT the Temple. Indeed, they fit Fort Antonia perfectly.

The Temple Mount in the Mishnah

The dimensions of the Haram esh-Sharif also do not fit the measurements of the Temple stated in another early Jewish writing known as the Mishnah. The Mishnah is a Jewish document compiled about 200 C.E. that records opinions of earlier rabbis dating back to the time of the Temple. Like Josephus, it also records that the Temple Mount was a precise square. The Mishnah’s dimensions, however, differ from those of Josephus. It gives slightly larger measurements. It states the Temple Mount was reckoned to be a perfect square of 500 cubits (that answers to 750 feet on each side if the ordinary cubit were meant).⁶⁷⁸

These measurements are at variance with those of Josephus. Though both Josephus and the Mishnah speak of a perfect square, the numbers themselves do not tally. However, when one analyzes

⁶⁷⁵ Josephus clearly shows that the platform on which Herod’s Temple was constructed had walls around it precisely one *stade* on each side (making a perfect square). The *stade* was just about 600 feet in length. Thus, the size of Herod’s Temple platform was about 360,000 square feet, or just about eight and one quarter acres in size.

⁶⁷⁶ *War* V.5,8 Loeb translation.

⁶⁷⁷ *Antiquities* XV.11,4; *War* V.5,4.

⁶⁷⁸ Middoth II.1.

the texts, it will be seen that the variance is because Josephus and the Mishnah are speaking of two different perimeters. The truth is, both measurements were proper for the Temple region. Josephus concerned himself with the actual dimensions of the walls around the Temple, while the Mishnah provided the measurements for the complete area of the “Temple Mount.”⁶⁷⁹ Josephus and the Mishnah were *not* speaking of the same thing. Once this is realized, both accounts can be helpful in understanding just what the proper measurements of the Temple area really were. Let us notice what the two sources meant.

The Mishnah is referring to the dimensions of a “camp area” around the Temple structure known as the “Temple Mount.”⁶⁸⁰ There were officially three camp areas recognized in the first century as encompassing the Temple and also the City of Jerusalem. The Mishnah in referring to the Temple Mount being a square of 500 cubits was calling attention to one of those three camps of Israel situated around the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

The Camps of Israel

It was common in the first century for Jews to refer to three camps of Israel surrounding Jerusalem. These three camps were situated around the Inner Temple known as the Holy of Holies. They were non-walled areas. They were the same types of camps that the Rabbis thought existed in the wilderness encampments of the Israelites during the time of Moses. These former camps were those located around the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. The Rabbis reckoned that the residence of God (the Holy of Holies)

⁶⁷⁹ I put the words “Temple Mount” in quotes because the “Temple Mount” and the Temple located on the “Temple Mount” were two different things.

⁶⁸⁰ In the translation of the Mishnah by Danby and the Soncino edition of the Talmud, one might get the impression that the dimensions of 500 cubits by 500 cubits for the perimeter of the Temple Mount could be speaking of stone walls. This is not, however, what the writers of the Mishnah intended, and in the excellent translation of the Mishnah by Jacob Neusner it is nowhere evident that “stone walls” were intended. Josephus, an eyewitness, gave the actual measurements of the stone walls that formed the square of the Temple, while the Mishnah is only giving the perimeter area of the “Temple Mount” itself which was a different matter altogether. This will soon be made clear.

was the center area of the Sanctuary. Around this Inner Temple was positioned the first camp of Israel. It was called the “Camp of the Priests.” This embraced the region within the Temple given to the responsibility of the priests. The second camp was reckoned to be the “Camp of the Levites.” It was this camp that the Mishnah was speaking about when it said that the “Temple Mount” was 500 cubits square. The third camp was a much larger area. It was a square “Camp of Israel” which reached out 2000 cubits from the threshold of the Holy of Holies in the Temple.⁶⁸¹

It is significant for us to realize these three camps were not distinguished by material walls in the time of Moses, nor did these three camps have stone walls designating them within the environment of Jerusalem and the Temple in the time of Herod and Jesus.⁶⁸² The limits of these three camps were reckoned as imaginary zones surrounding the Temple. The “camp” that concerns us in regard to the measurements of 500 cubits mentioned in the Mishnah is the “Camp of the Levites.” Simply put, the second camp area of the Levites was analogous to the zone around the Temple that was called in the first century the “Temple Mount.”

