

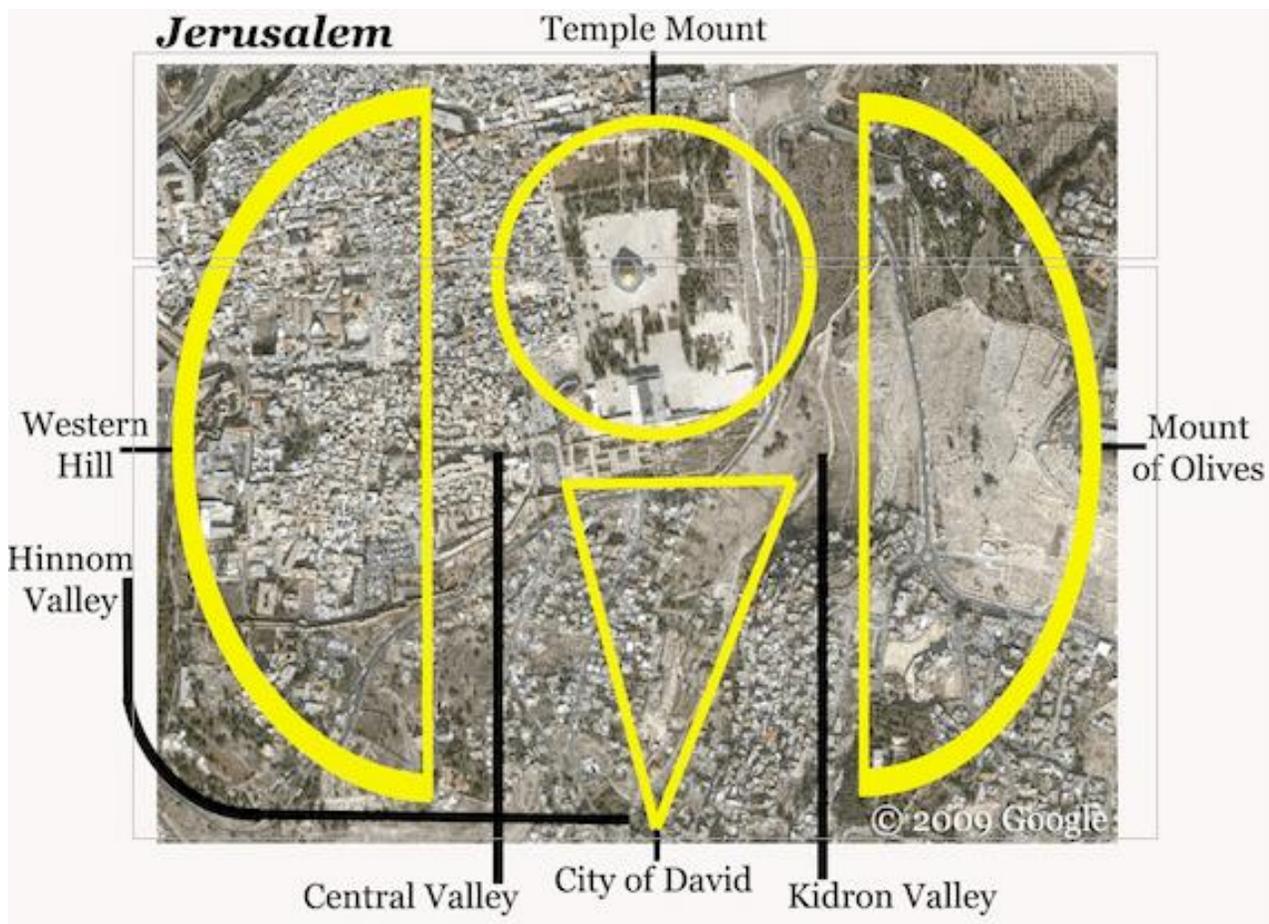


Shalom fellow traveler,

It's not long until you set foot in the Holy Land. It's getting exciting as the time is drawing near, and before you know it, you'll be walking the streets of Jerusalem!

