

Finishing Well

Lesson #7

Connecting The Pieces

February 15, 2023

Connection between: Fountain Gate, Gihon Spring, Shaft, Hezekiah's Tunnel, Pool of Siloam

Jerusalem, chosen by God as His city as a symbol of eternal reality, [I Kings 14:21] is ~ 5,022 years old. God chose it as a symbol of weakness to confound the wise.

- Human wisdom would have never chosen Jerusalem.
- It had no great attributes; no great river or minerals; not on a sea front or on a trade route. It barely had a water supply, the Gihon Spring, [LXX; to gush; a bursting forth] which was underground and outside the city.

Digging Up Jerusalem, K.M. Kenyon, In spite of its closeness to the arid Judean wilderness, on the East side of Jerusalem there is a single source of living water called the Gihon Spring or the Gihon Fountain. It was "vital to the existence of Jerusalem."

Water, or the lack thereof, always has a major impact upon man's ability to live in a particular area. The original city of David, surrounded on three sides by valleys, was easily defended. Nevertheless, despite strong fortifications, Jerusalem had no permanent water supply within her protective walls. The ancient city had only one reliable, perennial water source — the Gihon Spring, located in the Kidron Valley, outside and below the defensive walls. Rainfall in Israel was completely seasonal, a short rainy season followed by 7 months of virtually no rainfall. Any permanent settlement had to be within reach of a perennial water supply. Only one such spring exists in Jerusalem, the Gihon spring; it is truly water in a thirsty land.

The Jebusites were in the land during the time of Joshua and controlled Jerusalem.

- original inhabitants > Jebus, old name for Jerusalem > Josh: 18:28

Under Joshua, the Israelites were never able to drive them out and inhabit Jerusalem.

The Jebusites & The Gihon Spring

From the times of the Canaanites (circa 1800 BCE) until the Second Temple period, the main water source, the Gihon Spring, was located outside of the city walls. During a time of peace, the simplest way to get water was to leave the city gate, head down to the spring with a bucket, fill it and bring the water back to the city.

However, during a time of war when the city was under siege by the enemy, getting to the water by normal means was impossible.

Approximately 3,800 years ago [around the time of Abraham], the ancient Jebusites built a fortress which jutted outside the city wall on top of the source of the Gihon Spring. Any fortification of The Gihon Spring in the valley would easily be overcome from higher grounds. To protect it, they closed the entrance to the Spring and cut a vertical shaft [Warren's Shaft] to access the water. This shaft provided them secure access to a permanent water supply from behind their fortress walls.

Jebusites & King David

400 years passed from the time of Joshua until King David who captured the city from the Jebusites 3,000 years ago and made it the capital of Israel.

During the time of David, the Jebusites arrogantly boasted of their ability to defend Jerusalem, saying, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away."

The Jebusites were used to defeating God's people. [II Sam. 5:6]

II Sam. 5:7 Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David.

II Sam. 5:8 When King David went to conquer the city for Israel, he promised command of his military to that soldier who could scale the shaft and get Israel's forces inside the city walls.

I Chron. 11:6 And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first and became chief.

David's men entered the city of Jebus by stealth, climbing up through the aforementioned water tunnel [II Sam. 5:6-10; I Chron. 11:4-9).

Joab's feat in climbing the 50-foot shaft must have been considerable.

An expedition in 1867 by Warren could not climb it without wooden scaffolding.

King David & The Gihon Spring

Point of Interest: The Gihon was a place of ceremonial & strategic importance.

- David became master of the city at Gihon. It was chosen as the proper place to anoint Solomon as David's successor. [I Kings 1:33, 38, 45]

A 10th century palace coup was thwarted.

- David's 4th son, Adonijah, declared himself king without David's knowledge.
- Bathsheba & Nathan revealed the secret to King David who ordered Nathan, the prophet, and Zadok, the priest, to take Solomon, his 2nd son with Bathsheba to the Gihon Spring and anoint Solomon as King.

Key: Once Nathan, Zadok, and Benaiah, the highest leaders in the land, stood before David, it was time for the real king to begin his ascension.

With these 3 men and their followers, David sets one more seal of authority in place.

- Solomon would ride the king's own donkey which spoke of authority.

Note: David, as esteemed as he was chose to ride a donkey which denotes humility.

Consider: Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Humility DOES NOT take away from power.

It shows the person's heart. They served the people instead of oppressing them.

Key: Solomon started his reign on a donkey but ends it on a horse.

Significant: Solomon is anointed at the Gihon Spring.

- The location where the tent for the Ark of the Covenant was erected.
- Solomon would be anointed before God.
- The oil and the trumpet used in the tent were used to appoint & announce the king.

