

Jesus of Jerusalem

The Wednesday Jesus

So this guy is wandering around in the Old City of Jerusalem on his first day, just off the plane, no sleep, up and down the Via Dolorosa, down every laneway, in every shop, looking for that special something, nails or a spear, some little something that might have overlooked by a million pilgrims before him, little scraps of illegible parchment, anything, and what happens is that he's tired and he's not thinking but he's curious and so he goes through this unmarked door on the left into this attractive courtyard and there leaning up against the wall is a cross, quite a bit smaller than Regulation size, and with no foot rest, but still, it's real wood. And it's just leaning there.

And then this cute monk walks by and so he follows him to the left, down a long wide hall to this chapel where they're getting ready for a special private Mass and the guy thinks how lucky can you get on a Wednesday. There's a little sign that says it's the Church of the Flagellation, which also could be inferred from the extremely suggestive paintings and statuary up at the front, if you thought about it, and not too hard. He doesn't have a reservation but there's no usher and so the guy sits down in the very back row. And there, sitting right in front of him, still, solemn, solid, close enough to touch, fair skinned, stringy, unkempt, blondish hair, wearing a dirty, over-the-shoulder wrap, in off-white, trailing, flowing ... billowing really ... to the floor ... to the instantly recognizable boney toes of ... you guessed it! The guy from the plane is blown away! The real deal, on his very first day!

But then the guy from the plane panics, and not without reason, given his long history of shameless sacrilege, and he starts looking for the little closet where they do their business and desperately thinking of something to confess in a hurry, to get his foot in the door before closing time, so to speak, just in case ... something salacious, given the decor the standards here would be high - but the permutations and combinations are numerous and the list is too long to process quickly. And so then he's thinking, thinking, thinking - Plan B - how he could do unto others as he would have them do unto him - and do it before the end of Mass, nothing too showy and yet something to be noticed or what's the point. And then, and then a flashing light almost knocked him to the floor, thunder rolled and it came unto him ... Give Him my prize floppy, broad-brimmed, straw hat with the red/blue feather hat band, from Cambodia, and the braided chin strap in case it's windy ... better to keep the sun out of his eyes ... better than what he's wearing, for sure! ... in case He has to go outside after Mass ... not a purely hypothetical thought, which is what a Plan B is all about.

Yes! Yes! Yes! Act fast! Just give it to him! Don't even ask for tax receipt! What is travel for! My accountant will kill me but ... just do it!

And then, just as the guy from the plane reached out to put the hat on the head of ... and Jesus stands up ... to give his seat to a nun-type person ... and He is Friar-Tuck fat! And

short. And built like a tank. Who knew, seeing him just sitting there! No problem for him carrying that piss-ass thing out in the courtyard up and down the street. But that's as far it goes. If he sat on it, it would break in a dozen pieces (each probably worth as much as the original on e-Bay). There's a reason there was no foot rest! And it's not for sale.

The guy from the plane plunged into despair.

But it's only Wednesday. And Holy Week hasn't even started.

So the First Lesson of Jerusalem is that there are really amazing things you can do with off-white drapery fabric but there are also limitations.

A Day Without Jesus

Thursday was an interesting day for sure.

Mr. Shalom-Shalom who I met in the Old City showed me all around the Jewish Quarter, very, very, nice. Best restoration work ever. (Arab Quarter ... not so nice.) But, no Jesus, anywhere. Mr. S. said I was in the wrong part of town.

He took me along the battlements overlooking the Mountain of Olives and the Valley of Kidron. I asked if he could point out exactly where Jesus would come. He asked me who was my favorite poet. I told him I was looking for a condo in this very vicinity.

Eventually we found our way to the Western Wall and the Temple Mount with Golden Dome. At last! But all I could see were Jews and Arabs, Arabs and Jews, fortunately wearing colorful local costumes, or else who could tell the difference, but no Jesus. There were two dozen outdoor Bar Mitzvahs at the Western Wall and everybody praying and parading and sticking things in the Wall. But no Jesus. I went into the tunnels along the wall. I asked a few people if they'd seen him, or if he was expected. Nada, nada.