To get a bird's eye view of Jerusalem and to understand the lay out you can *visualize Jerusalem as an ice cream cone inside two hamburger buns.* (See the graphic below.)

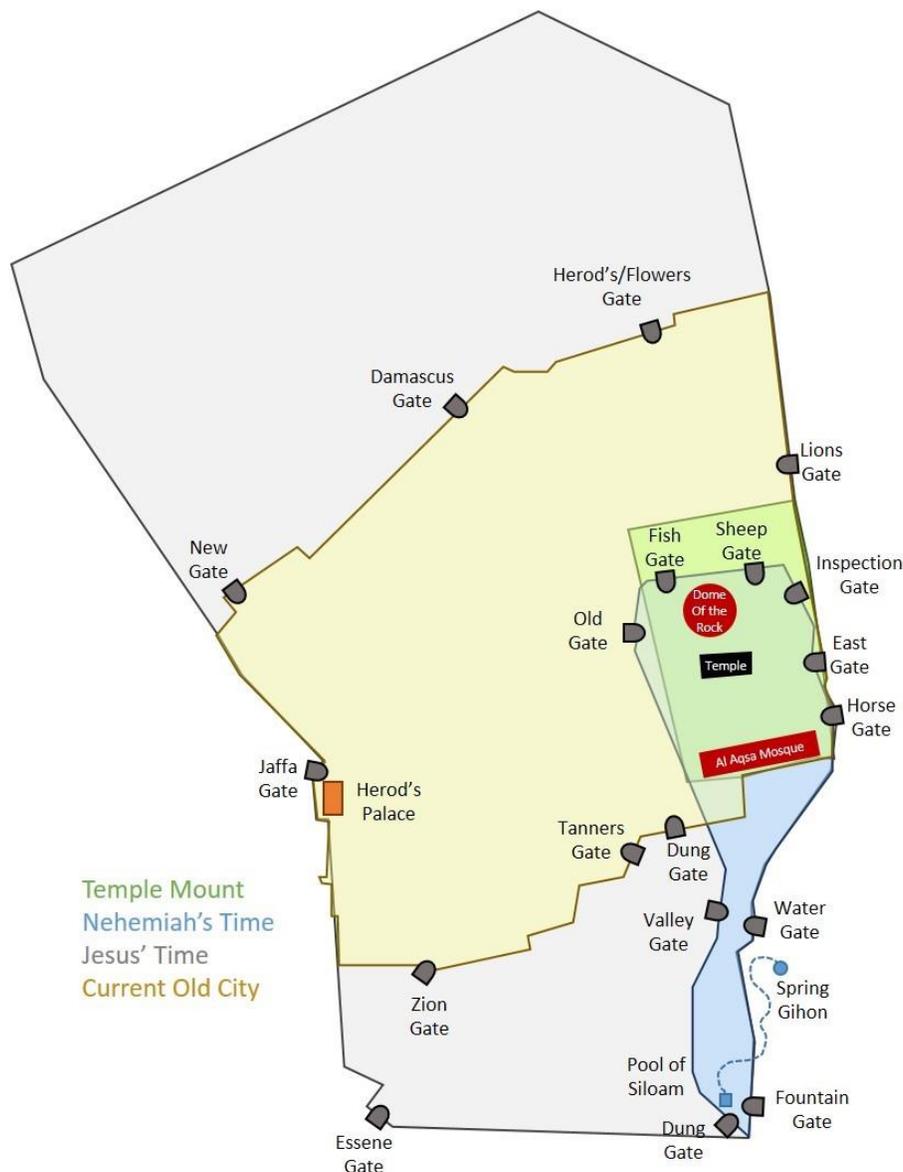
- The ice cream and cone are the Temple Mount and the City of David.
- The two buns represent the Western Hill and the Mount of Olives.
- The three major valleys of Jerusalem lie in between the cone and the buns.



