

Tracing The Footsteps of Jesus Film Trip Update
November 11 - December 4, 2009
Report #2 - Filming at the Via Dolorosa & Christ Church



Filming at the Ecce Homo (Behold The Man) Arch at dawn

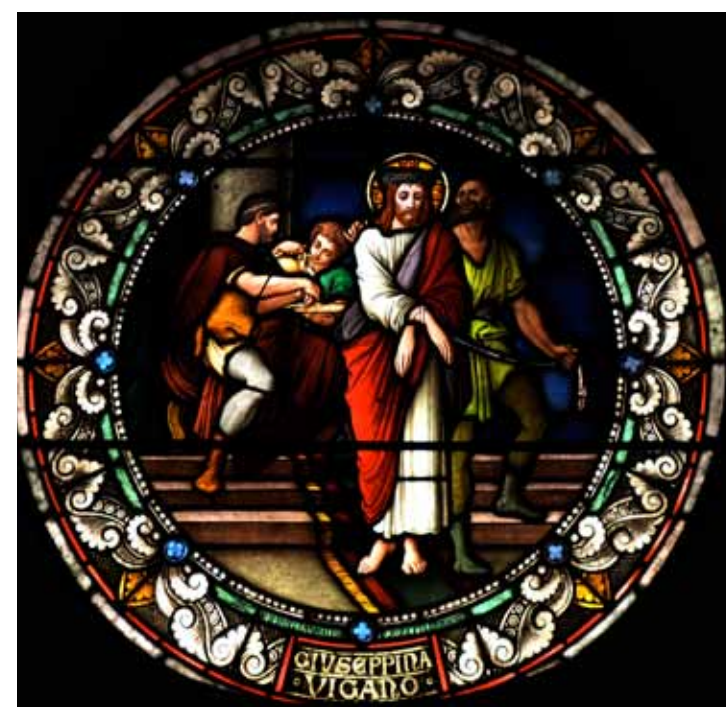
Dear Friends and Supporters of The Biblical World:

The Via Dolorosa (Way of Suffering) is a narrow cobblestoned street that begins near the Lion's Gate on the eastern side of Jerusalem. This was the site of the Antonia Fortress built adjacent to the Jewish Temple by Herod the Great and named after his patron Mark Antony.

It was thought for centuries to be the location of Pilate's Judgment hall and is the location of the first two stations of the cross for the Franciscans. The first station is located at the modern Muslim school for boys that stands on the former site of the Antonia which was destroyed by Titus in 70 AD. Across the street is the Monastery of the Flagellation, with two lovely chapels that commemorate the trial before Pilate and Jesus being beaten before sent out to carry His cross. Brilliant stained glass windows decorate each church.



Model of Antonia Fortress and Temple



Pilate Washing Hands



Jesus Carrying His Cross

Each Friday afternoon the Franciscans lead a procession down the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The tight streets are jammed with tourists and pilgrims so filming here is quite a challenge. The buildings block out the sunlight creating great contrast with the blue sky and making it very difficult to film.

So we decided to film at dawn before the tourists, pilgrims and sun arrived. We arrived Thursday morning, set up our equipment and were amazed at how much traffic came through at 6:00 in the morning. We managed the traffic, but could not manage the young boys who began arriving for school. A shopkeeper suggested returning on Friday or Sunday morning when school would be out. We returned on both days, but were still beset by challenges.

Finally, on our last Friday in Jerusalem there was cloud cover so we returned not realizing it was the Feast of the Sacrifice for Muslims. It is estimated that over 100,000 Muslims had gathered on the former Temple Mount for the celebration. We completed our shoot after they were dismissed, so it took over an hour to drive our car down the narrow streets through the great throng of people. But, the footage was good and will be used in episodes 24 and 25.



The Citadel next to the Jaffa Gate from Christ Church roof

Today most scholars do not believe Pilate resided in the barracks of the Antonia, but at the palace of Herod the Great on the opposite side of the city at the Citadel near the Jaffa Gate. This glorious palace was destroyed by Titus in 70 AD. The General left three towers standing as a monument to the past, but Hadrian destroyed them in 135 AD. The tower of Phasael (Herod's brother) was 148 feet high, the foundation of which is still visible today (where flags are flying).

We wanted to tell the story of Jesus before Pilate using the Citadel as a background. Since this is near one of the busiest gates of Jerusalem, it was a real challenge. Inside of the old city, across the street is Christ's Church, the oldest Protestant Church in the land. This was the site of the British Embassy in the 19th century and some of the buildings have been converted into guest houses. After praying, I went in and asked to speak with the management. The manager kindly gave permission to film from their roof top which is directly across from the citadel.



Filming from the roof of Christ's Church Guest House

I praise God for the wonderful locations He provided for us to tell the incredible story of Jesus trials before Pilate and Herod and His subsequent crucifixion. We pray that the Holy Spirit will use these two episodes (24 & 25) to touch people's hearts and minds for the kingdom of God.

Lord, You said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32).

Thank you for the privilege of telling Your wonderful story.

May these episodes be used around the globe to draw people to You is my prayer.