

A Walk To Gethsemane

Picture Gallery



Drawings by Dorothea Kalinski

A Pictorial Journey

The Last Walk Together

Arise, let us go hence. John 14:31

Drawings by Dorothea Kalinski

On a bright moonlight night in the spring of 33 A.D, Jesus and eleven of his apostles took a somber walk together around the ancient city of Jerusalem. They had just finished a momentous meal together and were heading for a small garden in the Kidron valley east of the city walls. Only Judas of Iscariot was missing from the small body who had become so welded together by their experiences of the past three and a half years.

It was a troubled walk. During the past few months Jesus had made several cryptic remarks about his imminent death. At the meal they had just finished together, he became more specific. They were loathe to accept the fact that he would be so soon taken from them. We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel (Luke 24:21), one of them was to say later in his despondency over their Master's death.

It was a specially somber walk for Jesus. He alone recognized that this would be his last opportunity to prepare the little band for the tasks that lie ahead. He recognized their human frailties and their petty jealousies. How they would need the new commandment he left with them, "as I have loved you, that ye also love one another (John 13:34).

It was a walk down memory lane. The route was a familiar one. A goodly part of their ministry had been in Jerusalem and its environs.

They had trekked these paths many times in the past but never before with the intensity of this last walk together.

It was a symbolic walk. Many of the sites they would pass held a meaning for them far beyond what the natural eye could detect. They had become symbols of the new ministry which they had shared with their Lord and which they would soon embark upon in an expanded sense.



The Needle's Eye Gate

A Symbol of Complete Consecration

While the exact location of the room of the last supper is unknown and is most probably not that which has become a shrine today, it would not have been far from this location just outside the city walls on the Western mount.

As they would depart for Gethsemane, the road would lead past of the gate of the city then known as the Gate of the Essenes. It was here that the routes to the desert areas where the Essenes dwelt would leave the holy city. In this massive gate was a smaller door for controlled access when the larger gates were shut. This smaller entrance was known as "the needle's eye," and contained memories of Jesus' words to the rich young ruler, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a



Traditional room of the Last Supper

rich man to enter into the kingdom of God (Luke 18:25).

The significance of the camel driver needing to totally unload his beast of burden and guide it through the opening on bended knee would not have been lost on them. They, too, must be totally free of earthly encumbrances if they would enter the New Jerusalem. Their Master had set the pattern: the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Luke 9:58).

Jeopardy

If they desired to escape the guards of the city who were on the lookout to arrest Jesus, they would have skirted the southern wall which overlooks the Valley of Hinnom, the garbage dump of the city where fires were constantly burning the refuse from the populace of the urban area.



The Valley of Hinnom

Here was another symbol of their life's journey. The Valley of Hinnom, Gehenna in their language, was a recognized figure of speech for death the second death from which there would be no release. Jesus personally knew the jeopardy in which he walked. Being perfect, absolute perfection was required of him. If he failed, the death of Gehenna awaited him. The same was to become true for his followers. The vows of consecration are not to be taken lightly. As Solomon had written earlier, Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay (Eccl. 5:5).

Opposition

Not only are there fears within, there are foes without. None were so opposed to the ministry of Jesus than the established religious hierarchy of his day the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes. This was not only to be true of the Master but of his followers as well. "If they have called the master of the house Be-

elzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household (Matt. 10:25).

The road that night would have wended sharply away from the Hinnom valley northward through a rich residential area in which the chief opponent of Jesus, the high priest Caiaphas, resided.

Today the traditional spot of Caiaphas' house is enshrined in the Church of St. Peter Gallicantu (the church of the cock-crowing). A simple structure with a reverential interior, it does not capture the opulence of the house of the high priest. Archaeologists envision it more as the picture below.



Courtyard of the House of Caiaphas

Miracles

Just north of the home of Caiaphas, the path takes a sharp turn to the East, down rock-hewn steps on to a lower ridge of the Tyropean Valley. Just across this valley lay the Pool of Siloam, the southern terminus of Hezekiah's tunnel and thus the reservoir of Jerusalem's main water supply, the Gihon springs.

It was to this pool that the Great Physician had directed the blind man whose eyes he had smeared with the ointment of spittle and clay (John 9:1-7). Like the pool of Bethesda further to the north, it was a central place for many of the healing miracles of Jesus.

