

Christ in Prophecy

Israel 13: "Walk Through the Old City"

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: My favorite city in all the world is the most important city in the world. It is the city of Jerusalem. Stay tuned for an up-close walking tour of that city.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I have a very special treat for you in this program. I want to take you on a walking tour thru one of the most fascinating places in the world --- the Old City of Jerusalem.

On this board I have drawn an outline of the walls of the Old City as they were reconstructed in the 1500s by Suleiman the Magnificent. We are going to start our tour here at the Lion's Gate on the east side of the city. And from there we are going to walk thru the Arab Quarter along the traditional route of the Via Dolorosa, the path that Jesus took when He went to the Cross. That path ends about here at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. And from there we will continue our walk thru the Old City thru the Christian Quarter over to the Western side at the Jaffa Gate. And then from there we will go thru the Armenian Quarter and back over to end at the Jewish Quarter with an overlook of the Temple Mount, the Dome of the Rock and the Western of Wailing Wall.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Welcome to Israel and the Old City of Jerusalem. I am standing here on the East side of Old City and right in front of me is the Lion's Gate it leads directly into the Arab Quarter. This incidentally is a very famous gate because this is the gate that the Israeli Army broke into in the Six Day War in 1967 when they conquered the city from the Jordanians. Throughout the centuries the gate has actually had two names it was called the Lion's Gate and it was also called the Gate of St. Stephen's because Christians believed that this was the area where the first Christian martyr Stephen was stoned to death. But today it is generally referred to as the Lion's Gate. And the reason for that is because above the gate on each side in the wall are carved lions. Well what we are going to do now is we are going to take a walking tour thru the Old City from the east all the way over to the west. And so what I'd ask you to do is just follow me and I will show you some interesting sites along the way. Let's go.

Well here we are inside the Old City of Jerusalem just coming thru the Lion's Gate. The streets are very narrow, but they allow vehicles to come in because the merchants need to get in here

and also people who live within the city. The city has been greatly transformed from 100 years ago. 100 years ago it was an incubator of disease because these streets were dirt, sewage ran down the middle and there was animal dung everywhere. But today it has been modernized since 1967 by the Jewish people. They have paved these streets. Put the sewage underneath and the city has been cleaned up considerably from what it was 100 years ago.

One of the things that I've learned about this old city is that you can never know, even imagine what's behind these wall. For example right through this door is an absolutely beautiful courtyard. Let's go and take a look at it. You see what I mean, a very beautiful courtyard. And in this courtyard there are two things that I want to show you. One is the Church of St. Anne and the other is the Pool of Bethesda. We will take a look at the Church of St. Anne first. This is the Church of St. Anne. It's a 12th Century Crusader Church. And it was built by the Crusaders to honor Anne the mother of Mary. One thing I love about this church is it has incredible acoustics. Let's go inside and see if someone is singing.

Over her adjacent to the Church of St. Anne is a biblical site; the Pool of Bethesda. I want to show you something over here. In John 5 we are told that there was a healing that took place here by Jesus. This is the Pool of Bethesda and there was a tradition here that if the water suddenly stirred and many people believe that was by an angel that the first person who could touch the water would be healed. Well this particular man had been here for over 30 years and he could never get to the water fast enough. The implication is that he was paralyzed in some way. But Jesus came here and healed him at this place. Now one thing that is interesting about that is that biblical critics in the 19th Century said, "Well this is one of the evidences that the Bible is full of myth, legend, and superstition because there was never such a pool." But in the 19th Century this pool was discovered. And so it has been authenticated.

Well here we are back on the street that leads to the Lion's Gate. And at this particular point in the street it becomes the Via Dolorosa. The Via Dolorosa in Latin means the way of suffering. And this is the traditional route that Jesus walked to the cross. It's the route from where He was tried by Pilate to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher where He was crucified. There are actual 14 Stations of the Cross, but we are only going to cover some 9 along this route. The other 5 are all in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. We'll point out a few as we go along, not all of them. This arch up here is the Ecce Homo Arch in Latin that means "behold the man." For centuries Christians believed that was the place where Pilate took Jesus and said to the people, "Behold the Man." And that this was the place where Pilate judged Jesus Christ. We now know that is not true, that arch was built in the 2nd Century after Christ by Hadrian. But this general area is an authentic site. I will explain that to you. The reason I say this is an authentic site is because we know that this was the site of the Ancient Antonio Fortress the Roman Fortress. And many people believe that it was at this fortress that Pilate judged Jesus. The fortress was built next to the north end of the Temple Mount and higher so that they could look down and see what the Jewish people were doing.

