



Jerusalem through the Ages: From Its Beginnings to the Crusades

Jodi Magness

Oxford University Press (Mar 26, 2024)

Hardcover \$39.99 (592pp)

978-0-19-093780-5

For those wondering why another book on Jerusalem is needed, Jodi Magness's *Jerusalem through the Ages* provides an eloquent answer based in archaeology, from the biblical era through the crusades of the twelfth century.

The book starts by explaining the city's location and surroundings. It then profiles a series of explorers and scientists whose work informed modern understandings of the city's history. From there it looks at key eras in Jerusalem's tale, starting with the Jebusite era that preceded the city's conquest by King David and moving through to the establishment of the United Kingdom era, examining specific ruins and considering where they fit in the city's timeline along the way. Chapters are dedicated to discussing the city during its occupation by the Persian, Roman, and Byzantine empires too.

In addition to buildings and other structures, artifacts including tombs, carved figures, and pottery add to the book's nuanced discussions. For example, the chapter on Jebusite Jerusalem discusses the debate about when Jerusalem was surrounded by city walls, how its water system was set up, and archaeologists' theories about a stepped stone structure that may have led to an ancient citadel. And Magness explains how biblical accounts can both help with and confound the process of dating physical remnants, using related stories to put archaeological evidence into context. Her exploration is enhanced by useful maps and diagrams, as well as photographs of the archaeological features discussed. An appendix of walking tours for those who want to experience history firsthand is included.

Jerusalem through the Ages is a fascinating study of one of the world's most discussed cities—and a window into how archaeologists and historians use evidence to piece its story together.

JEFF FLEISCHER (March / April 2024)

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