Now, with his imminent departure from this life, the joys of seeing the blind regain their sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and even the dead raised to life again, would become only a memory of the past. Greater joys awaited him at his Father's throne, yet it is never easy to see the sorrows that must continue to prevail until his kingdom would be established.



The Pool of Siloam

Great comfort must have been his with the knowledge of the verity of the prophetic words he had uttered in that upper room, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father (John 14:12).

A Text for a Sermon

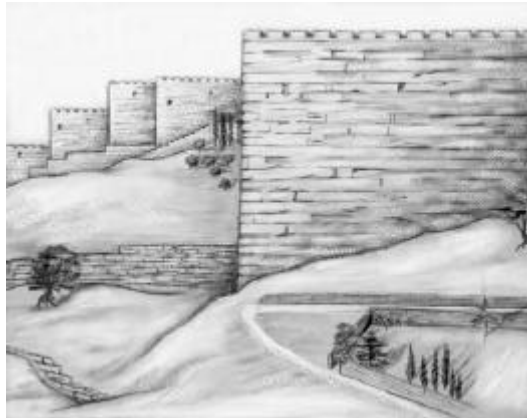
It is probable that the small band, to avoid premature detection, would have avoided passing the well-guarded main gates of the Temple and followed the alternate route alongside the southern wall of the Temple complex. This would bring them past the Huldah gate which led upward in tunnel fashion to the Court of the Gentiles surrounding the Temple.



The Huldah Gate

A remnant of his gate can still be viewed today in the subterranean area under the mosaue of El Aksah known as Solomon's stables. There one can view the brass lintel over these gates with its carving of a vine and branches. Josephus speaks of a larger frieze with similar depiction over the main Temple gate.

Thus, either route the band followed that fateful night would have brought them in contact with art work depicting vine and branches. This becomes the theme of Jesus' last discourse to his followers (John 15). He uses it effectively to illustrate the necessity of his followers abiding in him both in his words and in the spirit he had demonstrated to them.



The Pinnacle of the Temple

Temptations

The onset of Jesus' ministry was marked by a forty day period of meditation in the wilderness during which he was tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1). After having successfully meeting the Adversary's temptation, we read "then the devil leaveth him (v. 11). We are not to get the thought however that Satan left him permanently. He is a master at repetitive temptation. Jesus' life was constantly challenged by temptation thoughts, so much so, that he once replied to the suggestion of Peter to preserve his life, Get thee behind me, Satan (Matt. 16:23).

So it is that on this last night of his earthly ministry, he would be faced with a forceful reminder of these tempting thoughts. The path of Jesus and the apostles on this last walk together would wend around the city walls just under their highest elevation, at what was known as pinnacle of the Temple." What a forcible reminder this would have been of Satan taking him, in his mind's eye, to this very spot and suggesting that he cast himself down so thst the spectuacular deliverance of God would win the attention of the people (Matt. 4:5-7). Still once more, whiule on the cross, he would face that same suggestion, when passers-by would wag their heads and say, If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross (Matt. 27:39, 40).



The Golden Gate

Future Joys

Rounding the wall at the place of the pinnacle, the path traverses the western ridge of the Kidron Valley. This valley was also accessed by the Golden Gate. Both sides of the valley were covered with tombs, intermingled with gardens and groves of trees.

Passing through this vast cemetery, we can imagine what thoughts it may have stirred in the Master's mind. He knew it would not be long before he must die on Calvary's cross, condemned as a criminal. There he would take the place of Father Adam in death. There he would bear the sins of the world. The penalty was harsh. It must be borne. But there were future joys in prospect for faithfully bearing it.



Tombs with Memorial Prayer Stones

These would be the joys of raising all the dead, not only from these graves, but from all graves everywhere. "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth (John 5:28, 29). This would be one of the greater works of which he spoke.

Then he could answer all those prayers of which we are so forcibly reminded by the

stones that the Jews laid on the tombs of their loved ones as they came to the cemetery and prayed over them. As the words of the hymn so beautifully phrase it:

*All those dead to life returning,
We'll rejoice to see once more.*

Down the Last Hill

Just beyond the Eastern or Golden Gate, they would have taken one last turn, down the defile into valley below. There, just across the brook Kidron, was a well-known retreat the Garden of Gethsemane, thought by many to be adjacent to the family home of John Mark.



