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The Early Israelite Monarchy in Text and Archaeology

The Days of David and Solomon

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Macquarie University

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The Days of David and Solomon

Introduction

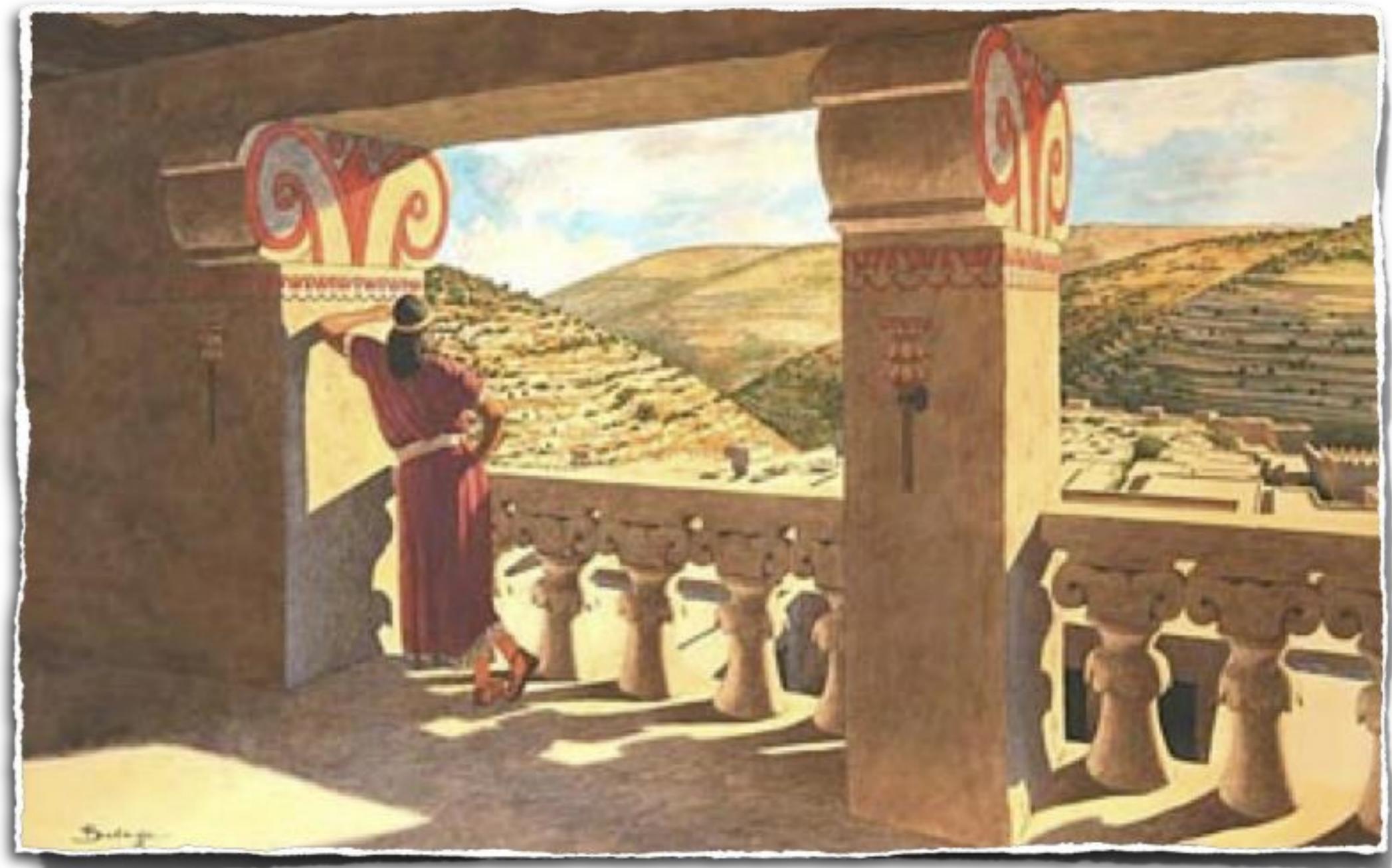
The United Monarchy in Text

The United Monarchy in Archaeology

Methodological Considerations

Integrating the Text and Archaeology: Jerusalem as a Case Study

Conclusions



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The United Monarchy in Text

	Authorship:	Date of Writing:	Historical Date:
• 1 Samuel 8 - 2 Samuel 24	?	10-6th c BC?	Ca.1040-970 BC
• 1 Kings 1 - 1 Kings 12	?	10-6th c BC?	Ca.970-930 BC
• 1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9	?	4th c BC?	Ca.1040-930 BC

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The United Monarchy in Text



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1 Sam 8 A Call for a Monarchy

1 Sam 9 - 1 Sam 31 the Reign of Saul

2 Sam 1 - 1 Kgs 2:11 the Reign of David

1 Kgs 2:12 - 11:43 the Reign of Solomon

1 Kgs 12 Collapse of the United Monarchy

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The United Monarchy in Text - the Reign of David



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2 Samuel 1 – 1Kings 2:11

Conquers Jerusalem (1000 BC) [2 Sam. 5:6-10]

David builds palace in Jerusalem [5:11–12]

Hiram of Tyre supplies David with timber and craftsmen

Wars against the Philistines [5:17–25; 8:1]

Creates territorial state; defeats...

Moabites [8:2]

Arameans of Zobah led by Hadadezer [8:3f.]

Arameans of Damascus [8:5–8]

Hamath pays tribute [8:9f.]

Edomites [8:13f.]

Ammonites [10:1–14; 11:1]

Amalekites [8:12]

Attempted **coup d'état** by Absalom [16:15–18:18]

More wars against Philistines [21:15–22]

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The United Monarchy in Text - the Reign of Solomon

I Kings 2:12–11:43

- Marries pharaoh's daughter (= treaty)
 - Receives Gezer as dowry of Pharaoh's daughter
- Administration and taxation
 - Establishes 12 administrative districts (minus Judah)
 - Taxes in kind; cf. lines of tribal divisions
 - Neighboring states pay tribute
- Enters into trade and treaty relations with Hiram of Tyre
 - Cedar and craftsmen from Lebanon to Israel
 - Wheat, oil, and conscripted laborers from Israel to Lebanon
 - Maritime venture with Hiram of Tyre
 - Bestows 20 towns in Galilee to Hiram of Tyre
- Builder:
 - Temple (967–960) and Palace (960–947) in Jerusalem
 - Builds and fortifies settlements
- Acquires chariots, horses, and resources



Did I actually exist? If so, was I as great as everyone says?

