

## SHALOM Yeladim (children),

The baking Judean sun disappears as we duck into a narrow shaft in the ground, our travels back through time have begun!

Down, down, down we go. The holes in the beige metal steps we carefully place each footstep on allow us a clear view of the depths we are descending into. Reaching the bottom we look back up at the shaft that Joab and the mighty men snuck up to take the city known then as Jebus. But our adventure is only just beginning!

Some in our group need to catch their breath, not because of the exercise but the great heights we come down. I didn't know that I was scarred of heights until we had to bravely go down those semi see through stairs. The tallest men duck down as we continue through an underground pathway and to a circular metal staircase that urges us to continue down deep into the earth.

Through a few more underground passage=ways and we are now standing on a man made platform with glass walls. Hmmm you think "what is different about these stones?"

Obviously they must be important as they are behind a glass barrier. Continuing down yet another staircase, this one wider then the others, we look up at the monstrous, huge stones we are circling around. This is the ancient foundation stones of the tower of Salem. Before Jerusalem was called such it was known as Jebus and before then Salem. These stones are from about 4000-3900 years old! You can't

help yourself, you reach out a hand and run your fingers along the actual stones that Melchizedek would have walked past, maybe he even sat down outside this tower and thought about his meeting with Abraham (top pictures). We watch a short video on what it would have looked like and then keep going through another passageway. Here we trace our fingers through the route that the tunnel we are about to enter will take, twisting

through the rock. Slipping the mini flashlights out of our pockets we flick them on and gaze at the water flickering in the light. One by one we step into the cool refreshing waters that quickly reach our knees. There are shrieks of surprise at the coldness of the water and in we all go.



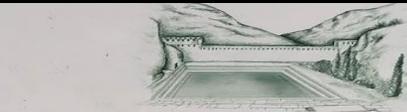
Step by step we wade through the waters of Hezekiah's Tunnel. It varies, sometimes it is halfway to our knees, sometimes just past our ankles as we follow each twist and turn in this miracle of tunnels. Reaching up on the walls with our fingers we can feel the chisel marks from the men that dug this. They carved small hole near the top to hold oil lamps to light their digging. Now a days engineers will use ground penetrating radar to help tunnels to be dug. Not so in the time of Hezekiah! We know from an inscription chiselled into the wall itself what happened. This is called the Siloam inscription and is in a museum in Turkey. It reads "...and this is the story of the tunnel while ...the axes were against each other and while three cubit were left to (cut?) ... the voice of a man ...called to his counterpart, (for) there was ZADA in the rock, on the right ... and on the day of the tunnel (being finished) the stonecutters struck each man towards his counterpart, ax against ax and flowed water from the source to the pool for 1,200 cubits..."

Do you remember why Hezekiah had this tunnel built? Jerusalem was the only city left in the whole of Israel and Judah that King Sennacherib of Assyria had not taken and destroyed. They had watched as the signal fires of Judah stopped burning. There are letters talking about this in the British Museum called the Lachish Letters. This tunnel brought the water from the spring into the city. After splish splashing our way through for half an hour we pop back out into the sunlight. For years people thought the pool of Siloam was where you came out of the tunnel (2<sup>nd</sup> pic) but 10 years ago they found the actual Pool of Siloam (3<sup>rd</sup> pic) from the time of Jesus! We sit on the Roman steps and enjoy a snack of Bamba, an Israeli peanut butter flavored "cheesy" and marvel that we have travelled from the time of Abraham, David, Hezekiah, Jeremiah up to Jesus all in one morning! Turning back to the top of the pool we stretch our tired legs and keep walking, this time up the actual Pilgrim Road to the Temple that Jesus would have walked up! What a blessing to be able to see these things with our eyes!

Shalom Until Next Time:  
Crazy Auntie Lindsay



PILGRIMAGE ROAD  
OPENING EVENT



THE POOL OF SHILOAH (SILOAM)  
Second Tunnel

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PILGRIMAGE ROAD  
OPENING EVENT



רכיבת השילוח