⁶⁸¹ The Jewish authorities in the first century chose the figure of 2000 cubits (3000 feet) because of the reference to the 2000 cubits mentioned in Joshua 3:4 that separated the Israelites from the Ark of the Covenant. The accounts in the earliest parts of the Talmuds known as the Mishnah show the use of these 2000 cubits in early Jewish interpretation (Rosh ha-Shanah 2:5, see also Sanhedrin 1:5 and Shebu'oth 2:2 for the authority of the Sanhedrin [the Supreme Court] of the Jews to set the limits of the three camps). As in the case of the Ark in the time of Joshua, the distance was determined “by measure” (Joshua 3:4). This was by walking the distance with a reed or a line [a measuring rod] in the hand. The distance was determined by walking, not by measuring the distance of 2000 cubits from the Holy of Holies as a bird would fly.

⁶⁸² Whereas it was common for Jewish towns outside of Jerusalem to have their Sabbath day zones for walking at 2000 cubits from the walls of the various towns, in Jerusalem it was different because that is where the Temple (God’s House) was situated. Since the Holy of Holies in the Temple was designed to contain the Ark of the Covenant and the 2000 cubits were originally reckoned from the Ark in the time of Joshua, the 2000 cubits for the limits of the Camp of Israel (the third camp) were measured in Jerusalem from the threshold of the Holy of Holies. This was considered to be the entrance to the abode of God on earth. This agreed with the 2000 cubits’ distance between the Israelites and the Ark in the time of Joshua (Joshua 3:4).

The Camps of Israel in the First Century

We need to understand these three camps. The Talmud gives an account of these camps that existed around the Holy of Holies. The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem tried to duplicate the three camps that were in the wilderness as ordered by Moses. The first camp was the priestly area of the Temple, the second camp was the “Temple Mount” and the third camp was the official religious limit of the City of Jerusalem.⁶⁸³

More precisely, these three “camps” outside the Holy of Holies were acknowledged in the first century as being: (1) the “Camp of the Priests” which occupied the priestly section of the inner Temple. Then (2) the “Camp of the Levites” which occupied the rest of what was called the “Temple Mount” (500 cubits square around the Temple according to the Mishnah — this measurement extended beyond the actual walls of the Temple which were only 400 cubits square according to Josephus). This second “Camp of the Levites” at Jerusalem had imaginary dimensions (not stone walls), like those non-walled zones that existed in the time of Moses around the Tabernacle.⁶⁸⁴ This special boundary for Levitical responsibility was a perfect square of 500 cubits on each side. It did not mean the dimensions of the walls surrounding the Temple. The Mishnah shows the walls were *inside* or *upon* the “Temple Mount” — not that the 500 cubits were the dimensions of the actual walls. The 500 cubits only denoted the area of the “Temple Mount” (which included the walls located *on* or *within* the “Temple Mount”). The 500 cubits were imaginary (not actual walls) and corresponded exactly to the area of the “Camp of the Levites.”⁶⁸⁵

There was also the third camp called (3) the “Camp of Israel.” This final “Camp” was also a square area. It extended 2000 cubits from the Temple and designated the limit to the Sabbath day’s

⁶⁸³ *Yoma* 68a, see also *Zabachim* 105b.

⁶⁸⁴ Exodus 32:26–27, and see my book *Secrets of Golgotha* for a description in greater detail (pp.36–38).

⁶⁸⁵ This means that the size of the “Temple Mount” was just about thirteen and one quarter acres. The area of the “Temple Platform” on which the Temple buildings were placed was about eight and one quarter acres. These measurements are contrasts to the Haram esh-Sharif that is about 36 acres in area.

journey (Acts 1:12).⁶⁸⁶ There were no stone walls defining this outer (third) “camp” of the Israelites either in the wilderness or at Jerusalem in the first century.