Textual Reasons for Disputes about the UM

1. Lack of chronological anchors in the biblical material
2. Debate over numbers: symbolic or literal?
3. Understanding of the semantic range of words for political and social structures
4. Uncertainty of the authorship and date of composition of the biblical texts
5. Uncertainty of the historicity of the biblical portrayal of the United Monarchy: Ideal vs. Real



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The United Monarchy in Archaeology

	Iron Age I	Iron Age II A
•Bible and Archaeology	1200-1000 BC	1000-925 BC
•Low Chronology	ca. 1130-930	ca. 930-830/800
•Modified Conventional Chronology	ca. 1180-980	ca. 980-830

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The United Monarchy in Archaeology

Traditional : 1000-925 BC

Based on Biblical Text: Period of the United Monarchy

Aharoni and Amiran : 1000-840 BC

End date based on changes in ceramic forms, particularly cooking pots

NEAEHL : 1000-900 BC

Compromised date based on various views of ceramic changes

Barkay : 1000-800 BC

Based on changes in the material culture, particularly ceramics

Modified Conventional Chronology : ca. 980 - ca. 840/30 BC

*Based on changes in the material culture, particularly ceramics**

Low Chronology : ca. 925-905 - 845/800 BC

*Based on ambiguous ancient sources and comparison of relative strata**

Herzog and Singer-Avitz (2004 & 2006) : Early Iron IIa (950-900/880 BC) and Late Iron IIa (900/880-800 BC)

Based on changes in the ceramics

Archaeological Reasons for Disputes about the UM

1. Lack of chronological anchors in the archaeological material
2. Debate over which historical events created chronological anchors in the archaeological material
3. Understanding of political and social structures (including the nature of both the governing authority and how power is rationalized)
4. Gradual and regional change in ceramics
5. Uncertainty of correlating specific structures to specific biblical kings
6. Flattened Radiocarbon curve



Did I actually exist? If so, was I as great as everyone says?

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Methodological Considerations

- Modern Interpretive Bias (with Texts and Archaeology)
Evolutionary/Linear/Functionalist/etc.
- Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures
Bureaucratic vs. Patrimonial
- Understanding Ancient Economies
One Economy or Many? Capitalist or not?
- Understanding Spatial Realities
Territoriality and Borders

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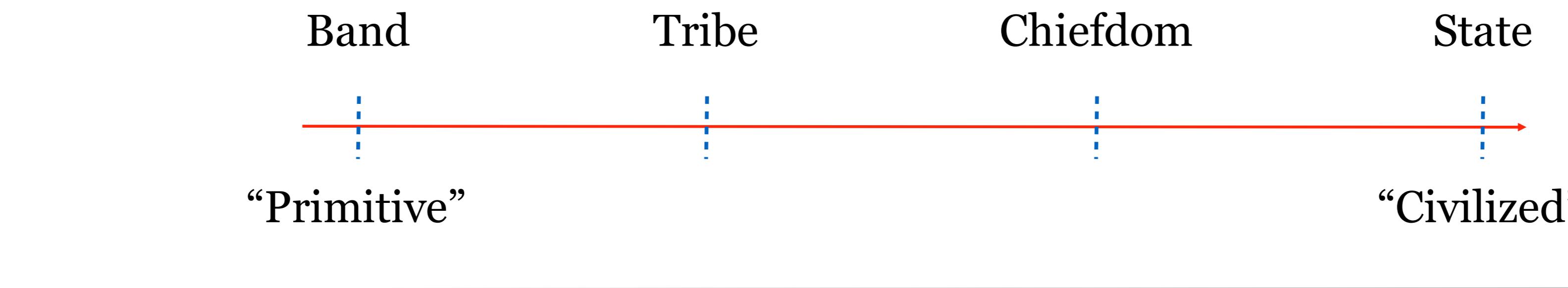
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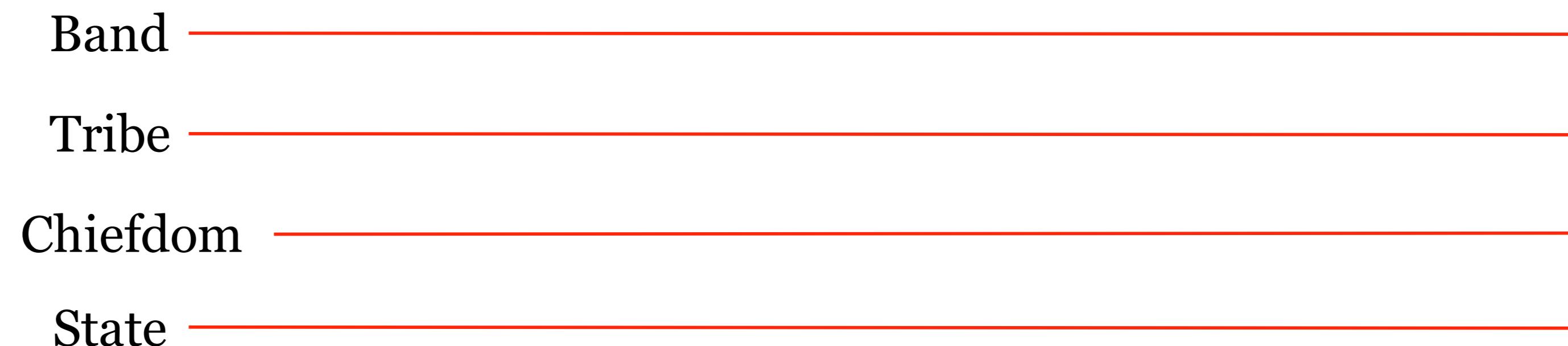
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Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures

Evolutionary Approach



Multilineal Approach Key considerations: rationalization, environment, religion, ideology



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Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures

Rationalization of Power (according to Weber)

Charismatic: “resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.”

Traditional: “resting on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them.”

Legal-Rational: “resting on an established belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands.”

The United Israelite Monarchy is characterized by Charismatic and Traditional rationalizations of power

How is this reflected in the archaeology?

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Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures

Rationalization of power is NOT a guaranteed indicator of social structure, and vice versa

Tribal societies can have monarchs.
States can be tribal in nature

The key is the nested concept of society



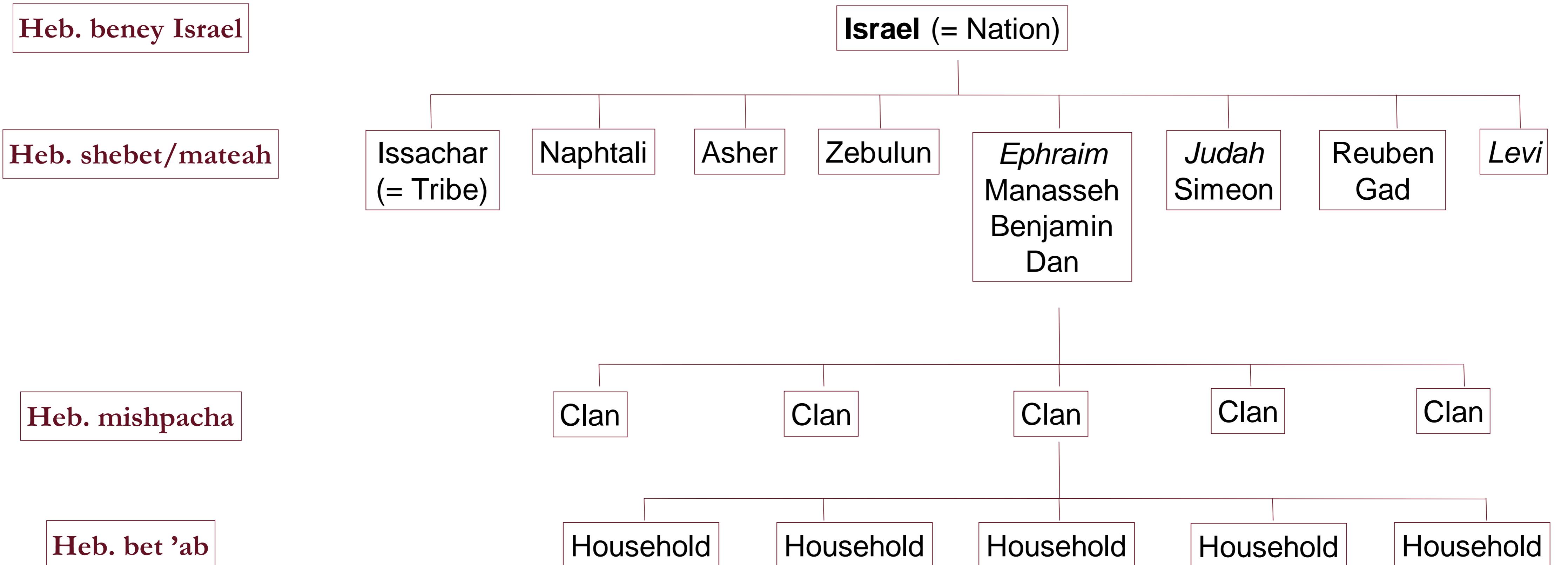
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See, for example, Numbers 1 and 26

