

## Ancient wall found in Jerusalem

A 3,700 -year-old wall has been discovered in east Jerusalem, Israeli archaeologist say.



Archaeologists say the wall formed part of the region's first fortifications

The structure was built to protect the city's water supply as part of what dig director Ronny Reich described as the region's earliest fortifications.

The 26-ft (8-m) high wall showed the Canaanite people who built it were a sophisticated civilisation, he said.

Critics say Israel uses such projects as a political tool to bolster Jewish claims to occupied Palestinian land.

Excavations at the site, known as the City of David, is in a Palestinian neighbourhood just outside the walls of Jerusalem's old city.

It is partly funded by Elad, a Jewish settler organisation that also works to settle Jews in that area.

### **Open to the public**

The wall dates from a time in the Middle Bronze Age when Jerusalem was a small, fortified enclave controlled by the Canaanites, before they were conquered by the Israelites.

Its discovery demonstrated Jerusalem's inhabitants were sophisticated enough to undertake major building projects, said Mr Reich.

"The wall is enormous, and that it survived 3,700 years - this is, even for us, a long time," said Mr Reich, an archaeology professor at the University of Haifa.

The excavation team said the wall formed part of a structure that protected a passage from a hilltop fortress to a nearby spring - the area's only water source.

Israel's Antiquities Authority said the site would be open to the public on Thursday.