So then I lined up and went up top to the Temple Mount and the Golden Dome and al'Aqsa Mosque. everybody there was bliss-ed out, studying the Koran under the trees in groups, just like heaven. I think. But no money changers, no boy preacher, no Jesus. But even that there was no Jesus, there was, is, might be, the presence of, a hint of, Gxx. Don't pretend you don't know that means God. This is the number one spot. The sign says this is where he resides. This is where God created Adam and where Abraham tried to kill his number two boy child to please God. This is where the (militant) Jews had there first Temple and the Second and want to tear down the Moslem mosque and rebuild a third Temple and resume sacrificing. This is where Mohamed landed on his flying horse when he was on tour and went up to heaven and came back. This is where Ariel Sharon came marching with 1,000 police just to show who's boss and get the Second Intifada off to a rousing start.

The Jewish Temple, now destroyed, was an exact replica of the tent the Jews carted around in the desert when they fled from Egypt, a place for Gxx to live in, behind a curtain, just like in the *Wizard of Oz*. The *Jerusalem Post* article said it really just the desert tent with a dressing room for a Egyptian general which the Jews stole as they left the country. Not to quibble over details.

Anyhow, Thursday was a good day. I was happy. Never mind about no Jesus. Everyday can't be Wednesday.

Jesus on Friday

Friday, today, I went to the Church of the Holly Sepulchre, very early, shortly after opening, thinking, hoping, maybe ... I mean where else ... and sure enough, there he was, sitting in the sun in the courtyard. Different venue, my Jesus, on the job! Same dirty robe, radiant of course, but not too much to show off. If he doesn't move – and he didn't - his plumb-ness lends a reassuring sense of permanence and reliability. I was won back to the true faith. I am not fickle, I am a tourist. He was smiling, reading his Bible and I snuck a pictures of him which I will show you just in case you are a doubter as to the truth of my tale. I have encountered doubters in the past.

He was, I assumed, waiting for his cross. Which I knew was on the way because I had already seen it on my way over, borne by a quartet of Swedish pilgrims, one for each arm and backed up by a mixed choir of twenty singing something lovely, although in Swedish.

The question, which came to me immediately in the courtyard of the Church of the Holly Schepplecure just after opening, was whether He, sitting there, had just come out or was waiting to go in. Was he about to retire to his special cave inside? Perhaps I could observe, help even, with the ablutions on the special stone where the tourists were gathered and kissing the rock. Or had He just risen, already had an early morning resurrection, and was gathering strength for a long day and I could follow him. Maybe He'd cure the arthritis in my left wrist.

Let's not kid ourselves, the guy has a hard job. I thought, for example, of the money changers I'd seen on the way over at the Jaffa Gate. Those guys weren't sitting at some flimsy table you could knock over with an oomph of the hip. They were embedded in these pretty thick walls, and behind plexi-glass and the money was in locked metal drawers connected to the Internet. He'd have to blast them out, maybe with the help of the Swedes. Not my thing, but still, somebody has to do it.

The further question I couldn't help wondering, as I watched him sitting there, calm and nice, and all the tourists streaming in and out of this little, shit box of a church, if they made him line-up with the multitudes to get in each time he wanted to go to his cave. Or

whether he had a private entrance, which you would hope for a guy like that, a back door somewhere, which I didn't see but why would I? And I figured as well he must have a locker and a change room in the back and a shower because he looked fresh and not at all like he had just slept in his clothes. They were dirty, but not creased or wrinkled, still billowing. Look for the small clues. So I concluded that Jesus had risen. And I had missed it. But not to worry. Most everybody did.

There were other clues. I went inside the Church and I stood in the very spot where Mary and Elizabeth had stood, where all the candles are, when they came to the garden and looked at the crypt where they had buried Him and saw the stone was rolled away! And I too saw the stone was rolled away ... gone altogether ... moved by a forklift you would assume, in order, I figured, that the long line of tourists could get in and out without bumping it and perhaps making it roll back, trapping somebody inside who didn't have a reservation.

I looked inside, with everybody else. It didn't look very comfortable for a guy like that, I mean given his importance. I confess I was thinking, hoping, presuming, there might be a roll-up futon in the corner, or who could sleep like that even if it was flat. But there wasn't.

But more important I heard voices, saying, 'Did you see Jesus in here this morning?' And the other voice said, 'He is risen. He's outside.' So I went back outside. And there he was, still, just like the voices said. And he was just where I left Him, chatting to a middle-aged redheaded pilgrim in sensible walking shoes, as they a wont to wear, from Erie, Pennsylvania.

When the red-head left his side I decided it was now or never so I went over and sat down and introduced myself and said I read his book when I was a little kid and that I was a lawyer with some considerable experience dealing with difficult clients and difficult cases and then I tried to explain to him, perhaps too quickly, the difficulties and dangers of self-representation in serious cases, not that I was against every times and sometimes it could be very effective but there were traps and trick questions and, especially, very important procedural issues, difficult for the lay person, and mistakes could have serious consequences and maybe I could help, actually I'd love to, if he would sign this Retainer Form.