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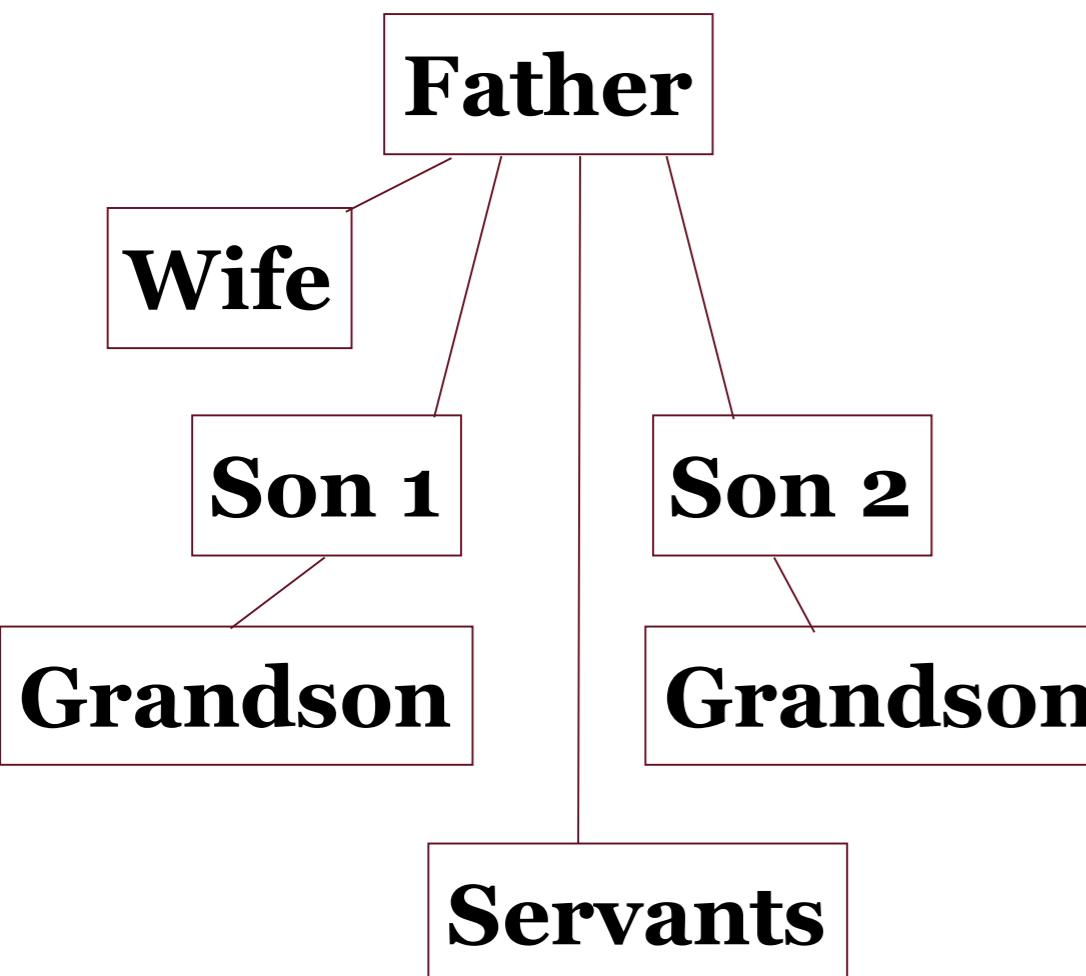
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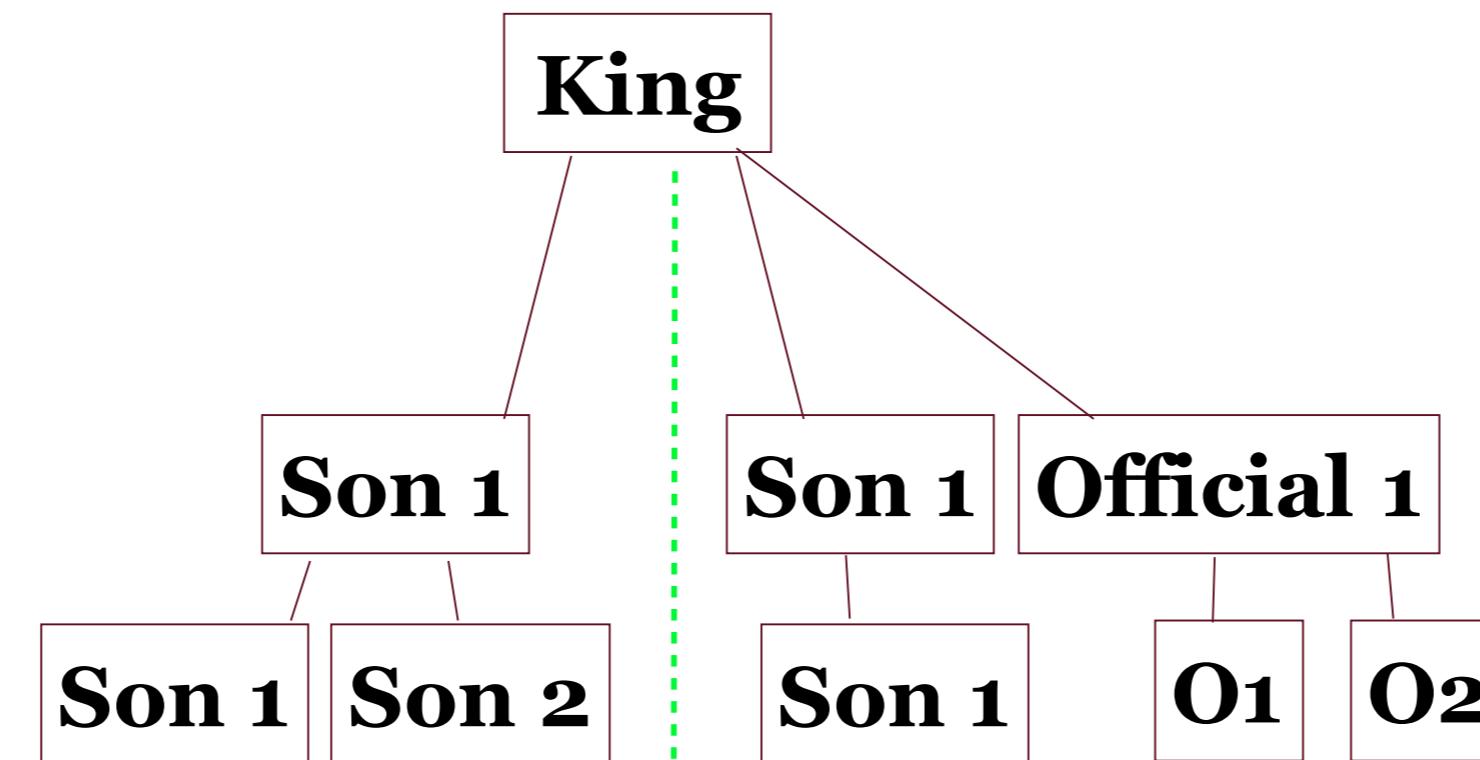
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Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures

