



Passion

Following Jesus
in the Gospel of
Mark

THE TEMPLE MOUNT IN THE TIME OF JESUS

Herod's Temple Mount was the focal point of Jerusalem during the time of Jesus. Sitting atop Jerusalem's north-eastern ridge, it occupied one-sixth of the city's area. Under Herod the Great, the Temple Mount's foundation was expanded to encompass approximately 1.5 million square feet (140,000 square meters). Its foundational walls were constructed using gigantic stones, the largest found being 45 feet long, 11.5 feet high, and 12 feet thick (13.7 m by 3.5 m by 3.7 m).

Wilson's Arch formed a bridge over the Tyropoeon Valley below, leading from the Temple Mount to the Hasmonean Palace. A section of the western wall south of Wilson's Arch (187 feet/57 m long, sometimes called the Wailing Wall) has been a place of prayer for Jews for the last 700 years. The lowest seven stone courses, which can be seen at ground level, are Herodian.

Robinson's Arch and its massive stairway led from the Tyropoeon Street below up to the Royal Stoa.

The early square Temple Mount preserved its identity as a separate area with its own walls and gates.

The Antonia Fortress was where Herod (and later the Romans) commanded the garrison in order to protect the temple and to suppress religiously motivated rebellion.

Herod's Temple (for a detailed cutaway drawing, see p. 1943)

The Court of the Women was the farthest point of the inner temple complex that women could enter.

The Pool of Israel was used to wash sacrifices before they were led to the Temple Mount.

The Golden Gate, the known as the Shushan Gate.

Stairs descended from the Muster Gate into the Kidron Valley and eventually to the Mount of Olives.

The eastern city wall of Jerusalem.

Solomon's Porch, the portico built along the eastern wall, was a place of congregation (cf. John 10:23; Acts 3:11).

The Double Gate and its monumental stairway

A ritual bath-house for pilgrims to cleanse before entering the temple precincts

A Council House for legal proceedings

The Triple Gate and its stairway

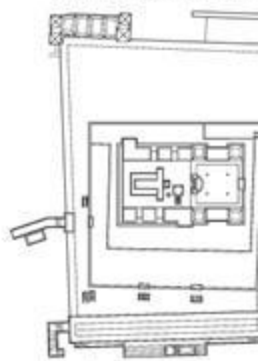
Small shops, which had a narrow street built above them, were built along the southern wall of the Temple Mount.

The soreg (a low, latticed screen or railing) prohibited Gentiles or non-purified Jews from entering the temple courts.

The Court of the Gentiles was the area between the soreg and the outer walls of the early square Temple Mount.

The Royal Stoa was a 912-foot-long (278 m) portico, containing four rows of 40 columns. The Sanhedrin met in the central apse after c. A.D. 30. This may have been where Jesus cleansed the temple. The southeast corner overlooking the Kidron Valley created a drop of 140 feet (43 m) to the street below, and 300 feet (91 m) to the valley below. This may be the "pinnacle of the temple" mentioned in Matt. 4:5 and Luke 4:9.

Temple Mount Architectural Plan

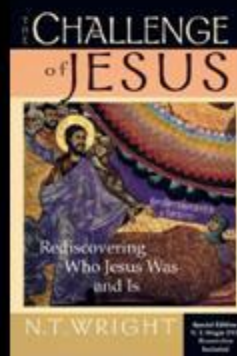








If we are to be kingdom-announcers, modeling the new way of being human, we are also to be cross-bearers. This is a strange and dark theme which is also our birthright as followers of Jesus. Shaping our world is never, for a Christian, a matter of going out arrogantly thinking we can just get on with the job, can reorganize the world according to some model that we have in mind. It is a matter of sharing and bearing the pain and puzzlement of the world, so that the crucified love of God in Christ may be brought to bear healingly upon the world at exactly that point. Because Jesus bore the cross uniquely for us, we do not have to purchase forgiveness again; it's been done. *But because, as he himself said, following him involves taking up the cross, we should expect, as the New Testament tells us repeatedly, that to build on his foundation will be to find the cross etched into the pattern of our life and work over and over again.*



N.T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*, p. 188-89