Olive Trees in the Garden of Gethsemane

There the small group gather round their Lord to hear his beautiful prayer which the apostle whom Jesus loved recalled so beautifully in John 17. Crossing the brook into the garden, Jesus commissions them to watch with him as he does further into the grove for a period of prayer and meditation with his Father, steeling him for the tortuous ordeal ahead.

We leave him there. Soon the beautiful reflective walk of the small band would be interrupted with turmoil and fright for the apostles, and with the rigors of a sham trial and cruel crucifixion for Jesus. It would not be long before he could say, It is finished (John 19:30).

The Walk Goes On

Though we take our leave of Jesus in this meditation during his Gethsemane, we trust that none of us will take our leave of walking in his footsteps as long as we have breath. The road may be narrow, the pathway may be steep, but there is no more rewarding pathway than the narrow way that leadeth unto life. May we each ever follow him every step of the way.

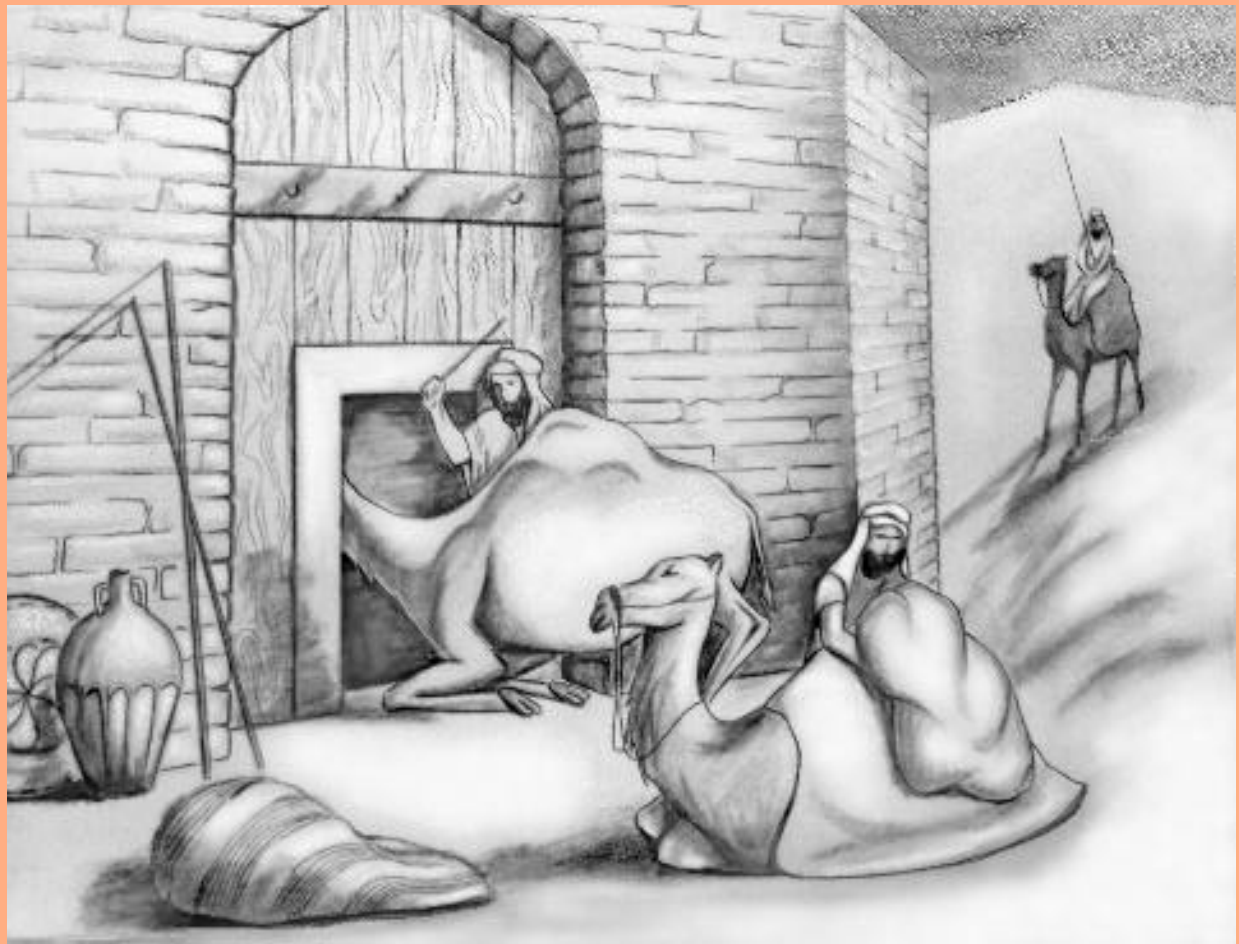
Building Housing Room of Last Supper



Room of the Last Supper



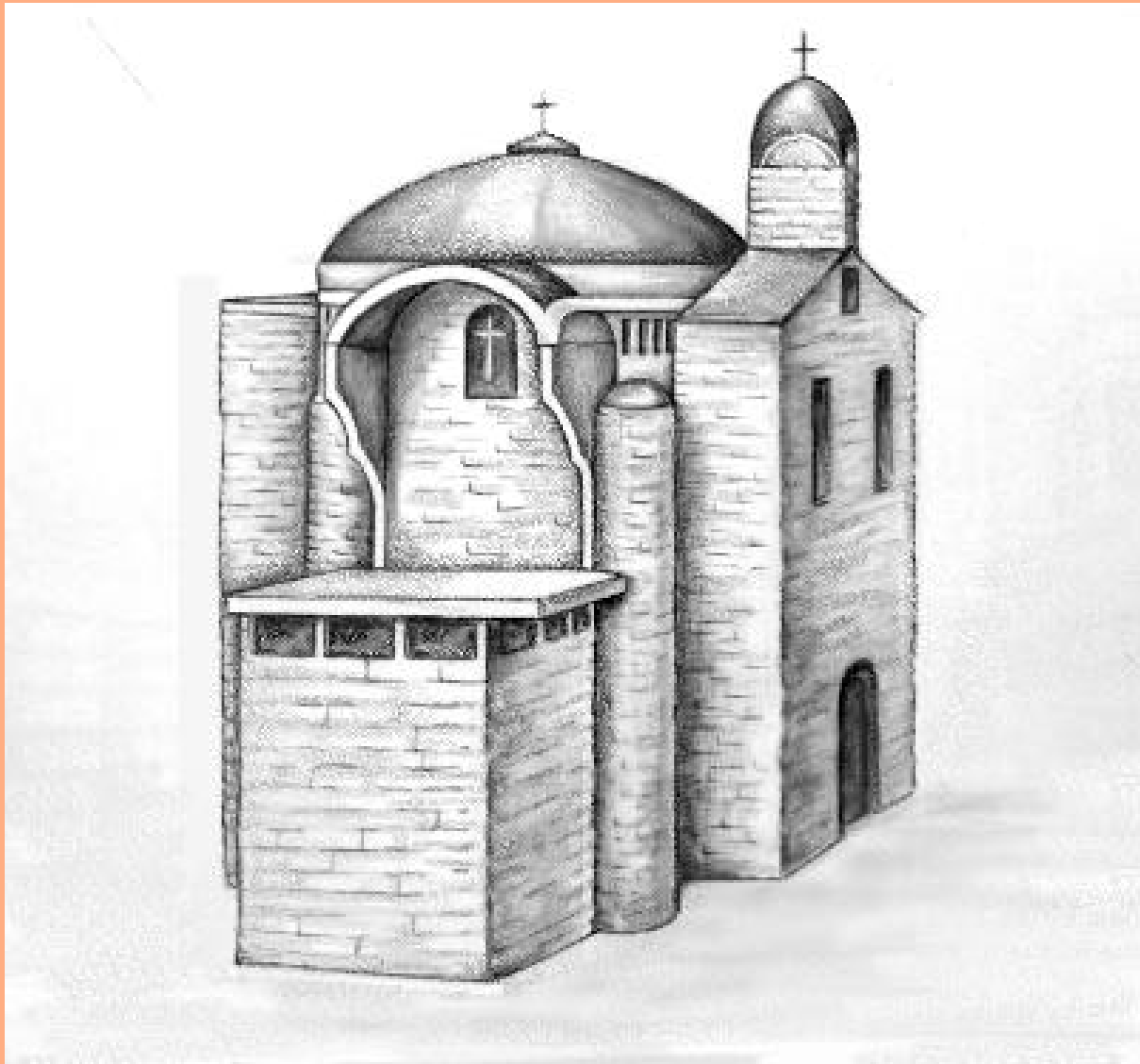
Camel Going Through Needle's Eye Gate



The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna)