Heb. *bet 'ab* (House of the Father)

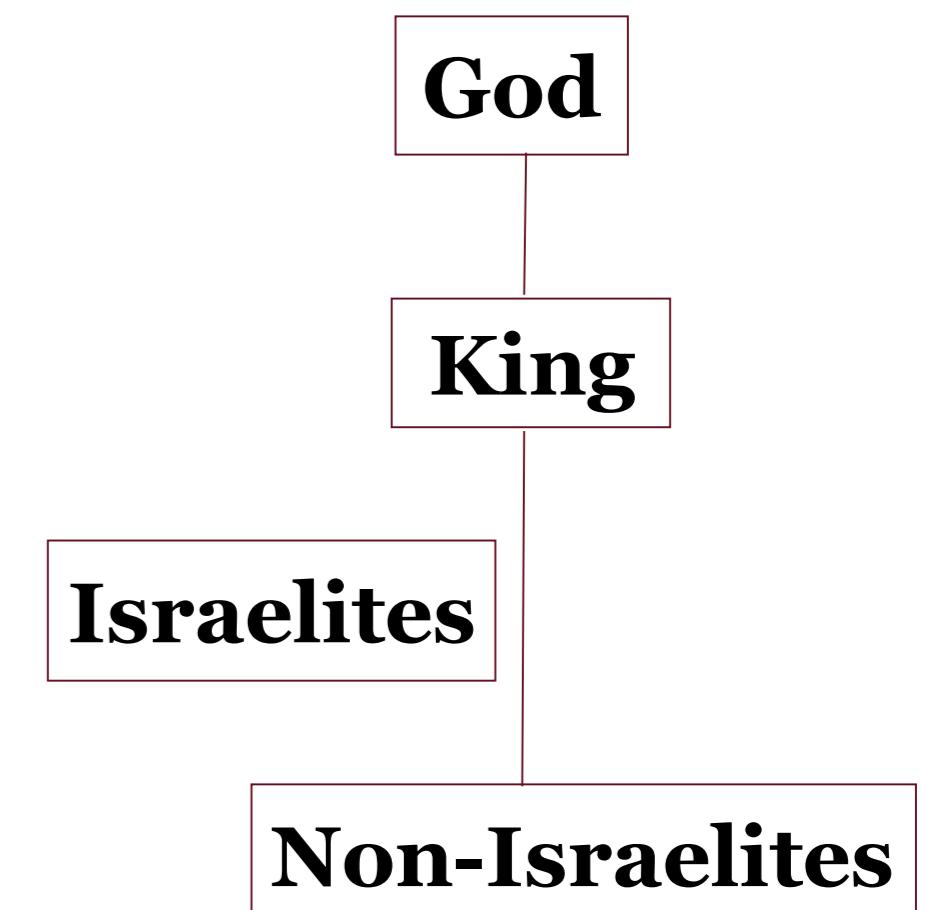


Patrimonialism is Common Throughout the
ANE from at least the 3rd Millennium BC



Earlier

Later
(Patrimonial
Bureaucracy)



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Understanding Ancient Socio-Political Structures

What was the nature of the Early Israelite Monarchy?

Bureaucratic

Writing is Necessary

Public vs. Private

Socio-Political Complexity =
Complex Material Culture

Authority is Legal-Rational

Centralized Authority

Patrimonial

Writing is Optional

No Concept of the Private

Socio-Political Complexity may/may not =
Complex Material Culture

Authority is Charismatic/Traditional

De-centralized or Tiered Authority

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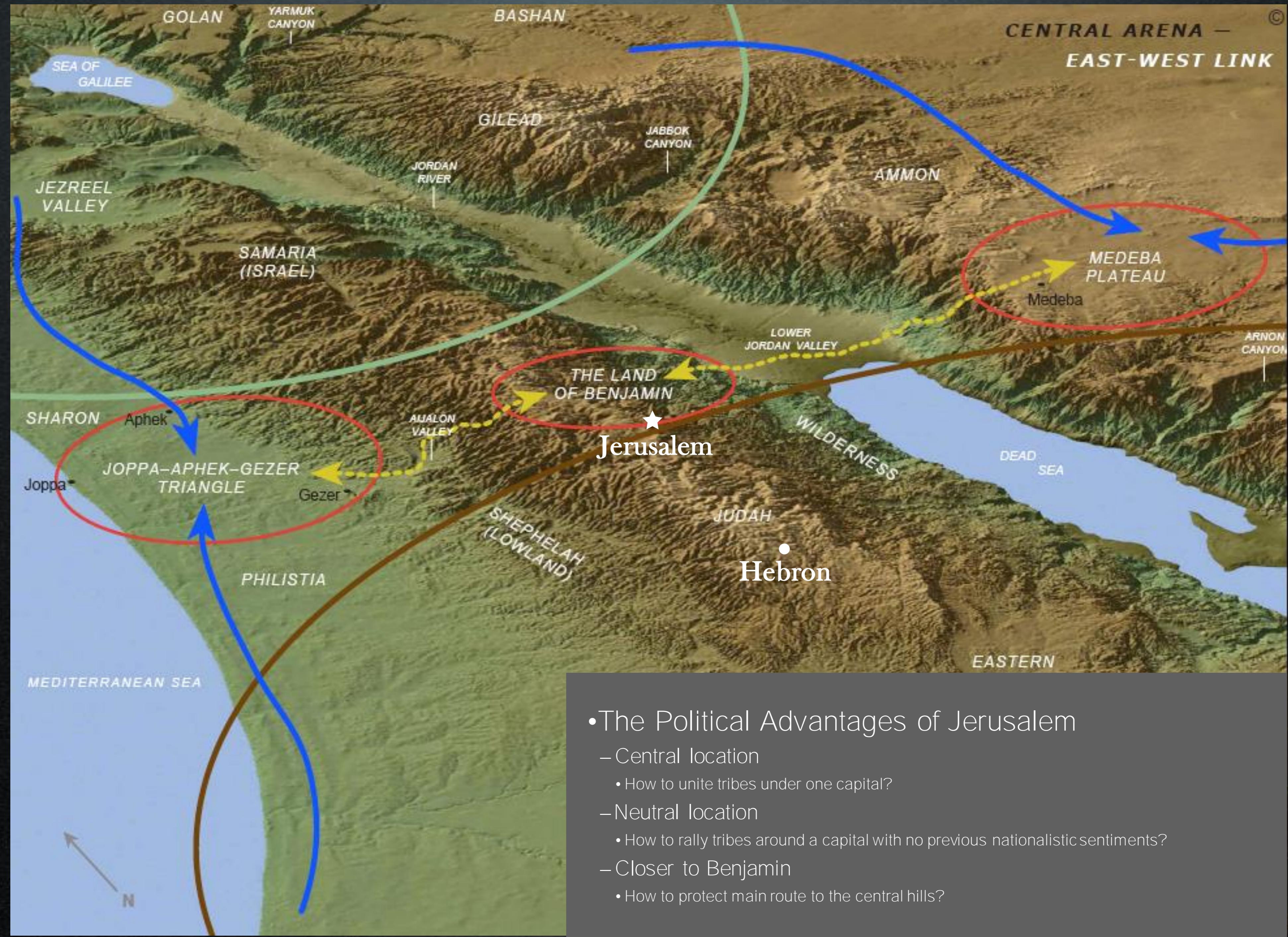
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Integrating the Text and Archaeology: Jerusalem as a Case Study





