

JERUSALEM SCENES

The Cardo



After the Israelis took over the Old City of Jerusalem in June 1967, they carried out extensive excavations in the Jewish Quarter prior to rebuilding it. One of the most significant discoveries was the Cardo, the main street of Byzantine Jerusalem. After the Roman Emperor Hadrian had suppressed the Second Jewish revolt in A.D. 135, he re-established Jerusalem as a Roman city called Aelia Capitolina, with a new street layout, including the Cardo, the Latin name for the main street of the city (thought to be derived from the Latin for 'heart', compare our word 'cardiac'), running north/south. About 400 years later, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian extended the original Cardo southwards, and it is this part of the Cardo that has been excavated in recent times.

The picture shows the extreme southern end of the excavated Cardo. At this point it was about seventy feet wide, which means that the picture shows but a part of the width of the original street. In fact what we see is the pavement area (reconstructed) rather than the road itself. Originally this was roofed, open to one side, and lined with small shops, within the arched areas shown on the picture. Today one can walk along the partially reconstructed Cardo, partly in the open air, partly under the new buildings of the Jewish Quarter. It is a reminder that Jerusalem was indeed "trodden down of the Gentiles", as our Lord foretold (Lk. 21:24); but the phrase that follows, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled", states that this would not be for ever. The fact that modern Jewish buildings have been constructed over the Cardo indicates that the time has come for Gentile times to end and for our Lord to set up the promised worldwide Kingdom based on Jerusalem.—*Tony Benson*