

Homes of Middle and Lower Classes:

1. The people of these social classes generally lived an agricultural related lifestyle.
2. Homes are normally considered to be a shelter from the cold and rain. However, in the ANE they provide shelter from the heat. No heating system and/or kitchen.
3. Construction is generally masonry, as the land was denuded from trees centuries before Christ. Many families lived permanently in tents which gave them the opportunity to search for greener pastures for their flocks. (Masonry is defined as clay, brick, and/or stone).
4. Masonry homes generally had 2 or 3 rooms with small openings for windows. A wooden masonry post was in the center to support the flat roof. Rain water was diverted from the roof into an underground cistern. The rooms, which were always dark, were used for sleeping and storage. In most communities in Israel and Judah there was no community water or sewer facility.
5. Roofs were required (OT law) to have a protective rail or guard around the perimeter. The roof was used for sleeping, prayer, and social activities. At night it was improper for a man to walk around his roof because he could see down into his neighbor's courtyard.
6. In larger cities, the poor lived in rented apartments. The higher the apartment, the cheaper the rent. There appears to have been a greater degree of home ownership in Israelite communities than in other cities (?).
7. Romans developed concrete by the 2nd century B.C., thereby permitting 5 and 6 story apartment buildings.
8. Terms of 1st century homes: *Roman*
 - a. Domus a large house or mansion occupied by a single family.