(Visualize Jerusalem as an ice cream cone inside two hamburger buns.)

## The Gates of Jerusalem

The gates of ancient cities were important as a means of providing access to the city while maintaining security. The Bible speaks of the gates of Jerusalem many times in many different contexts. As the city walls are built, destroyed, and moved and the gates are bricked up, restored, or renamed, it can be difficult to figure out what gate the Scripture text is talking about. Gates were more than passageways. They served as places for personal business and civic affairs. Gates often took their names from the distant cities they faced, like Jaffa, Damascus, and Shechem. The following map shows the various walls and gates in existence throughout the centuries.

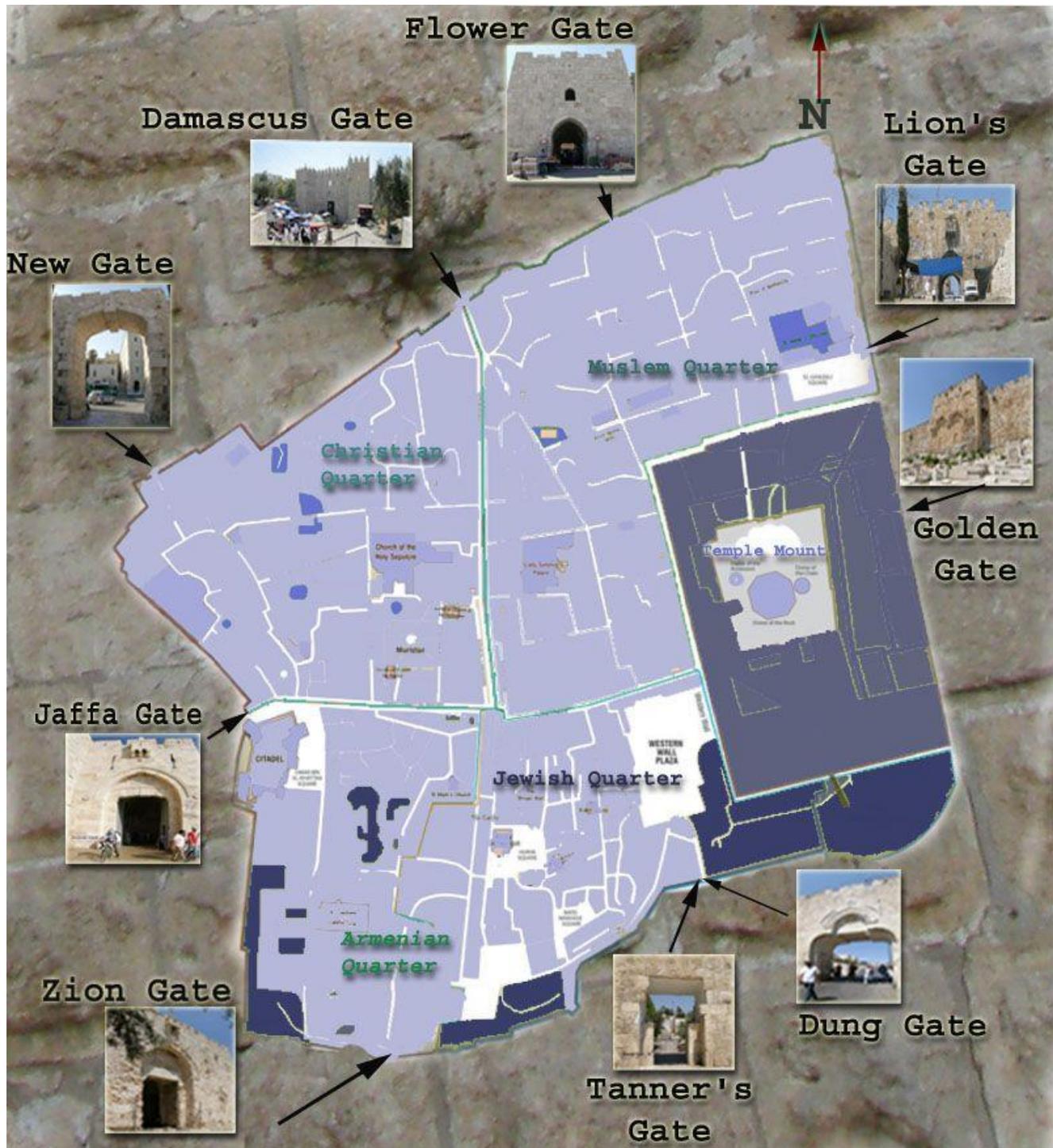


The wall around Jerusalem during the time of the New Testament was probably the biggest that ever existed. Because of that, the gates are even more difficult to locate. The walls have been torn down, built up, and moved many times. In AD 70, they were destroyed by the

Romans, and in 1033 by an earthquake. The walls as we see them today were built in the 1500s.

## The Walls and Gates of Jerusalem Today

When you visit the Old City of Jerusalem, you'll be entering through one of its eight gates. The ninth gate, the Golden Gate (Eastern Gate), is blocked up and shut. These are the gates around Old City Jerusalem now:



## Golden Gate (AKA East Gate)

In AD 1530 Ottoman Turks walled up the Golden Gate or the Eastern Gate because of a Jewish tradition that states the Messiah will pass through the Eastern Gate when He comes to rule. The walling-up of the East Gate was a Muslim attempt to keep out the Jewish Messiah. Indeed, the Bible does predict the glory of the Lord will enter the Temple by means of “the eastern gate” (Ezekiel 43:4), but who knows if it refers to this one. Regardless, no bricked gate will deter the Messiah.



