

Water to Solomon's Temple

Commentary for January 1, 2020 — How Did It Get There?

This Commentary discusses how water was transported to YHWH's Temple in Jerusalem. How did that water get to the Temple? The ASK article for January 2020 is "A Fountain in the Temple, 10 Historical Proofs." For an introduction to the subject read the "[January 2020 Newsletter](#)."¹

Question to Guide 1: How Did Water Get to the Temple of Solomon?

When I was last in Jerusalem, I went on a tour that began at the top of the City of David. Halfway down the hill, the tour entered the hill and went through passages in rock to areas down to the Gihon Spring. You see the massive stones that were part of the constructions of the first Israelite Temple of Solomon.

At the Gihon Spring, we saw the beginning of Hezekiah's Tunnel. Some walked through the water to follow the tunnel. I went with most on the tour and walked through the older dry Jebusite tunnel that comes out to open air. From there we passed open carved tombs to reach the Pool of Siloam to the south. At Siloam, I asked a serious question of our young (in her 20s) but knowledgeable guide, "**How did they get the water to the laver up to the Temple in Solomon's day?**" The laver was a huge stone basin of water.

She answered without hesitation (I am paraphrasing), "**They had girls with buckets carry water up to the Temple.**" I did not tell her I believed the Temple was located in the city of David above the Gihon spring.

Her answer surprised me. Imagine pre-teen or teenage girls carrying buckets of water from the Gihon Spring, up a steep hill, one-third of a mile to the sanctuary on the "Temple Mount." I wonder if she was asked a similar question before. The Gihon Temple evidence has become well known with more adherents every day. Unfortunately, the tour ended and she had to leave immediately before I could ask follow-up questions. Here are my thoughts about her answer:

1. She thought the Temple was at the traditional site on the Haram esh-Sharif.
2. There was a constant need for great quantities of "living water" to be on-site of every Temple, from the first to the last.
3. There never was a source of "living water" on the [Haram] "Temple Mount."

¹ Dr. Martin's article "[The Apostle John, the Lamb, and the Spirit](#)" also deals with water. Scroll in the article to the section head, "*Water in John's Gospel.*" You will be surprised at the spiritual information about water. In John's Gospel, water is a symbol for the Spirit of God. And Jesus says that "**living water**" will flow from Him (John 4:10–11, 7:38).

4. There were no aqueducts bringing water to Jerusalem during the period of the Solomonic Temple, not from Etam near Bethlehem, nor from anywhere else.

Question to Guide 2: How Did Water Get to the Temple of Solomon?

Later I took another tour in Jerusalem. It was an excavation newly opened to the public. The excavation was immediately west of the Kotel (which is along the western wall of the "Temple Mount"), and immediately north of the plaza in front of the Wailing Wall.

The experienced tour guide was a woman in her 60s who had participated in many archaeological excavations. The tour took us to examine areas formerly filled. They were dug out and the visible stone remains were constructions made after the Herodian Temple was destroyed. The excavation uncovered a massive water system complex to store and use run-off rain-water in a vast underground system of cisterns and flows for use in the city rebuilt during later Roman and Byzantine times. As far as I could tell, the entire water structure was below the surface of the Haram esh-Sharif (or "Temple Mount"). The dates of the structures of the tour may originally have been Herodian or before, but they were constantly modified so that what was seen on the tour were considered to be later Roman and Byzantine period structural improvements.

After the tour I asked the experienced guide a question similar to what I asked the younger guide, **"How did the water get to the 'Temple Mount' in Solomon's time?"** She paused a second or two and said (again I'm paraphrasing), **"No one ever asked me that question before."** She paused another short time and said, **"I guess they must have dammed up the water to the Sheeps Pool."** We know what John 5:2 says, **"Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches [covered porticoes]."** The Sheep market Pool, Bethesda, was where Jesus healed a man lame from birth in John 5:1–15.

The sheep pool was near the Sheep Gate into Jerusalem from the east. The Sheep Pool was north of the Haram esh-Sharif. If that was the site of the Temple, the Sheep Pool was where they brought the sheep to be cleansed before they were inspected and passed as unblemished and suitable for sacrifice at the Temple. That was likely what part of that water was used for — to clean the sheep of insects, dirt, and waste. This would not be "living water."

1. The problem about bringing water to [Haram] Temple of Solomon still remains.
2. Water of the Sheeps Pool was not "living water." The sheep made the water unclean.
3. There never was a source of "living water" on the Haram "Temple Mount."
4. No aqueduct went to Solomon's Temple at the Gihon. It was not needed. There are no records of water from outside Jerusalem being carried to Solomon's First Temple.

A Gihon Temple location fulfills all needs for Solomon's Temple. Only later was water brought to Jerusalem, Fort Antonia, and the Temple, particularly during the feasts of the Jews.