But He didn't grasp my import and I wondered whether he even spoke English. Which was in itself a revelation, of a sort.

Then the Swedes arrived with the cross, He got up, gave me some mints which I kept as proof, and took the cross from the baritone and they all exited, to the right.

And so I decided to follow Him.

Jesus At the Pool

On Saturday my vow to follow Him detained me at the pool of the American Colony Hotel where I thought for a moment he maybe he might be the life guard, to save me from drowning and bring me a Gin and Tonic with a twist. I checked out the sauna and exercise facility and massage room, for giving new life to pilgrims, and the cave-like bar for smoking up but no Jesus. Nor in the courtyard by brunch table, reading English newspapers and discussing theology with the Princeton Professors or in the gardens by the fountain, not in the little bookstore, or even on my balcony with the ceramic tiles and the wicker chair. But, no where, no where, was my Jesus, not a wisp of a trace of a breathe of Him. He wasn't even the group photos of the Chicago Stapfords and their friends the Swedish Christians who founded this august establishment a hundred years ago - in their pilgrim quest -and who famously helped the hapless mayor of Jerusalem to surrender the City to General Allenby in 1917, using one of their 500 thread, very fine Egyptian cotton bed sheets (without fitted corners) on a long pole.

After eight hundred years the Christians finally, finally got rid of the Turks from the Holy City. (And what do they do? Turn it over to the Jews! Go figure!)

And before I knew it the day was gone.

Climbing Mount Zion with the Siloam Jesus

After my day of rest and filed with new energy I took up my search again and set out the next day by taxi to the Mount of Olives. It was Balm Sunday I knew, if I knew anything that on this day He'd be coming from Bethany which is up there somewhere, where I knew, I thought I knew, I'd read, that's where he stayed with his friends.

I had the driver take me all the way to the top to Bethphage, thinking I'd get the donkey for him to ride, introduce myself again, the taxi driver could translate.

Anyhow we got to Bethphage where the donkey is suppose to be but it wasn't. Although there was a large crowd with palm leaves. Nevertheless I did find the donkey - I have a picture - down the hill a bit, in the parking lot of Mount of Olives Four Seasons Hotel. Which is also a fine view point of the Old City and the valley below and the graveyards of the famous Mount where all the very best people are buried because they are waiting for his return, as I did for about half an hour, figuring if I couldn't take the donkey to him, he would come to the donkey. You could ride the donkey around the parking lot for six shekels, but only one shekel for a picture. (There was also a camel ride, which I found confusing but you have to keep an empty mind in Jerusalem.)

You would think I could find him somewhere up on the Mount of Olives. There are, not one but two spot from which he ascended. The Chapel of the Ascension is modest, not quite at the top but it has a footprint, sort of a blast off point - I have a picture - costs a

shekel – and also the Church of the Ascension, which is large and imposing with a high tower and right at the very top of the Mountain, that you can see from everywhere, which would be a logical place from which to jump, up or down. So I went there, but the tower was closed for restoration.

So I went back to parking lot but the donkey was gone! Which pissed me off.

There's a path down the mountain between the graveyards so I went down it. Watching carefully left and right, to see if any of the 144,000 chosen ones were stirring. Not. I wasn't really expecting this, wrong day, but just in case.

On the way I visited the other place where Mary the Mother is buried. If she hadn't ascended bodily from another ... we're coming to that. Or moved to Ephesus in Turkey and turn into Artemis, which is not on this tour. Or visa-a-versa.

Part way down the mountain is the Church of All Nations where the Garden of Yosemite is beside the agonizing olive trees. This looked very promising. Because these old olive trees did look really, really, old – I have pictures. But you're not allowed to touch or have so much as a twig. They weren't even selling olive pate. Somebody isn't thinking the way I do.

Anyhow, I was either too early or too late. He was there.

Then I heard church bells across the valley from the Old City, deep and booming, calling me. So I immediately went clear across the valley into the old city in the direction of the bells. Did you know there are sixty-three churches within a square kilometer. Never mind the mosques and the Wailing Wall. What a racket. I found the moneychangers, lots and lots of money changers at the Jaffa Gate. But He wasn't there either. I have pictures to prove he was somewhere else, if you don't believe me. And why would you without the pictures. So I re-traced my steps back to Mount of Olives and the Garden of Yosemite but still, nada, nada. Jesus had disappeared.