- The Political Advantages of Jerusalem
 - Central location
 - How to unite tribes under one capital?
 - Neutral location
 - How to rally tribes around a capital with no previous nationalistic sentiments?
 - Closer to Benjamin
 - How to protect main route to the central hills?

David's Conquest of Jerusalem

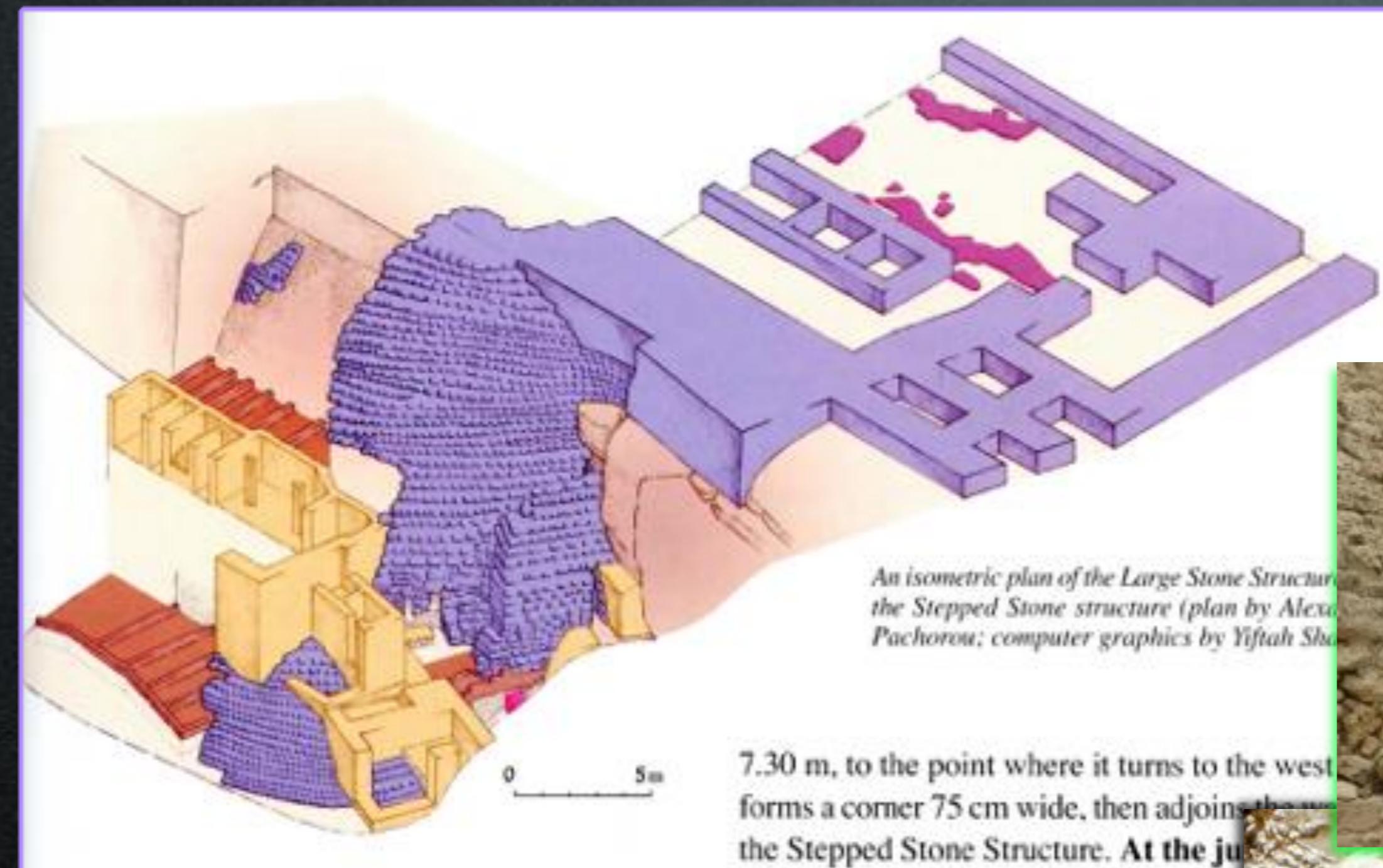
Temple

(ca. 1000 BC)