This door is the entrance to the Convent of the Sisters of Zion. And down below there is a pavement floor that was the floor of the Antonia Fortress. And on that floor is a game that was carved by the Roman soldiers that they played with the prisoners where they would dress them up in regal costumes and then torture them according to how the dice fell on the game. I might mention to you that an archeological debate has broken out in recent years about the location of where this trial took place where Pilate judged Jesus. For years it was assumed it was here at

the Antonio Fortress but now archeological scholars are saying, "No, that it was on the other side of the city at Herod's Palace." We know from the writings of Josephus that when Governors came to town they always stayed at that Palace. And in 2009 an Israeli archeologist discovered a Praetorium over there that appears to have been where Jesus was judged.

The street from the Lion's Gate comes to a dead end at this point you either have to go this way or that way. Now there are two sites for the crucifixion the Protestant site called the Garden Tomb. And the Church of the Holy Sepulcher which is the Catholic site. The Catholic site is much more traditional and is more verified in history than the Protestant site. But if Jesus went to the Protestant site He came here and he turned and went that way. If He went to the Catholic site he went that way. We are going to follow the traditional route of the Via Dolorosa so we're going that way. Let's go.

This is the third station of the cross. The first two are up where Pilate judged Jesus. This particular station marks the first place where Jesus fell. According to tradition He fell several times this was supposed to be the first place.

Right here in the midst of all these postcards we have the fourth station of the cross. This is where Jesus supposedly encountered His Mother. That is strictly a tradition. Let's go now to the fifth station.

What you see behind me is the fifth station of the cross. This is where Simon of Cyrene was supposed to have picked up the cross when Jesus stumbled again. And when we go around this corner we are going to start going up a very, very steep hill and you will understand why He needed some help to get up there. He would carry a cross or a cross beam of the cross.

This is the sixth station of the cross and this is supposedly where a woman by the name of Veronica wiped the face of Jesus with a handkerchief and His image came off on that handkerchief; that of course a totally extra-biblical myth. But that is one of the stories of the life of Jesus that is celebrated along this Via Dolorosa.

Let's go on up to the top of the hill. We are going to skip the other Stations of the Cross because we are moving into an Arab Market area. And right up here at the end of this street you can see another dead end. We are going to take a left, walk thru the Arab Market area and then take a right and go to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Let's go.

Okay let's start walking thru the Arab Market area. There are not many people here today because this is a Friday which is the Islamic Sabbath. Normally when we go thru this market it is absolutely jam packed with so many people that it is almost impossible to walk thru it. It's a very colorful place. It's also a place with a lot of aromatic smells. And it is a place that is rather exciting as you go thru it. We are approaching now the turn we are going to make to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher we'll be making that turn in just a few moments.

We are coming now to the end of our walk thru the Arab Market. And we are going to make a right turn into the Christian Quarter. And when we do so it will be like going from light to dark, or dark to light it is just unbelievable the difference in the feel of these quarters the looks of them and so forth. You'll see as we make this turn we are coming now into the Christian Quarter. And right around this corner you will begin to see that it is very quiet. It's much

cleaner. And the merchants here don't jump out and try to grab your neck and sell you something. So here we go around this corner to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Well as you can see the Christian Quarter is open, it's clean, it's serene. It's a really nice place to be. And right over here we are coming to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Let's go.

Well here it is folks the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The most sacred place in all of Christendom because this church sits on what is believed to be the site of the crucifixion and the burial, and of course the resurrection of Jesus. And there is a lot of archeology to sustain that assumption. The church has a very interesting feature about it if you look up high you'll see a ladder that is up there leaning on a ledge below a window. Keep that ladder in mind. What I want to do now is I want to go to a private place and talk with you a little bit about this church.