So then I decided I would go down into the Valley of Kidron, a.k.a. Jeosaphat – very handy, right there - to the Pool of Siloam where I figured he could be, might be, healing, which He did, usually, just after beating the crap out of the moneychangers. Maybe I'd be early for the clinic, but I could wait. And if he's not there I'll go up Mount Zion, to the right, and wait at the Hall of the Last Dinner. I know this is backwards ... *from* the Garden of Yosemite *to* the Last Dinner ... but my very clever hypothesis was that I was going the wrong way on his famous route and I might just intercept him going the right way and I could chat with his handlers and offer my services. It was a theory. When you're on a quest like this you have to have a theory or else you look like a needle in a haystack.

Before I go on I want to note that this Valley of Kidron is a different Valley of Kidron than the one in the desert west of Bethlehem. They are both, possibly, the place of the battle between the Messiah and the Anti-Christ to start the Thousand Years of rule of

Jesus. And who's to say there might not be two battles. (Not to mention Meggido, way, way, far to the north, close to Syria.) As you know I've been on the market for some time for a spot, really just a pied-a-tier, to be close to the action. There are pretty nice looking caves available in both valleys. The best desert cave had a door (installed by a real monk) and a nice porch and could be had for 3-4,000,000 S. but, but ... always the 'buts' ... being in the West Bank it would take a hell of a long time to drive downtown to the office because of all the check points and guards and everything. The Jerusalem property is outside the Wall of the Old City but still within both the Green line and the Wall-Wall, but it has no door, or even steps although it did have a ladder. A real fixer-upper. In terms of battle vistas the desert location is vastly superior but then given modern drone warfare favored by the Anti-Christ it is really, really hard to predict where the action will be. But then you'll no likely to have more than a moment to take it in and reflect upon the majesty and justice of it all. If, and I say, if, and only if, there is no Armageddon battle and no thousand year rule and Jesus just descends, ka-bang, for Judgment Day – as some knowledgeable realtors claim - and who am I to predict the future – it's a done deal that will be just up the valley from the Jerusalem cave at the Mount of Olives cemetery where all the best people have already bought and which I simply couldn't afford anyhow. In that case then the City cave would be best by a mile. Close enough to watch the dead rising, far enough to mostly avoid the smell. Not to mention it's a hop and a jump to the Pool Siloam for my arthritis while I wait, which might be a while.

All things considered – I put an offer in on the city cave and a conditional offer on the desert one. But the lawyer says I need at least one Jewish grandfather to buy the City cave. My cousin in Pittsburgh is looking into our great, grandfather from Bethel, Pennsylvania, named Nathan, can you imagine, who we heard ... and who pays attention to stories like that ... hard to believe, but ... anyhow she's making inquiries of our fourth cousin, who we've never met. Just in case.

Anyhow I'm deep down in this scruffy valley, looking at my possible cave and on the phone with my real estate agent, Mr. Shalom, Shalom, and feeling pretty good, even though Jesus had slipped the net and I tell him about my fourth cousin it just comes out, he doesn't have any faith that I'm Jewish. And he hangs up.

And so there I am. My world is falling apart. I'm very upset and I shout out, 'Jesus, Jesus, I am lost, I am lost in the valley of Jeosaphat and I might not be Jewish! Where fore art thou, Jesus?'

And then this young guy, not even a guy, just a tall teenager in lime green Converse Cross-Trainers, comes up to me and says, 'You are found.' And I'm thinking, don't panic, all your money, and your passport, are back in the hotel locked in the safe, combination 0070#.

So I ask him, 'What grade are you in?' and he tells me 'Grade Eight, but I lost a few years when I lived in Cleveland with my uncle.'

Lost years? 'How many lost years?' I asked, *very casually*, trying to sound very casual and only slightly, only mildly curious and not nervous at all.

And he answered my question with another question. 'How do you count the lost years when your house is demolished and you live in a cave?'

I thought that was a good point for a fourteen year old. So I asked another question, with that innocent but deceptive cunning which reduces the average lying witness to a fountain of truth confession. 'Where were you born?'

'Bethlehem,' he answered. 'Do you want to come home with me for upside-down chicken, very good, and meet a real Palestinian family, before we are demolished?'