In Hebrew, the portal is known as Sha’ar HaRahamim, the Gates of Mercy. It’s said that when the Messiah comes and the dead arise, they will enter through this gate to win eternal life. In Arabic, it’s called Bab el Rahmeh, the Gate of Eternal Life for the same reason. This gate is sometimes confused with the “Beautiful Gate” of the Second Temple (Acts 3:10). When Jesus came to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the crowds shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” It’s thought that Jesus entered the Temple courtyard through this gate and then proceeded to drive out all those who were selling and buying, upsetting the tables of the money changers.

## Lions Gate (AKA St. Stephen’s Gate)

Stephen was supposedly killed in the Kidron Valley, below. In the 16th century, the Turkish sultan dreamed he was being attacked by lions. An interpreter told him they represented the lions that guarded the thrones of David and Solomon and the dream meant that, if he treated Jerusalem with respect, he would be blessed. The sultan went to Jerusalem and saw the walls were in ruins. So, he rebuilt the wall, including this gate. The name, “Lion’s Gate,” comes from the stone carvings of lions that flank the gate. Now, if you look even more carefully at the Lions Gate, you may decide that the icons are leopards and not lions!



### **Herod's Gate:**

Flower Gate or Sheep Gate. In Arabic, the gate was called Bab es Sahirah, Cemetery Gate, because outside the gate and up the hill is a cemetery. The residents of the northeast corner of the Old City substituted one letter and they changed the name of the gate to Bab es Zahirah meaning Flowers Gate; they were not interested in receiving mail addressed to the "Cemetery Neighborhood"! Now that sounds welcoming! This gate took Herod's name in the 16th or 17th century because pilgrims mistook a Mamluk house near the gate to be Herod Antipas' palace. In this area the Crusaders penetrated the walls to capture the city in 1099.