Key Points:

- Solomon rode from the home of David to Gihon and back.
- On the way back, the people shouted praise to the new king.
- This foreshadows Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

- Jesus rode in on the same roads that Solomon did 1000 years before in the same manner.
 - ❖ On a donkey with the people shouting coronation praises

Note: In both cases, the father/Father chose the donkey.

- David chose his own donkey for Solomon to ride. Gave his stamp of approval
- God appointed one held in reserve for Jesus to ride. God's hand in every part

King Hezekiah & King Sennacherib Of Assyria

During the 8th century BC, Assyria was the dominant power of the ancient Near East and was intent on expansion. In 722 BC, Samaria, the capital of the northern Kingdom of Israel, had been attacked and all but destroyed by Assyrian invaders.

- Many Israelites had been taken into captivity.

King Hezekiah, 13th successor of King David, reigned in Judah from about 715 to 686 BC. He had a close relationship with the prophet Isaiah. He is recorded as a king who "did right in the eyes of the Lord," initiating a series of reforms against idolatry in Judah. When Hezekiah became king, Judah was already a vassal of Assyria. Owed tribute money
In 715 BC, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and began a march toward Jerusalem.

- Jerusalem came under siege by King Sennacherib of Assyria who demanded tribute money and boasted he would capture Jerusalem.
- Hezekiah made a stand and refused to pay the annual tribute.
- Since Hezekiah had entered into a league with Egypt, he expected them to come to his aid. But they did not come. [Isa. 30-31; 36:6-9]

II Kings 18:13-16 Now in the 14th year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them.

- [Started ruling @ age 25; Ruled for 29 years; 15 years left; He was granted 15 extra years;]

¹⁴ And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house.

¹⁶ At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria.

- Sennacherib withdrew from Judah, but he had every intention of returning.

701 BC In preparation for the impending siege by King Sennacherib of Assyria, King Hezekiah rebuilt Jerusalem's fortifications, made weapons, built storehouses and carved the famous underground tunnel to ensure that Jerusalem would have water.

II Chron. 32:2-8 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, ³ He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? And he resolutely set to work and rebuilt all of the wall that had been broken down and erected towers on it and *built* another outside wall and strengthened the *Millo* in the city of David, and made weapons and shields in great numbers. ⁶ He appointed military officers over the people and gathered them to him in the public square at the city gate, and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, ⁷ Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: ⁸ With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah. water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

It is not long until Sennacherib and the Assyrians had taken 46 fortified cities in Judah. They settled in Lachish [30 miles southwest] to plan the siege and capture of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was besieged by Sennacherib's Rabshakeh (2nd in command of the army), who mocked the God of Hezekiah (II Kg 18:35, 19:10, Is 36:4). Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem and said that "he had trapped Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage." He demanded his surrender. Don't Forget: The year before [702 BC], the prophet Isaiah had told Hezekiah that God would defend Jerusalem and destroy the Assyrians [20:6; Isa. 38:4-6].

Prophecy:

Isaiah 8:7-8 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks:

⁸ And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

God's Promise -Isa. 37:33 "Therefore, he shall not come into this city, and he shall not shoot an arrow thereon; nor come before it with shields, nor cast up an embankment against it.

Promise & Prophecy Fulfilled: Isa. 37:36-38 Then the angel of the LORD went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

II Chron. 32:30 This same Hezekiah also stopped [blocked] the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David.

By diverting the waters of the Gihon, he prevented the enemy forces under Sennacherib from having access to water.

II Kings 20:20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Hezekiah's first thought was to protect Judah's source of water—the fountain.

Problem: How can we block the enemy's access to the fountain? How can we secure continual access to the fountain's water for the inhabitants of Jerusalem inside the walls?

Constructed roughly 3,000 years ago, Hezekiah's Tunnel is one of Jerusalem's most incredible landmarks. Even by today's standards, the construction of this 1,750 feet subterranean passageway is an extraordinary feat of engineering.

Purpose of Tunnel: Fortify the City of David against the invading Assyrian armies without compromising its main water source, the Gihon Spring, which lay outside the walls.

1. The shaft constructed by the Jebusites which was still in use had holes in it which watered the King's gardens below.
2. Water from the Gihon overflowed into the Kidron Valley and was used to irrigate crops, vines and fruit trees.
3. It would provide ample water to the sieging Assyrians.