The walls of the Temple itself (according to Josephus) were a *stade* in length or 400 cubits on each side (which I take to be 600 feet). This represented a precise square.⁶⁸⁷ Josephus said: “Such was the whole enclosure, having a circumference of four *stades*, each side taking up the length of a *stade*.” The “Camp of the Levites” (representing the whole of the “Temple Mount”) was reckoned to be 500 cubits on each side. Combining those two boundaries in Josephus and in the Mishnah represents a proper explanation of the official “Temple Mount” in the first century.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁶ This “Camp of Israel” was square in shape. This configuration is to be distinguished from the astronomical “camp” which was a radius of 2000 cubits from a central position within the Holy Place in front of the Altar of Incense (see my book *Secrets of Golgotha* where the “square” camp and the “circular” camp are given in more detail). The “square” Camp allowed the Israelites to take advantage of the corners in walking on a Sabbath day. The “circular” camp did not provide such corners. The “circular” Camp, however, was only for astronomical and prophetic purposes and was not in daily use by the ordinary Israelite public.

⁶⁸⁷ *Antiquities* XV.11,3. See also *Contra Apion* II.8,11 where Josephus said the Temple had “four courts” that surrounded it.

⁶⁸⁸ Though early Jewish writings mention the “Temple Mount” as having “a colonnade within a colonnade” (*Pesachim* 52b), the records do not mean the colonnades comprising the walls represented the perimeter of the “Temple Mount.” There are statements that a person could be on the “Temple Mount” before even reaching the eastern gate located in the exterior wall of the Temple. In fact, there were three Beth Dins (religious courts) in Jerusalem. One was at the entrance to the “Temple Mount” (to allow people who were unclean in certain aspects to attend). The second Beth Din was at the Temple Gate in the wall of the Temple, and the third was the Great Beth Din located at the Chamber of Hewn Stones at the southeast corner of the Holy Place in the Temple (*Sanhedrin* 86b, 88b). There were also three ash-pits to contain ashes of the sacrifices (particularly sin offerings). One was on the Mount of Olives, the second at the entrance to the “Temple Mount,” and the third on the eastside of the Altar of Burnt Offering (*Zevachim* 104b). The fact that the “Temple Mount” answered to the “Camp of the Levites,” and did not have walls around it (just as it was in the time of Moses), has confused some modern interpreters. Those who believe the square of 500 cubits for the “Temple Mount” mentioned in the Mishnah represents the dimensions of the Temple walls in the time of Herod are at loggerheads with the eyewitness accounts of Josephus who said the Temple walls were

Indeed, in the Talmud it was recognized that the Eastern Gate of the Temple was not a part of the boundaries comprising the "Temple Mount." The dimensions of the "Temple Mount" are not to be equated with those of the Temple walls or Temple Gates.⁶⁸⁹ This was also recognized by Maimonides in the twelfth century. He said there were gradations in holiness in the various areas surrounding the Temple and within the various Camps. Maimonides said: "It is also clear that the gradation [of holiness] with regard to the various places, that is, *the Temple Mount*, to the *place between the two walls* [of Temple Square], to the *Hall of the Women*, to the *Hall* [Court of Israel], and to the *Holy of Holies*."⁶⁹⁰

In the verse just quoted from Maimonides, you will note that after mentioning *the Temple Mount* itself, he then singles out the next inward part of the Temple that had greater holiness. That was "the *place between the two walls*." In Herod's Temple there was a single colonnade walkway surrounding the Temple that was 600 feet long (a Greek *stade* in length) on each side of the perfect square of the walls of the Temple. That single walkway was 45 feet wide with walls on each side (an *outer* wall protecting people from falling over the precipice into the valleys below and an *inner* wall that shielded the Court of the Gentiles from the walkway). The *inner* wall had various Gates associated with it. The Gate on the east was called the "Gate Beautiful" (or the Shushan Gate). Abutting to this *inner* wall was a covered area on the east known

a square of 400 cubits. The interpretation given in this book solves the problem in a most reasonable manner and it agrees with the texts of Josephus, the Mishnah and the Talmuds.

⁶⁸⁹ Talmud, Mas. *Ta'anith* 15b says [the text is capitalized and I retain the capitalization]:

"IN THE DAYS OF R. HALAFTA AND R. HANINA B. TRADITION THAT A MAN STEPPED BEFORE THE ARK AND COMPLETED THE ENTIRE BENEDICTION AND THEY DID NOT RESPOND, 'AMEN'.... THIS WAS OUR ORDER OF PROCEDURE ONLY AT THE EASTERN GATES AND ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT."