He was definitely not from the same gene pool as the Friday Jesus. He has short hair, nice olive skin and was next thing to skinny. And I thought, lose the sneakers and the T-shirt, a nice bathrobe in off white long enough to hide his knees, that cinches around the waist, maybe the one from Hotel I could lend him ... and maybe. I mean, if Jesus were Jewish, I'm just saying, hypothetically, *if* Jesus were Jewish, he could, he might, he'd at least get an audition. In my opinion. I'm just saying. To tell the truth, and what a terrible thing to say, and I've said it already, so it doesn't bear repeating, I can't tell a Jew from a Arab for looking unless they wearing some bit of costume as a clue or one of those fab hair dos. Which they do, but not always. And I'm thinking when the war comes how will they know whom to kill but maybe that's not important. But I'm just a tourist.

There are those who say Jesus *was* Jewish. I've read that, several times. But ... then ... how could he be Palestinian? I thought they were driven out of Jerusalem years ago. But, maybe, hiding in the caves. But then how could Jesus be from Palestine because it's on the other side of the wall!

Like I say, on subjects like this as a tourist you have to keep an empty mind. But at least, at least, I thought, he'd get an audition. *The part of Jesus at fourteen played by ...*

I said 'thanks' about the upside-down-chicken but after the Pool of Siloam I had plans for dinner but if he knew the way to the last dinner I would follow him. He said, 'No problem, I can take you there. The Pool of Siloam, is right over here, down in that pit, under the blue tarpaulin, where the smell is coming from. You can wash your hands and then we can go up Mount Zion to the Last Dinner. Not so good as traditional Palestinian dish of upside-down-chicken, but still good.'

I said I'd pass on washing my hands and, and, I thought to myself, how could he know about the Last Dinner? Is it possible ... that maybe Jesus really was from Palestine. I mean where was, where is, Nazareth anyhow, in Palestine or Israel? So I decided I'd follow him, and who knows, if we don't find the fat Jesus at the last diner, maybe we could find a synagogue and I could take the Siloam Jesus in and watch him do his stuff with the rabbis and tape it on my I-Phone and sell it to Fox News. about the Law or Return or something. What's not to like about my chances?

And so I climbed Mount Zion with the Siloam Jesus.

So we're climbing, climbing, climbing, not on the road, up this hill of rough scrabble, and my new Jesus is telling all the different churches in town and who's buried where and when the Pope is coming and every Station of the Cross which he could take me to in the Old City. My new Jesus can climb like a Billy goat. Me, I'm close to a heart attack but we'd leave the Wednesday Jesus in the dust at the bottom of Mount. Zion, for damn sure. The Siloam Jesus pointed to the monastery where Judas hung himself, right across the valley. No. Judas hung himself right across the valley, which is now a monastery. And would make a nice restaurant. Or another Tomb of King David, of which there are never enough.

And then I'm thinking that for the old Jesus to get from the Hall of the Last Dinner, still way, way, up top, to get from up there, back down Mount Zion, in the dark, and back up the scruffy Valley of Kidron, past my cave, mine, if the deal closes, if I have a Jewish grandfather, then back up the hill, not too far but still up, to Garden of Yosemite, to the olives trees, in the dark, after a big supper and a few drinks, well, more than a few, in time for his hook-up with the centurion well, I'm thinking He, the Wednesday Jesus, He'd have to be some kind of Billy goat, it's the only way, and the Wednesday Jesus was definitely not in the Billy goat gene pool with the Siloam Jesus. And who was? Is? So, it must be! There's no other possibility. A time warp Jesus.

So we get to the top and there is the Tomb of King David – which many people think is really down at the bottom of Mt Zion in the City of David, which is like a suburb and is either on the left or the right side of the valley - depending on which archeologist is shouting at you the loudest. Or maybe out in the desert.

So I go in to have a look and see whether it's King David in person, or even a realistic approximation, as with Lenin. And I say to the guy, 'who is buried in David's tomb?' And the guy says, 'it's not the tomb, it's the entrance to the tomb.' I'm thinking, with Jesus, you can look inside both tombs – I didn't tell about the *other* tomb for Jesus, the Garden Tomb – you can look inside both to be sure He's not there, because that's important. But with King David, I want to look in the tomb to see if he *is* there, because that is important. You don't want to be a David-denier in this town! Without cause. No-Sirry-Bob! And I'm not. It's too good a story. Two hundred foreskins of the Philistines warriors David brought to King Saul! Top that! Jesus only had twelve, which are all over the world in different churches. And a few replicas in the internet. Which got me thinking, where are the Philistine foreskins? Probably in private collections.

The Ortho guy at the tomb ... I mean the entrance to the tomb ... told me to go away and obey the Seven Commandments, the ones for the goy. (Look it up).