I've been over here 42 times and the only time I've ever been in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was the first time. The reason I haven't been back in since then is because I felt an overwhelming sense of spiritual suffocation. It's a rather dark and dreary place. It is a place where priest vie for control. It's a place where people worship icons. It is not to me a spiritually uplifting place. This has been true for centuries. There are six different Christian denominations that have various aspects, control of various aspects of the church. And over the centuries they have fought each other. They have feuded with each other. They've actually had fist fights. Until finally it got so bad that during the time of the Ottoman Empire the Ottoman Sultan decided to issue an order. It was the called the order of "The Status Quo." And you know what that order did? It froze everything, everything. As the day that was issued everything was frozen. So there could be no more territorial disputes. And the fighting could stop. But on the day he issued that order there happened to be a ladder on the balcony that I pointed out to you earlier. What had happened was an Armenian Priest had taken a ladder out and put it up to wash windows. But as he was getting ready to do so a Greek Priest came out and said, "Hey that ladder is resting on the corner that belongs to the Greeks." And so they got into a fight over that. When the Status Quo was issued the ladder was there and the ladder could not be moved. When that occurred we are not quite sure but every photograph of the church taken since the 1850's shows that ladder. And the great illustrations that David Roberts from England did in this country in the 1840's also show the ladder. So it's been there for almost 200 years. And it is a symbol, a symbol of the silliness that goes on quiet often among these different denominations fighting over territorial rights.

Part 3

We have been continuing our walk thru the Christian Quarter and now we are reaching another dead end. This is David Street. And David Street is one of the major thoroughfares in the Old City where people come to buy souvenirs and knickknacks of one kind or another. We are going to turn right here head up David's Street; it is up hill all the way. And we are going to come to the other side of the city at the Jaffa Gate. Let's go.

Well here we are at the Jaffa Gate. We have walked all the way across the Old City from the Eastside to the Westside. And what you see up there is not the original Jaffa Gate. That's a cut that was made in the wall in the early 20th Century in order that Kaiser Wilhelm II could ride

into this city in a buggy and not have to get out and walk in. I guess royalty does have it privileges.

This massive structure you see here located at the Jaffa Gate is what is called The Citadel. This is the place where Herod's palace was located in the time of Jesus. And this is where many archeologists today believe that Jesus was actually tried by Pilate.

This entrance to the Citadel is important for many reasons. But one of my favorite historical scenes that comes to mind when I see it is that in 1917 in December when the Allied Forces liberated this city from the Ottoman Turks for the first time in 400 years. General Allenby walked in the Jaffa Gate came right up here and stood here and proclaimed this city to be liberated from the Turkish Empire.

I am standing directly across the street from The Citadel. And I am here because this is the entrance to a very historic church, it's called Christ Church right inside the Jaffa Gate and it was completed in 1849 the first Protestant church to be built in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Well here we are once again in a beautiful courtyard. I told you you never know what's inside these walls as you walk thru the Old City. This is the courtyard of Christ Church. And it's a remarkable story here. There was a German born Jew by the name of Michael Solomon Alexander, who became a follower of Jesus in 1825 after he heard the Gospel in England from two Anglican clergymen. He had gone to England to teach Hebrew and he had been ordained as a Rabi. He became a lecturer in Hebrew literature at King's College in London. And this man, remarkable man translated the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the New Testament into the Hebrew language. He was a believer in Bible prophecy and to me that is the most important thing of all. He really believed the prophecies of the Bible. He believed that in the end times God was going to regather the Jews in unbelief back to this land. And so he decided to come here to the Holy Land and establish the first Protestant Church inside these Old City walls, Christ Church. He came here as a Bishop of the Anglican Church. And he began the building of this church. Unfortunately he died before it was completed in 1849. Today this church, Christ Church is the only Protestant church in the Old City of Jerusalem that acknowledges the Jewish roots of our Christian heritage. And which does not teach Replacement Theology.