Note that the last two phrases of this reference distinguish the Eastern Gates of the Temple from the "Temple Mount" itself. Two different areas are discussed in this geographical statement.

⁶⁹⁰ Maimonides, *The Guide to the Perplexed*, Book III, ch.45 (see translation by Sholomo Pines, p. 581).

as “Solomon’s Porch” that was located within the Court of the Gentiles and where people could speak without having to stand in the open area of the Court which would expose people to the weather and the sun. These two walls (the *outer* and the *inner*) helped to support the colonnade walkway that completely surrounded the square platform of the Temple of Herod.

As one can see, these measurements of the Temple in the time of Josephus were very different from the lengths of the walls now surrounding the Haram. This is another principal reason why the Haram and its walls do NOT represent the walls surrounding the former Temple. These obvious differences should have been a “red flag” to warn modern scholars and theologians that something is very wrong with their convictions that the Haram represents the remains of the Temple of Herod. But this clear disparity has not deterred the modern authorities from jettisoning any eyewitness accounts that disagree with their conclusions. They merrily inform the general public that all the ancient authorities are wrong and they (the modern scholars) are the only ones who can be trusted as having the truth. It is my judgment, however, that the ancients be given their fair hearing in this matter.

Squares Were Ideal Measurements of Temple and City

The use of squares in the design of holy places was important in certain circumstances. This was particularly the case in determining the shape of the outer walls of the Temple, or in defining the area of the Camp of the Levites and the Camp of Israel. The example for this was the scriptural teaching of Ezekiel’s ideal Temple and its inner and outer walls reckoned as a perfect square.⁶⁹¹ This same pattern can be seen in the “Temple Scroll” found among the thousands of fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁶⁹² In that document, the Dead Sea sectarians represented both the Temple and the City as squares. There is also a New Testament reference to this square pattern in defining sacred areas. The Book of Revelation shows the New Jerusalem that will descend from heaven at the end

⁶⁹¹ See Ezekiel chapter 48.

⁶⁹² Yigael Yadin, *The Temple Scroll*.

of the age is a perfect square. "The city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth."⁶⁹³

The fact that these foursquare measurements are associated with several of the important features of the Sanctuaries and the City in the Holy Scriptures shows that this pattern was an important one for the early Jewish authorities. It is reflected in the measurements of Josephus in the walls of the Temple (400 cubits on each side) and the Mishnah in its description of the "Temple Mount" (500 cubits on each side) which was the size of the "Camp of the Levites." This square area of the "Camp of the Levites" (known also as the "Temple Mount") had no walls surrounding it.

There is another geographical feature that must be borne in mind in the gradations of holiness associated with the walls of the Temple and the extended Temple Mount itself. It should be noted that the square boundaries of the Temple Mount were not the same distance from the four walls of the Temple itself. That is, the Temple was NOT positioned in the exact *CENTER* of the Temple Mount. Indeed, the Mishnah states:

"The Temple Mount measured five hundred cubits [750 feet] by five hundred cubits [750 feet]. Its largest [open] space was to the south [that is, the open space was from the *outer southern* wall of the Temple to the *outer* boundary of the Temple Mount located farther south], the next largest to the east [that is, the open area from the *outer eastern* wall of the Temple to the *outer* boundary of the Temple Mount located farther east], the third largest to the north [that is, from the *outer north* wall to the *outer* boundary of the Temple Mount located farther north], and its smallest was to the west; the place where its measure was greatest was where its use was greatest."⁶⁹⁴

Most people entered the Temple Mount (the Levitical Camp) through an official entrance in its *southern* boundary and they also went into the Temple itself through a gate in its *southern* wall. This means that the distance of open space between the southern boundary of the Temple Mount and the southern wall of the Temple was deliberately made wider so that the crowds could assemble on the

⁶⁹³ Revelation 21:16.

