

# Upper Room



## Description

The Last Supper Room is a second-story room in Jerusalem that commemorates the “upper room” in which Jesus shared the Last Supper with the disciples. It is located directly above the Tomb of David and near the Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion.

The site of the Last Supper is not known and the Gospel accounts provide few clues. It cannot be the present “Last Supper Room,” for it was built in the 12th century. However, it is possible it stands over or near the original site of the Last Supper and Pentecost.

## Historical Background

### Roman period

Mount Zion was also the site where some of the events of the last days of Jesus have happened. The “Last supper” is one of these most important events which, according to tradition, happened in the upper floor of the building where the tomb of David is located. As per Mark 15:15: “where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared”.

St. Peter and the other apostles also talk about David’s tomb in Acts 2:29: “...the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.” This text may relate to the original site of the tombs of the house of David, or the new location on Mount Zion.

Another tradition holds that the Holy Ghost descended here as per Acts 2:1-4, and Apostle Peter conducted the sermon: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come... And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting...”.

## Scripture

### Mark 14:12-15

And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

## **Byzantine period**

Several hundred years later, during the Byzantine period, the early Christians built several churches around Mount Zion.

The second level in this site was a Byzantine building, as determined by an archaeological survey that was conducted beneath the tomb of David, on the lower floor.

## **Persian and Arab conquest**

After the Persian or Arab conquest in the 7th C, the structure was destroyed, and the area remained in ruins from the 7th C until the 12th C.

## **Crusaders**

The Crusaders rebuilt some of the structures on Mount Zion, as well as many sections of Jerusalem. The present day Coenaculum hall is one of these 12th C Crusaders structures. After the Crusaders retreated (1187) the structure was cared by Franciscan Monks, the official custodians of the Holy places.

## **Middle ages**

The Ottomans did not include the area inside the 16th C wall, but regarded the site as a Holy place - the site of the King David's tomb. They banished the monks, and transformed it into a mosque (1524 AD), as attested by the stone inscription embedded into the eastern wall. The Ottomans, under Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, added changes which included a prayer corner, colorful windows and a Muezzin tower on the roof. The mosque was named E-Nebi Daud, or: the prophet David.

In the building around the site lived a Muslim family, who held the keys to the site.

## **Modern times**

On the ground level are several Jewish synagogues, and the site is one of the most Holiest Jewish places. The upper level is a holy place for Christians.

The place is open to the public and is a popular place, receiving hundreds of thousands visitors year round. Pope Benedict XVI visited here on May 12, 2009.