

SHALOM Yeladim (children),

Do you have a favourite Bible story? There are so many vivid tales of brave men and women, boys and girls to choose from. Remember our first letter when we traveled up a dusty gravel path to the fortress of the Valley of Elah? Well today we are stepping forward in time to the City of David.

Winding through the narrow twists and turns of the old city streets we stroll from the Jaffa gate, through the pedestrian cardo with its spice, garment and tourist shops – each gorging its contents out onto the steps and pathway with vivid greens, blood red, burnt orange and every single colour. The smells of the spice merchants mingles with tobacco smoke coffee, and yeasty pitas tempt us on nearly every corner! Turning right we find ourselves in the Jewish Quarter filled with apartments constructed of Jerusalem stone and overflowing with bougainvillea vines – pink, purple, orange and white. Everywhere is full of so much colour that my eyes almost seem overwhelmed. Every street holds a treasures -- we gace in awe at the wall that Hezekiah had built right next to a playground filled with giggles. We peak down glass topped shafts just there in the middle of the street, peaking into water cisterns from the time of Jesus, walk past pillars that held up the covering of the cardo from the same time. We keep walking, one foot after another, knowing that our destination is through the other side. Almost there we cross the pizza cardo and come to the wide set stairs leading down to the Kotel, To mock the Jewish prayer's some call this the "wailing wall" or the western wall referring to it being the western retaining wall. Of the Temple mount that Herod built. Down we go, attempting to count the steps is in vain and we reach the bottom. Through a quick security check we turn right, away from the Kotel plaza, and through the Dung Gate and finally reach our destination – Ir David ("ear" "Davveid")



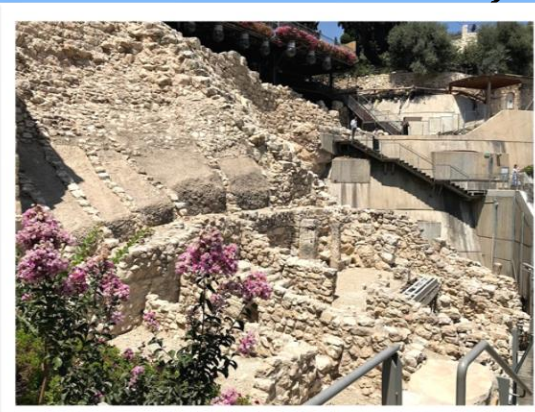
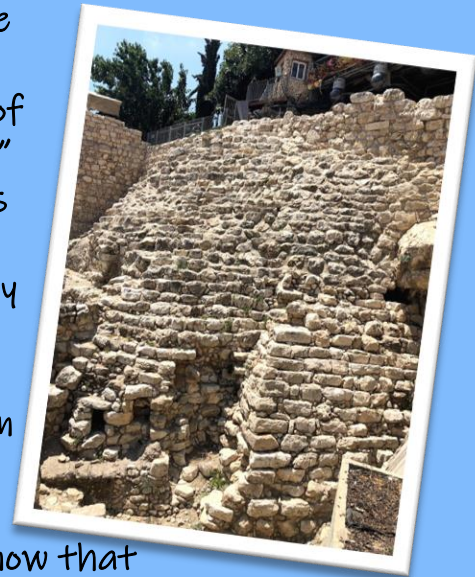
After purchasing our entry tickets we watch a short 10 minute 3D video on the history of the City, and it is all from the Bible! From the Jebusite stronghold to the Capital of Israel to the burning fire of the Babylonian army, Of course it is all exactly as God told us in the Bible!

Blinking at the sudden bright sunlight we exit and then make our way down a seemingly unimportant metal staircase. Before us are the stone remains of room upon room. Standing on the raised platform in silence we close our eyes and imagine what may have taken place here. A servant girl coming to get grain from a jar in the store rooms, maybe a cat lurking about keeping it free of mice, an older man coming down to get a new scroll to write

a decree on for the King (Melech). Children, we are standing in the lower level of the Palace of King David!



There on the wall is the top of a pillar from the Palace. It is all so thrilling to see with our very eyes the place where David lived and ruled from. Below this Palace structure is a large stone retaining wall that is called the "stepped stone structure" because it looks like a very wide and fat staircase. This also dates back to the time of the David and shows the brilliance they had with building without all the extra machines that we use today. At the bottom of this are the ruins of some buildings, one house even has the toilet still there carved into the stone! One of the most important finds was in the "House of the Bullae" A bullae is the impression that is left in clay when a seal is pressed into it. This building had been used as a library or storehouse of scrolls all sealed with clay Bullae. Fortunately for us Bible students when clay is burnt with fire it becomes as hard as rock. We know, and the archeology has proven that the Babylonians burnt the city with fire when they destroyed it. In doing this they left amazing proof of the Bible! Many of the people mentioned in the book of Jeremiah have had their bullae discovered here. Did you know that there was a group of men that all got together to try to kill Jeremiah – God tells us this in the Bible and guess what..... All their seals impressions or Bullae have been dug up and found here and you can go to the Israel Museum and see them for yourself!



Our day had only just begun and yet we had seen so much – King David's Palace and administration buildings full of proof that the Bible is true. But our amazing day wasn't over yet! We sat on the steps looking up at David's Palace while we ate our usual sandwich of hummus, veggies and turkey. Changing into crocs we were ready for the next amazing sight..... Hezekiah's Tunnel!

(to be continued...)