⁶⁹⁴ *Middoth* 2:1, Danby's translation.

south side before entering the Temple. The eastern side was the next most open area between the boundary of the Levitical Camp and the eastern Temple wall. The next most open space between the two boundaries was on the north side. The least amount of open area around the Temple walls was between the western boundary of the Levitical Camp and the western wall. This region in the west was made narrower because the buildings of the city on the western side were very near the Temple and Herod had to accommodate for that architectural feature. Thus, the larger area of the Temple Mount (that is, the limits of the Levitical Camp by being 750 feet by 750 feet) is not the same area encompassed by the square walls of the Temple which were much smaller (only 600 feet by 600 feet). The geographical centers of each area were different. Since the Temple was smaller in dimension, it was positioned nearer the northwestern corner of the Temple Mount (slightly nearer to the western wall than the northern wall).

Of course, these two different measurements for the boundaries of the Temple Mount and the Temple itself have nothing to do with the site of the Haram esh-Sharif. That area was the region of Fort Antonia, and it was a much, much larger region. All of this helps to show that the Haram esh-Sharif cannot be the site of the former Temples because its walls are not a square, nor were they even a perfect rectangle. Of its four walls (though they are straight for long stretches), the eastern and western sides are actually convergent toward one another in their northern orientation. This means that the Haram is not a square. This convergent feature alone disqualifies the Haram as the Temple, for the Temple was a perfect square.

Another Fact the Haram esh-Sharif is Not Temple Site

Josephus tells us in his description of the Temple and its walls that most of the eastern wall of the Temple (that existed in the time of Herod and Jesus) was constructed by Solomon.⁶⁹⁵ Josephus said this eastern wall was made up of gigantic stones which were

⁶⁹⁵ *War* V.5,1. The New Testament also refers to one of the colonnades (no doubt the southern up to the eastern) as "Solomon's Colonnade" (Acts 3:11).

“bound together *with lead*.”⁶⁹⁶ He also said this wall of Solomon

“became greater in depth, so that the size and height of the structure, which was 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*.”⁶⁹⁷

Notice two points in Josephus’ description that I emphasized. He said the stones that made up the wall on the east side of the Temple were “bound together with lead” and on the inside they had “iron clamps” that fused them together with such a bond that Josephus reckoned they would be permanently united together. These bonding features in the east wall that used iron and lead would have been a unique aspect associated with the binding of those stones. But note this: Much of the eastern wall of the Haram (that some attribute to Solomon because they think it is the Temple Mount) DO NOT have any of these features.⁶⁹⁸ The stones of the Haram are all placed one on another without any type of cement between them (either of lead, iron or whatever). This fact is, again, a clear indication the walls surrounding the Haram are NOT those that encompassed the Temple of Herod as described by Josephus, our eyewitness historian.

Remember, if we select the Haram esh-Sharif as the site of the Temple (as the scholars and religious authorities do today), and at the same time accept the dimensions of its walls as recorded by Josephus (as we should), we will have the platform of the Temple

⁶⁹⁶ *Antiquities* XV.11,3.

⁶⁹⁷ *Antiquities* XV.11,3 Loeb translation.

⁶⁹⁸ Meir Ben-Dov explains how the Roman architect Vitruvius established a school of engineering which dealt with the transportation of large stones in buildings, and how to set them precisely on top one another. A small hard stone that was round in shape could be placed underneath the stone and the stone could be rolled into place. The small stone could then be crushed and the large stone would then be where the builders wanted it. The metal lead was also used in a similar manner to position stones, and the archaeologists found at the edge of some of the stones of the Haram esh-Sharif the residue of lead where this procedure was used. This lead, however, was not used for bonding or cementing in the way Josephus describes it for the Temple. See Ben-Dov, Naor; and Aner, *The Western Wall*, pages 215–219 for the use of lead in setting the stones in place.

about 200 feet higher than the summit of the Mount of Olives (the Temple platform was 300 cubits or 450 feet high). But such a conclusion is absurd because it presents us with impossible geographical situations. All becomes reasonable when one positions the Temple over the Gihon Spring with its foundational corner of the southeast wall located in the very floor of the Kedron Valley. That is precisely where it belongs. This correct position for the Temple is a third of a mile south of the Dome of the Rock in the Haram area.