We are entering the Armenian Quarter now which is the smallest and least populated of the four quarters of the Old City. I will tell you more about the Armenians when we get into the center of their quarters. The Armenian people are supposed to have been the very first people to be converted to Christianity as a nation. And throughout their history they have been severely persecuted. That persecution came to its climax in 1915 with what's called the Armenian Genocide; when the Turkish people tried to annihilate the Armenian community. As a result of that the Armenians have closed in to themselves and have cut themselves off from the outside world. We are right in the middle of the Armenian Quarter they've got high walls around it so there is really nothing to see here.

We are going to continue walking to the Jewish Quarter. Well we have arrived now to the Jewish Quarter of the Old City the last of the four quarters. And it is the newest one. And the reason it is so new is because when the War of Independence ended in 1949 the Jordanians had control of this old city and they cut the Jew off from it. Not only did they do that they came into the Jewish Quarter and systematically blew up every building in this quarter including all of

the synagogues. After the 1967 Six Day War when the Jews regained control of this city they decided of course to rebuild this Jewish Quarter. But you know what they did first? They did archeological excavations. So under every one of these buildings there is an archeological excavation. There is something I want you to notice in particular here. You seen that minaret next to that dome? That dome is the Hurva Synagogue that has been rebuilt because it was blown up by the Jordanians. But notice here in the Jewish Quarter there is a minaret of a Mosque. That's because the Jews are willing to tolerate all religions. But if the Jews were to go into the Arab Quarter and try to build a Synagogue well it would probably start a war. So we see the intolerance of the Islamic religion toward others. And the determination of those in Islam to put themselves in your face and say look we're the greatest.

When the Jews did reoccupy this Jewish Quarter in 1967 one of the things they did was to build a memorial to the Hurva Synagogue. And the Memorial you can see in this photograph of a great arch. I am happy to say that now that arch has been replaced by the rebuilding of the Synagogue which opened recently.

This plaza in the center of the Jewish Quarter is one of my favorite places in this area of the Old City. It is a place where you can come and sit and have lunch. And you can watch the Jewish people celebrate as these people are doing that they are back in this city. It's always a wonderful place to be. You can watch Jewish families walking by here. And it reminds me of a passage in the book of Zechariah where it says that in the end times Jerusalem will once again be a place of celebration; where boys and girls and men and women will dance in the streets.

This is the headquarters of what is called the Temple Institute which is right here in the heart of the Jewish Quarter. This organization is trying to make all the preparation for the Third Temple; the Temple that will exist during the Tribulation. They have made the clothing of the priests, the clothing of the High Priest, the High Priest headdress. They have made the instruments to be used in the sacrifices and musical instruments. But the most difficult thing they had to prepare was the menorah to go in the Temple because it had to be made of solid gold. We will take a look at that menorah in just a moment.

Here it is the solid gold menorah that is to be positioned in the Third Temple, the Temple of the Tribulation. My friends these preparations are just one of many signs that point to the fact that we are living on borrowed time, and the Messiah is returning soon.

I want to conclude our walk thru the Old City right here in the Jewish Quarter with this scene of the Temple Mount behind me. What you see there is the Dome of the Rock. And right below it is the Western Wall or the Wailing Wall as some people call it; where Jews have gone for centuries to lament the destruction of their Temple and to pray for the return of their Messiah.

I sincerely hope that this walk thru the Old City has been informative to you, and has been spiritually enriching. I hope one day that you will be able to come to the Holy Land and walk thru this Old City yourself. Walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Shalom from Jerusalem.

Part 4

In Psalm 48 we find these words about the city of Jerusalem: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth Is Mount Zion . . . the city of the great King. At the beginning of this program I said that Jerusalem is the most important city in the world. And that's because it is the focal point of the cosmic battle between God and Satan. Jerusalem is where Jesus, the Son of God, shed His blood for the sins of Mankind.

It is where He was buried and resurrected, and where He ascended into Heaven. It is where He will return to this earth. And it is from Jerusalem that He will reign over all the earth for a thousand years, bringing peace, righteousness and justice. The prophet Ezekiel says that at that time the name of the city will be changed from Yerushalayim to Yahweh-Shemmah, which means "The Lord is there." And the Lord will be there. He made that promise in Ezekiel 43:7 where He said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, this [Jerusalem] is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever." Well, that's our program for this week. I hope it has been a blessing to you. And I hope you will be back with us next week, the Lord willing. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program