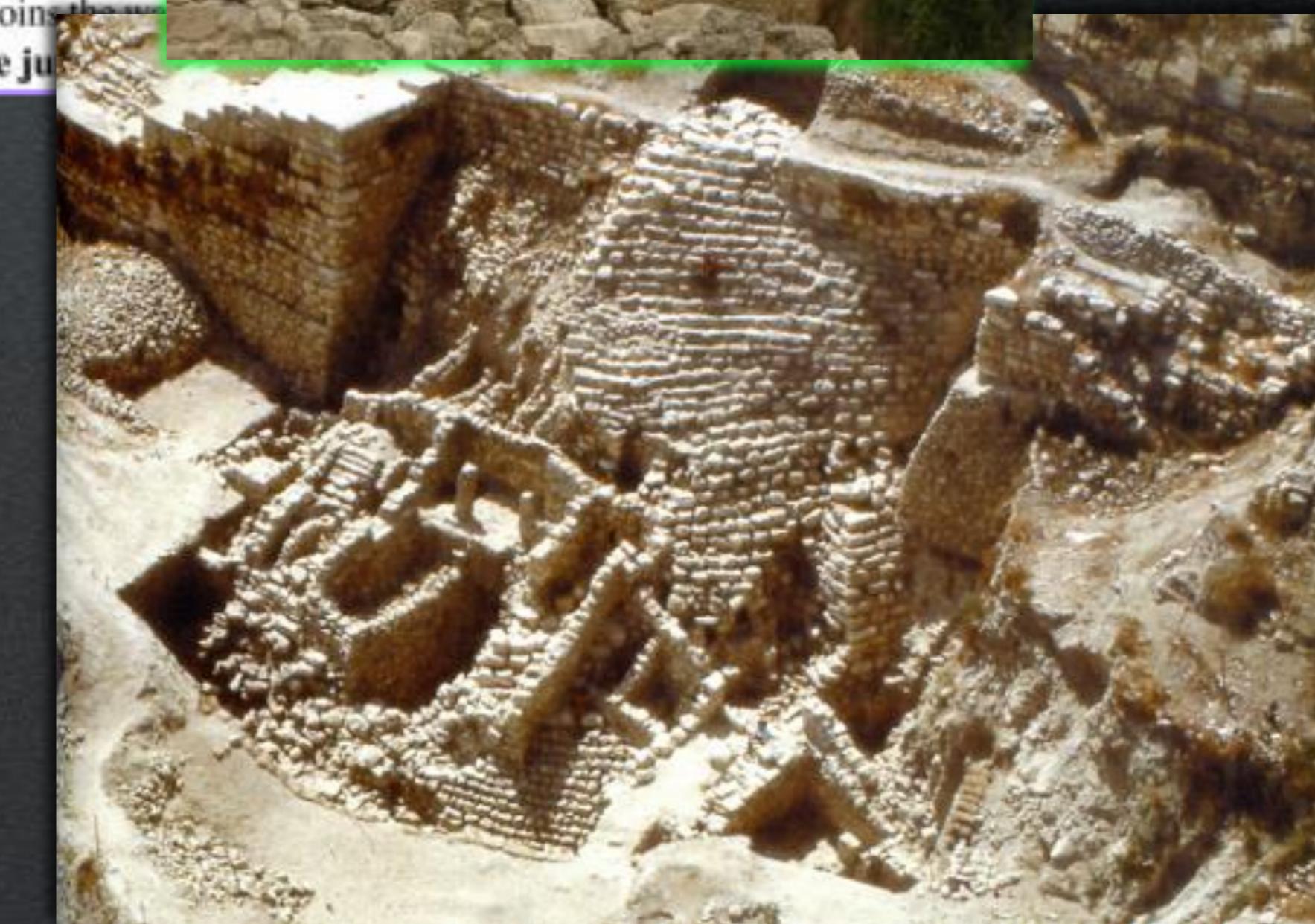
- 2 Sam 5-6 Conquest of Jebus
- What is the “*tzinnor*”?
- Renames Jebus the “City of David”

11th-10th Century Jerusalem

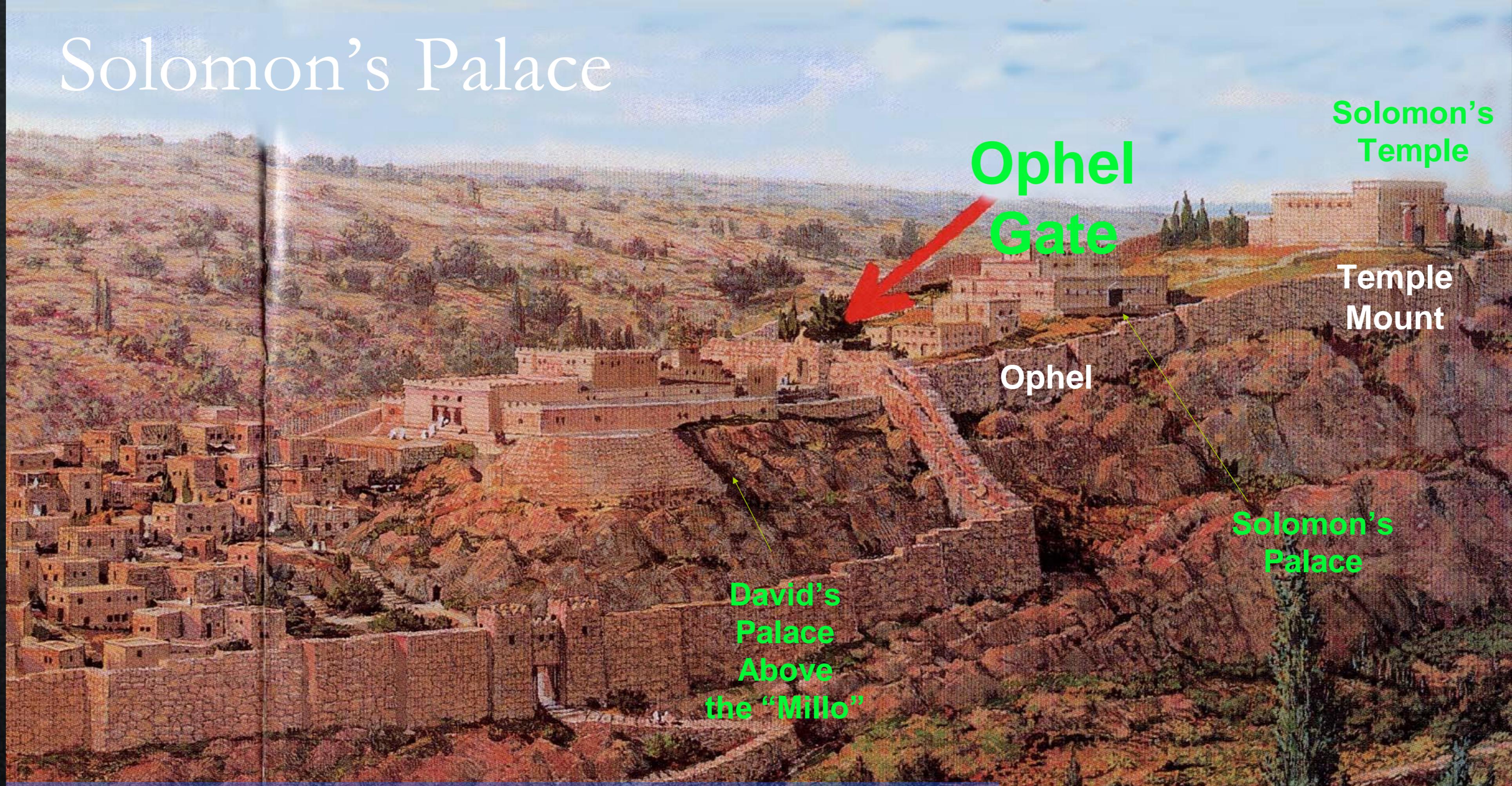


Was Jerusalem
a major city?