Once this southern location for the Temple is recognized, an historical account by Josephus now makes sense. He said that before the war, Agrippa the Second would customarily recline at dining in a veranda room at his palace with his friends. From that spot they could look at what was happening within the Temple courts. For Agrippa to see the interior of the Temple the elevated part of his palace (where he would dine with his friends) must have been in the Upper City and at an elevation higher than the western wall of the Temple. When the religious authorities heard that Agrippa was entertaining his friends in such a manner (viewing the religious activities within the Temple courts), they decided to prevent this by constructing a new wall on top of the western colonnade.⁶⁹⁹ This additional height obscured Agrippa's view.

Look at this incident carefully.⁷⁰⁰ In no way could Agrippa have seen inside the Temple courts *if* the Temple were located over the Dome of the Rock within the Haram. That area in the north is much higher in elevation and would have been far too elevated for Agrippa to look over the Temple walls into the courts where the worshippers assembled. This again shows that the Haram can in no way be considered the site of the Temple of Herod.

A Final Point

Josephus stated as an eyewitness that the southern wall of Fort Antonia was located a *stade* (600 feet) north of the northwestern

⁶⁹⁹ *Antiquities* XX.8,11.

⁷⁰⁰ I am indebted to the Israeli architect Tuvia Sagiv for pointing it out to me on his Web Site. Indeed, with the actual Temple being located 600 feet south of the southern wall of the Haram, the observation of Tuvia Sagiv makes even better sense (*War* VI.2,6).

corner of the outer Temple walls (with an open space between the two structures that was bridged by two colonnade roadways about 600 feet long).⁷⁰¹ The walls surrounding the Temple and supporting the platform on which the Temple itself stood were also a *stade* in length (600 feet) on each side, making a perfect square. On the east side, the foundation of the wall went down 100 cubits (150 feet) *below* the surface of the Kedron Valley, and there was a further 300 cubits (450 feet) up to the platform on which was placed the colonnades that were 20 cubits (38 feet) high built around the Temple. According to the accounts in Josephus, the Temple complex looked like a palatial *penthouse* on top a square-shaped skyscraper *TOWER* that was 40 to 45 stories high.

In simple terms, the Temple and its four walls was a single high TOWER standing alone like any 40/45 story building now in New York or Chicago. It was 600 feet square and it occupied a whole square block. And on top of that 40/45 story skyscraper, one found all the numerous buildings that made up the Temple itself. Imagine too that at the top, and at the northwest corner of this 40/45 story building, there were two colonnade arched roadways that led northward to a much larger structure straddling about three square blocks in area. This northern structure would answer to the Haram or Fort Antonia. This was the Haram esh-Sharif.

If you can visualize this scene (as I illustrate in the pictures accompanying this book), then you have an idea of what Josephus saw before the Temple was ruined. Another eyewitness was Barnabas. He had first-hand knowledge of how the Temple appeared. He said only 15 years after the war that the Temple was then designated as a single and isolated TOWER. He distinguished it as: "THEIR TOWER [the Temple] shall he give up to destruction; and it happened according to that which the Lord had spoken."⁷⁰² The Haram esh-Sharif, though, was NOT a *single tower* like a skyscraper building. But the Temple was a skyscraper-like structure — a high *tower* with a Sanctuary on top — very dissimilar indeed from the Haram esh-Sharif.

⁷⁰¹ *War* VI.2,6.

⁷⁰² *Barnabas* 16:6.

The Haram and Temple Were Different Buildings

In closing, let us sum up this subject with a comparison. While the Temple had walls that were a perfect square of a *stade* on each side (600 feet), the Haram and its walls were (and are) quite diverse in their dimensions. The two structures are not identical. One was a square and the other was a trapezium.

The Temple Measurements were two Squares [the Squared Temple Walls and the Squared “Temple Mount”]. The Temple Square was positioned in the northwest part of the Temple Mount and this factor made the two Squares to have different geographical centers. The usage of the two Squares was different and they are NOT to be confused as being identical. The northwest part of the Temple Mount was where the four walls of the Temple Square was located.