Anyhow right next door there it is, the Last Diner. We go in. It looks like a baldly lit banquet hall from a grade-B, Crusader v Infidel, sword-and-sandal epic. I look around with the Siloam Jesus for my the fat Jesus to make introductions, or not, or for any of his friends from the Church of the Flagellation, or signs of supper about to be served, or even

eaten. And nada. Not so much as a stick of furniture, not even a sideboard for gefilter fish or after dinner mints. And I'm thinking it was a big mistake to pass on Palestinian up-side-down chicken.

The Church of the Dormition is right next to that. Dormition means the eternal sleep, of Mary the Mother - sort of like Sleeping Beauty, only a lot longer - except that famous Sleeper did not rise from the dead and ascend into heaven, she awoke into the arms, - as Mr. Disney so subtly portrays it - Mr. Heaven himself. None of which I thought to explain to my Siloam Jesus. If he managed to miss this during his four lost year in Cleveland, all the better for him. I note that the Pope recently declared that she did actually die and then ascend bodily into Heaven. Jesus was not the only one!

So me and my friend go over there to look in the church, but the guard at the door of the Church of the Dormition told my new Jesus he couldn't come in! And I said, 'This is Jesus of Siloam!' And he said, 'He still can't come in. He's Arab.'

The Siloam Jesus just turned the other cheek and walked away, as if it happened every day. He did it with such practiced grace that I guessed it did. And I was thinking, this isn't going to last, the walking away or the grace.

Anyhow, that did it. All the way up Mount Zion, sometimes almost on my hands and knees following the only person in the world who could possibly do this in the dark and know all the Stations of the Cross in lime green Cross Trainers, who must be Jesus although he doesn't know it yet! And he can't even enter the Church where he own mother might be Sleeping Beauty. I was so mad I refused to go in and I took him up on the roof and I showed him the whole city spread before us and I told him, very confidentially, it didn't matter because Mary was really at Ephesus with the Turks. He looked at the City and he looked at me and smiled and told me, very confidentially, it didn't really matter because she might be in the tomb over on the Mount of Olives and anyhow, 'Only Allah knows' for sure'.

And I agreed that only Allah knows for sure, although I had considerably less confidence of that than he did, in fact none, which I didn't say. It was the only time in fifty years I had ever even pretends to believe in anything. And it was Allah! What a trip!

And I gave him fifty dollars and told him to and stay in school, even though I didn't believe that it would help much in this town. And I walked back to my hotel through the Old City, down the Via Dolorosa (of which he knew every Station) and past a store selling crowns of thorns, three shekels each. I didn't buy any because they looked dry and brittle which makes them difficult to wear and awful to pack and you can buy fresh ones on the Internet anyhow and besides none of them ever fit me.

The Third Lesson is that for the Siloam Jesus of Jerusalem Judgment Day can't come soon enough.

Jesus in Bethlehem

I awoke the next morning with a start, from a wondrous dreaming. The *camel* was, staring me straight in the face! Of course! The camel! I was looking for Jesus in all the wrong places! I would go to Bethlehem!

It was Palm Monday. I dressed quickly in my best tie-died kaftan. I asked at the desk if they could get me a camel for the day, and, if possible ... acknowledging very short notice a couple of shepherds. They said, ever so politely, checkout was eleven but in unusual circumstance five minutes and where they could they forward my luggage. Trip-Advisor will hear about this!

I carefully packed and wrapped the myrrh and put it in my day bag. I key Manger Square into the GPS App on my I-Phone and followed the directions which miraculously appeared there which lead me to a tour bus parked into front of the YMCA and across the street from the King David Hotel marked Bethlehem.

Maybe not a camel, but I was pumped by my vision and I had the myrrh. I got on the bus and I said, "Take me to Jesus."

"Weren't you on the tour two weeks ago? You're not Herod, by any chance?" the guy said to me.

"Who me! Do I look like Herod? He had a beard. Do I have a beard?"

"Beards come and go."

"Was this other guy looking for Jesus?"

"Not particularly, Jesus', is what he said. 'Kill any baby I can find. Is what he said."

"Well, I'm looking for Jesus. A very particular person. White-ish robe. A bit chubby."

"Donkey?"

"Yea! That's the guy!"

"He lives in the refugee camp behind the church. Sometimes we see him. Seventy-five US dollars."

"Can I talk to him?"

"Depends. You speak Hebrew?"

He works in the Old City. Most often we see him in the line-up at the Gate."