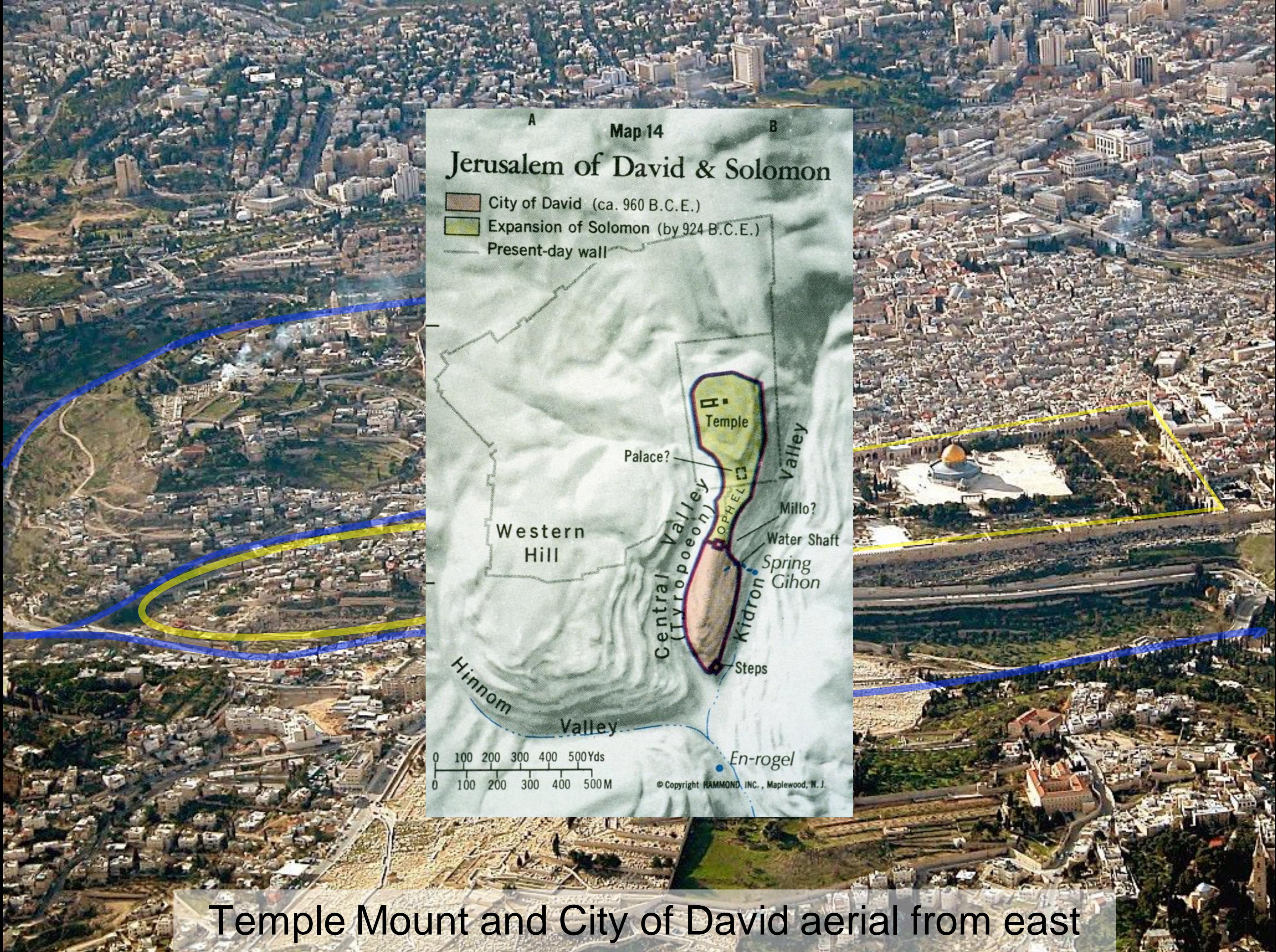
What is required
for a capital?



Solomon's Palace

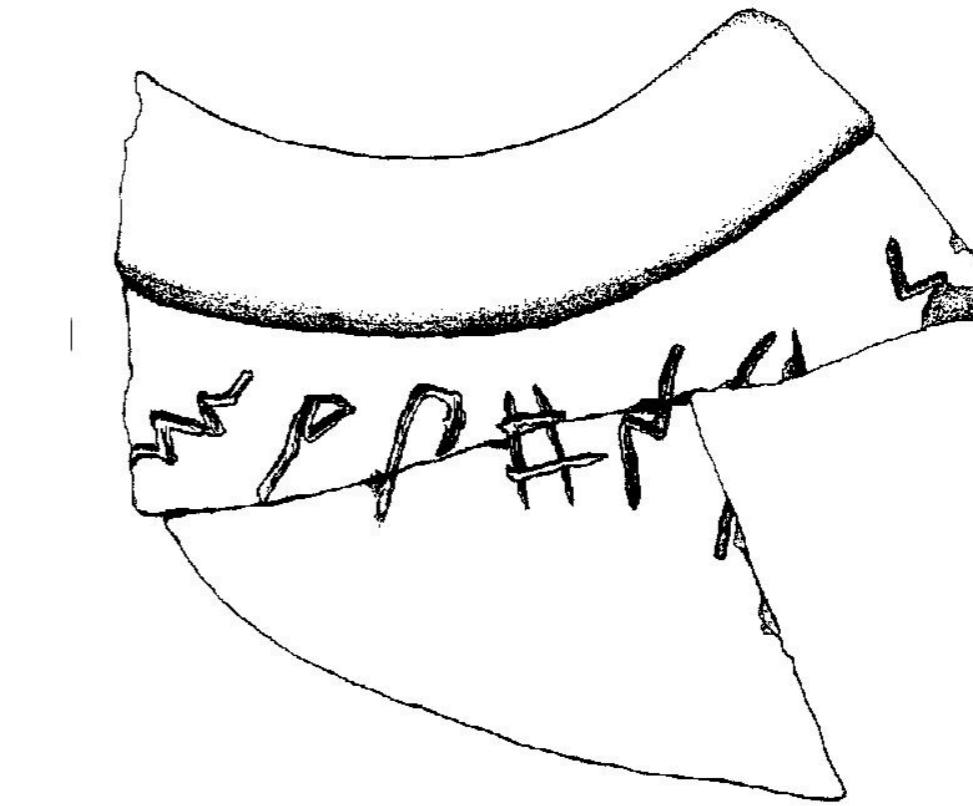
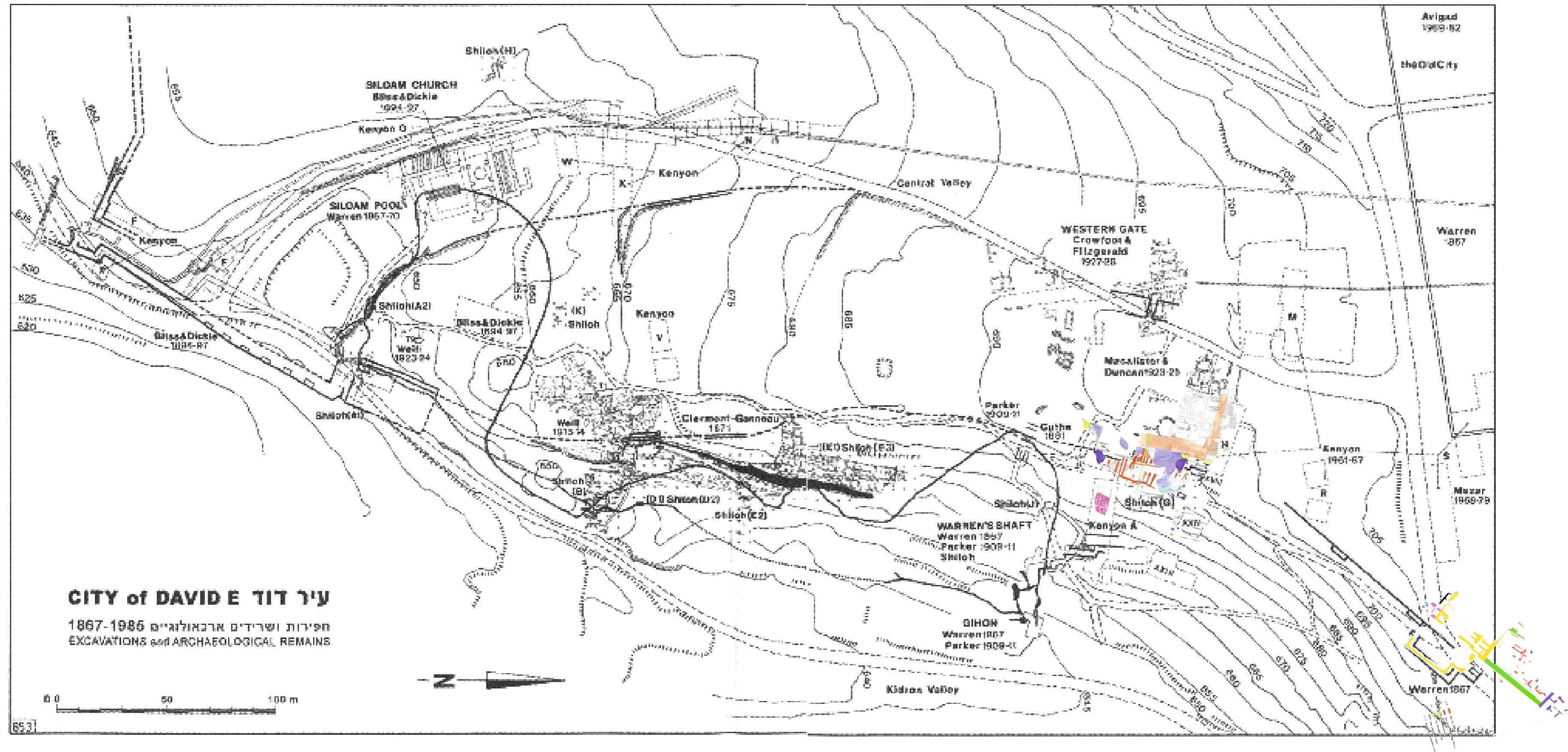