**Damascus Gate:** On Fridays and Saturdays, is the busiest gate leading into the city, with hundreds and sometimes thousands of shoppers looking for bargains, home-grown spices or the freshest fruits. Located along the northern wall of the Old City, Damascus Gate is named after the most important city to the north during nearly every historical period. A fine example of Ottoman architecture, this is the most beautiful of the gates of Jerusalem. Excavations below the gate reveal a triple-arched gateway that Hadrian built—the northern extent of the Cardo Street from the second century. Outside the gate, an Arab market offers fresh fruit and vegetables. The Jews call it the "Shechem Gate," and the Arabs refer to it as the "Gate of the Pillar." The Romans built roads throughout their empire and laid milestones

measuring distance. The zero point in Judea was a tall imposing pillar standing in the central plaza inside the Damascus Gate. The Damascus Gate leads you straight into the heart of the Old City market (shuk in Hebrew and souk in Arabic). Be prepared to bargain!



**New Gate:** New Gate is located on the north-western perimeter of the walled city. Its Hebrew name is Sha'ar Hadash and its Arabic name is Bab el Jedid, both meaning "new." The current New Gate was made in 1887 when Christians demanded the Turkish sultan give them direct access to their quarter of the city and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

**Jaffa Gate:** Currently, one of the main gates and busiest into Jerusalem. It is located on the western perimeter, right above Hinnom Valley, the Valley of Hell (Gehenna in Greek). In ancient days, if you were a pilgrim who docked at the Mediterranean port of Jaffa and walked east for three days, or perhaps more, along the Jaffa Road, you would eventually reach the Jaffa Gate. Hence its name. In Hebrew the gate is translated Sha'ar Yafo. Yafo is the name for Jaffa in the Hebrew Bible, mentioned for example, in the Book of Jonah. Because the Jaffa Gate also faces Hebron, where Abraham is buried, Arabs call the gate, *Bab el-Khalil*, "Gate of the Friend," because of Isaiah 41:8. The gate offers easy access to the Citadel Museum and a walk on the ramparts. Until the end of the 19th century, Jaffa Gate was locked every night to keep out marauders, hyenas, jackals and dragons. The dragons may have been imaginary, but the others were real. Travelers arriving at dusk had to carry lanterns so they could be identified and admitted into the city. Latecomers had to sleep outside the walls and wait until dawn when Jaffa Gate opened. Today, from the Jaffa Gate you can stop for a bagel and hyssop or walk straight into the bazaar.



**Zion Gate:** Located on the southwest perimeter of the Old City, leads from the tomb of King David and the Upper Room on Mount Zion into the Armenian and the Jewish Quarters of the Old City. Immediately south of this gate sits modern "Mount Zion." Its Arabic name, *Bab Nabi Daud*, "Gate of the Prophet David" - came about because David's tomb supposedly rests on Mount Zion. The gate wears a pockmarked facade, voiceless scars from the fierce fighting for the Jewish Quarter in 1948.



### Tanners Gate:

Although Tanners Gate dates to medieval times, it was only reopened during the 1990s to alleviate pedestrian traffic that came through the newer Dung Gate to get to the Wailing Wall. As you enter Tanners Gate, you will be walking on Hollywood Boulevard of the fifth century. It was a branch of the Cardo which you see in the Jewish Quarter and led straight up to Damascus Gate in the north. Just to give you some atmospheric context, as you enter Tanners Gate, you'll face a wall mural reflecting main street during the Roman times.



**Dung Gate:** Apparently not the original Dung Gate; this is farther north, as the "tail" of Nehemiah's Jerusalem was cut off. The unusual name stems from a gate that stood along the city's south wall in the time of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:13). The Targum identifies the Dung Gate as the "Potsherd Gate" of Jeremiah 19:2. In antiquity, the city dump lay in the nearby Hinnom Valley, and

the Potsherd Gate served as the exit by which the citizens took out the garbage. Paradoxically, the Dung Gate is today one of the cleanest areas in the Old City. When you enter the Old City through the Dung Gate, you'll walk up directly through the security outpost to the Western ("Wailing") Wall plaza. Both the Western Wall and the Temple Mount require "modest dress," so if you're female, don't even think about entering the Dung Gate in shorts or sleeveless!

*God Bless,  
Kurt (Tour Host)*