Temple Measurements as a Square

North Wall	=	600 feet (or 750 feet if the non-walled “Levitical Camp” is included as the Mishnah relates)
West Wall	=	600 feet (or 750 feet <i>ditto</i>)
South Wall	=	600 feet (or 750 feet <i>ditto</i>)
East Wall	=	600 feet (or 750 feet <i>ditto</i>)

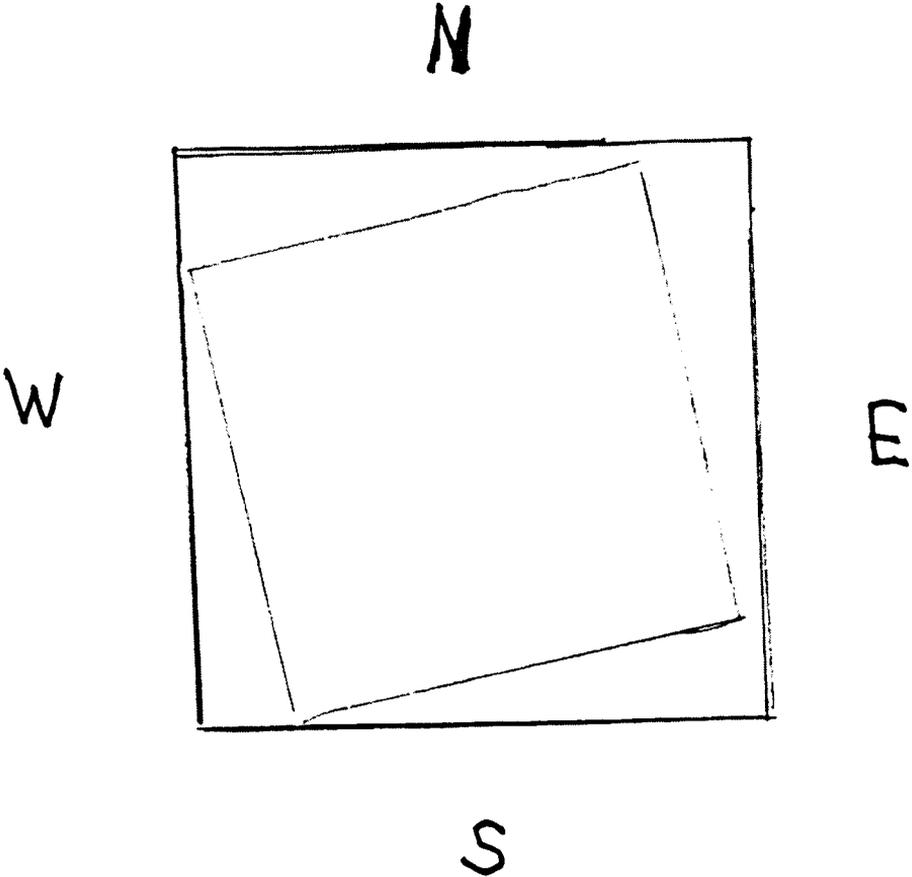
[compared with]

Haram esh-Sharif Measurements as a Trapezium

North Wall	=	1041 feet
West Wall	=	1596 feet
South Wall	=	929 feet
East Wall	=	1556 feet ⁷⁰³

⁷⁰³ Josephus, *Antiquities*, Loeb edition, vol. VIII, p.193.

It should be apparent from these disparate measurements that the Temple and the Haram were NOT the same structure. It is really quite clear. The Haram was actually the remains of Fort Antonia.



The two squared areas we see above represent an outline drawing of the Temple Mount (the larger square and oriented directly toward the cardinal points of direction) and the outline of the square walls of the Temple itself (the smaller square which is swiveled from true east and west by about 10 degrees north of east). The outer outline does NOT represent any built up walls or ramparts. It represents simply the Camp of the Levites (or what is technically called the "Temple Mount") that is 750 feet square within which the Temple itself is positioned that is 600 feet square. There were simply fewer Levitical buildings around the Temple in the southern section of the Temple Mount to allow more crowds to assemble before entering the Temple. The eastern sector had more buildings, followed by the northern sector. The western sector of the Temple Mount had many Levitical buildings and not many people could assemble on that western side. This is explained in *Middoth* 2:1. "The Temple Mount measured 500 cubits by 500 cubits. Its largest [open] space was to the south, the next largest to the east, the third largest to the north, and the smallest [open space to assemble] was to the west, the place where its measure was greatest was where its use was greatest."