- Palace of the Forest of Lebanon (1 Kings 7:1–12)
- 13 years to build
- Multiple buildings with residence and “Hall of Justice”
- Phoenician craftsmen
- Cedar beams
- Immense masonry





Temple Mount and City of David aerial from east



Jerusalem Pithos Inscription

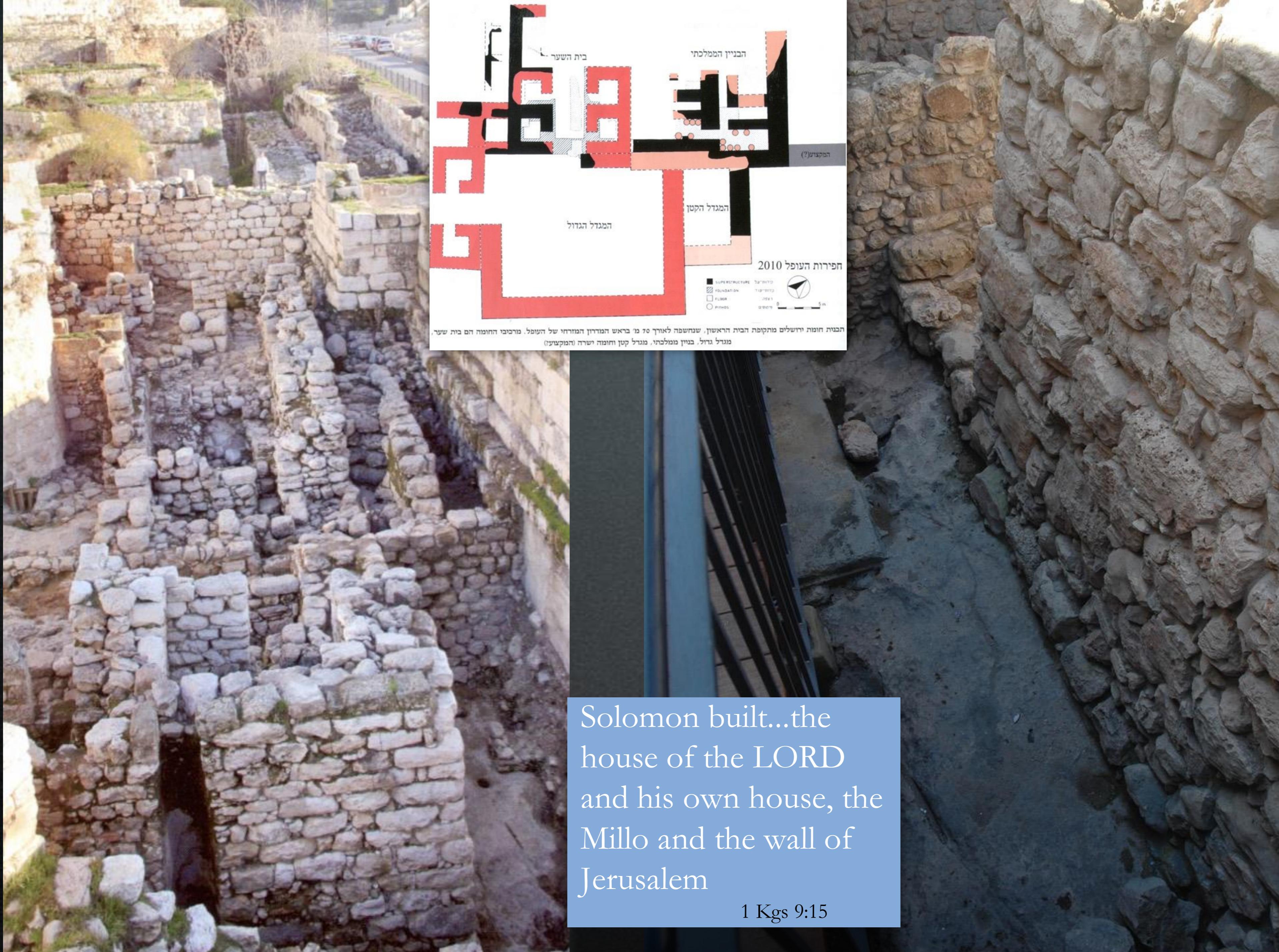
0 2cm



Southern Temple Mount/Ophel excavations from east



Southern Temple Mount/Ophel Excavations aerial from southwest





Conclusions

1. Use an appropriate theory for understanding the ancient Near East and ancient Israel in particular. Understand the context.
2. Match our expectations to our theory
3. A reading of the biblical texts must be attuned to a given text's genre, our hermeneutics, and the available comparative ancient literature
4. Interpretation of the archaeological remains requires a theoretically informed hermeneutic so the best model of ancient society can be allowed to speak for itself (as much as possible)
5. When points 1-4 are considered, many disparities noted by biblical scholars and archaeologists become resolvable
6. When points 1-4 are considered, a literarily viable, historically reliable, and archaeologically verifiable portrait of the United Monarchy is possible.