Hezekiah's Plan:

1. Hezekiah stopped the channel of the Gihon Spring that sent water outside the City of David.
2. He built a new water system to divert the water underground, leading it westward to the Siloam Pool at the bottom of the City of David inside the city walls.
3. He had his engineers redirect the water, by carving a 1,750-foot water tunnel through solid rock. [~6 football fields]
4. To cut this channel, workers began tunneling through the rock on either end, until they met—incredibly—not only in the middle, but also at a perfect gradient to facilitate the flow of water.

Inside the tunnel was an engraving called the Siloam Inscription. Discovered in 1880, this moving inscription documents the story of the tunnel's construction.

The Siloam Inscription:

Carving the tunnel was a monumental task. The snaking channel was cut through solid bedrock by laborers working from both ends. This bold strategy meant that the tunnel could be constructed much faster, but it also required exceptional engineering skills.

- The difference in height from start to end is 30 centimeters [11.8 inches]
- This was an amazing feat when you realize that the tunnel was not cut on a straight line but curves back and forth.

Even today, many scientists are baffled about how the teams successfully met in the middle. Their best guess is that rock-sounding techniques were used.

The tunnel has been dated using various methods, including radiocarbon dating, to Hezekiah's time period, thus confirming the Biblical verses that state that it was built by Hezekiah.

Siloam Pool

Hezekiah's Tunnel, located under the City of David, connects the Gihon Spring, Jerusalem's fresh water supply to the Pool of Siloam.

- The Pool of Siloam provided water to the inhabitants of the City of David and the inhabitants on Jerusalem's western hill [Broad Wall] which was developed and settled during the time of King Hezekiah.

In 2004, workers for the Ir David Foundation, an organization that funds many of the archaeological excavations in the City of David, discovered steps leading down to a lower trapezoidal-shaped pool called the Pool of Siloam, which is fed with water by a channel from the Gihon Spring.

- The discovery was the result of a sewage pipe explosion.
- In Jerusalem, they not only send in construction crews but also archaeologists.
- When the construction crew began the work to repair the sewage pipe, they uncovered a series of ancient stone steps which led down to the Pool of Siloam.

Historical Background

1. The water runs through Hezekiah's Tunnel, which was built ~ 701 BC to prevent Jerusalem's water source from being cut off by the warring army of the Assyrians.
2. Its water source comes from the Gihon Spring in the City of David.
3. It has the same kind of stones and style as the Southern Stairs leading to the Temple.
 - 4 steps, flat; 4 steps, flat; 4 steps, flat, etc.
4. It was the size of two Olympic sized swimming pools.
5. The Pool of Siloam was a large purification mitzvah for the Jewish holy festivals like the Passover, Feast of Tabernacles, and Pentecost.
 - It accommodated thousands of pilgrims journeying to Jerusalem for these 3 required feasts. [Ex. 23:14-17]

The historian, Josephus, who lived during the time of Christ, records that up to a million Jews would make pilgrimages to Jerusalem on these holy festivals. It was a mikvah, a public bath for cleansing that rendered the pilgrims ritually pure before they ascended a quarter mile (600 m) on the Jerusalem pilgrim road to the Temple Mount to worship God.

6. Water from the Pool of Siloam was carried up the pilgrim road to the Temple for the Water Libation Ceremony during the intermediate days of the 7 day festival of Sukkot.

Not only did they find the steps leading down to the Siloam Pool, they are uncovering a 200' pool underground with stairs around it.

They have also discovered a road with steps leading from the pool to the Temple.

- The ascent from the Siloam Pool to the Temple is about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile; Pilgrimage Road
- Hebrew: Come, Lift Your Feet & Go Up: Must be cleansed to ascend God's Holy Place
- Steps lead down to water for purification = sign of humility
- Then you ascend the steps into God's presence
- Road was ~3-5x wider than excavation. Shops/stalls on each side.

Ps. 46:4-5 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God

The holy dwelling places of the Most High.

- River = nahar > perennial spring; constantly flowing source of clear, fresh water
- Hebrew = chay/chaim mayim = Living Water

⁵ God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her just at the break of dawn.

Note: Historical background is God's deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians in the time of King Hezekiah.

- The people are confined because of the Assyrian army camped about them.
- Because water was a precious commodity, Hezekiah had built an underground water system that connected the Gihon Spring with the Siloam Pool in the city.
- God is the river and the source of living water.
- Then the angel of the LORD went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

Consider: We are to depend on our "hidden spiritual resources" that come from God alone.

No matter our circumstances, we may drink at the river of His joy and blessing to find the strength and peace we need.

- The entrance to the Gihon Spring was called "The Virgin's Fountain."
- The water from the Gihon Springs, a type of God the Father, was sent to the Pool of Siloam by cutting through solid rock.

I Cor. 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

God provided life-giving water to us by sending His Son Jesus Christ, the Solid Rock.