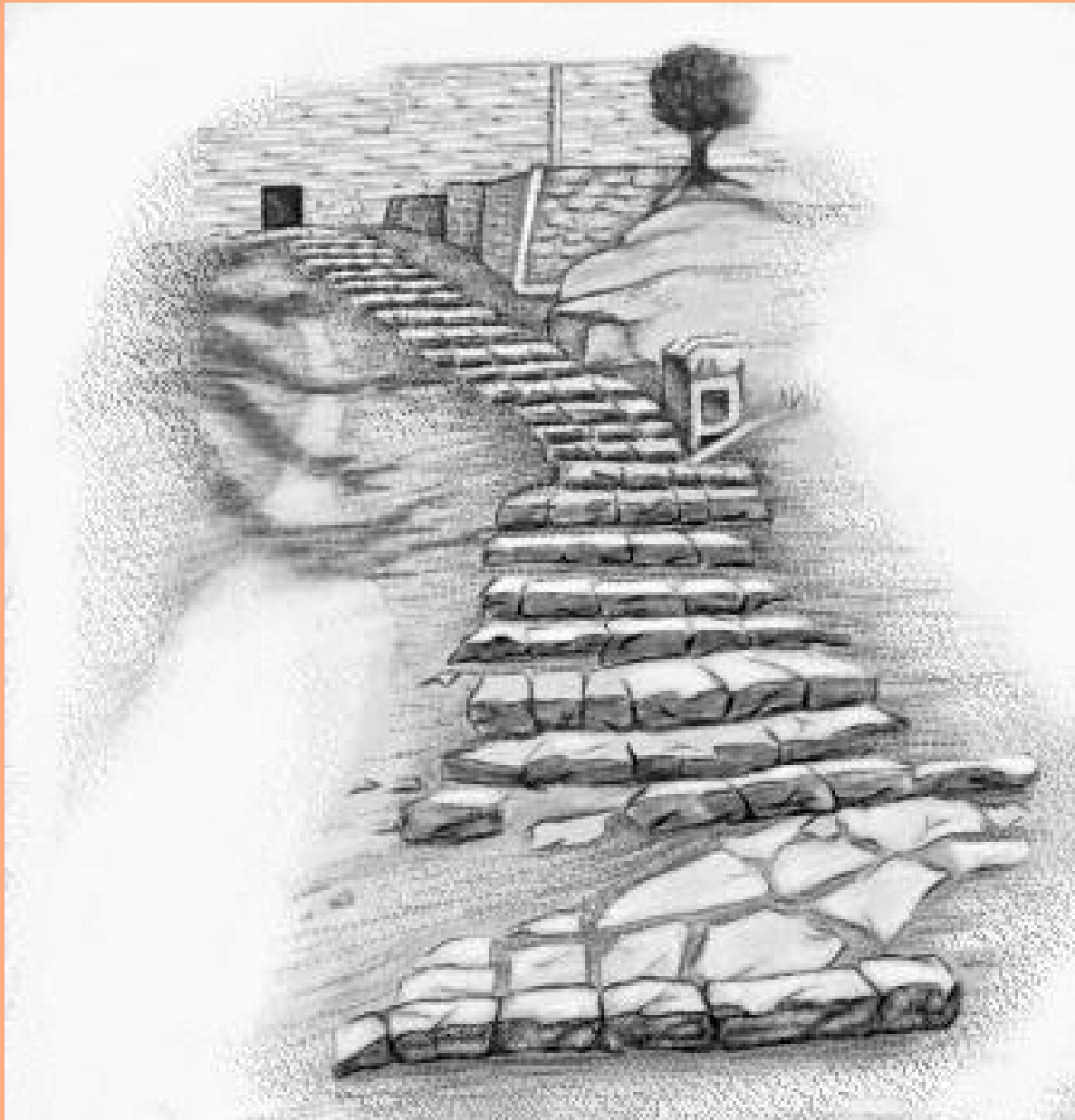
St. Peter Gallicantu
(Church of Cock Crowing)



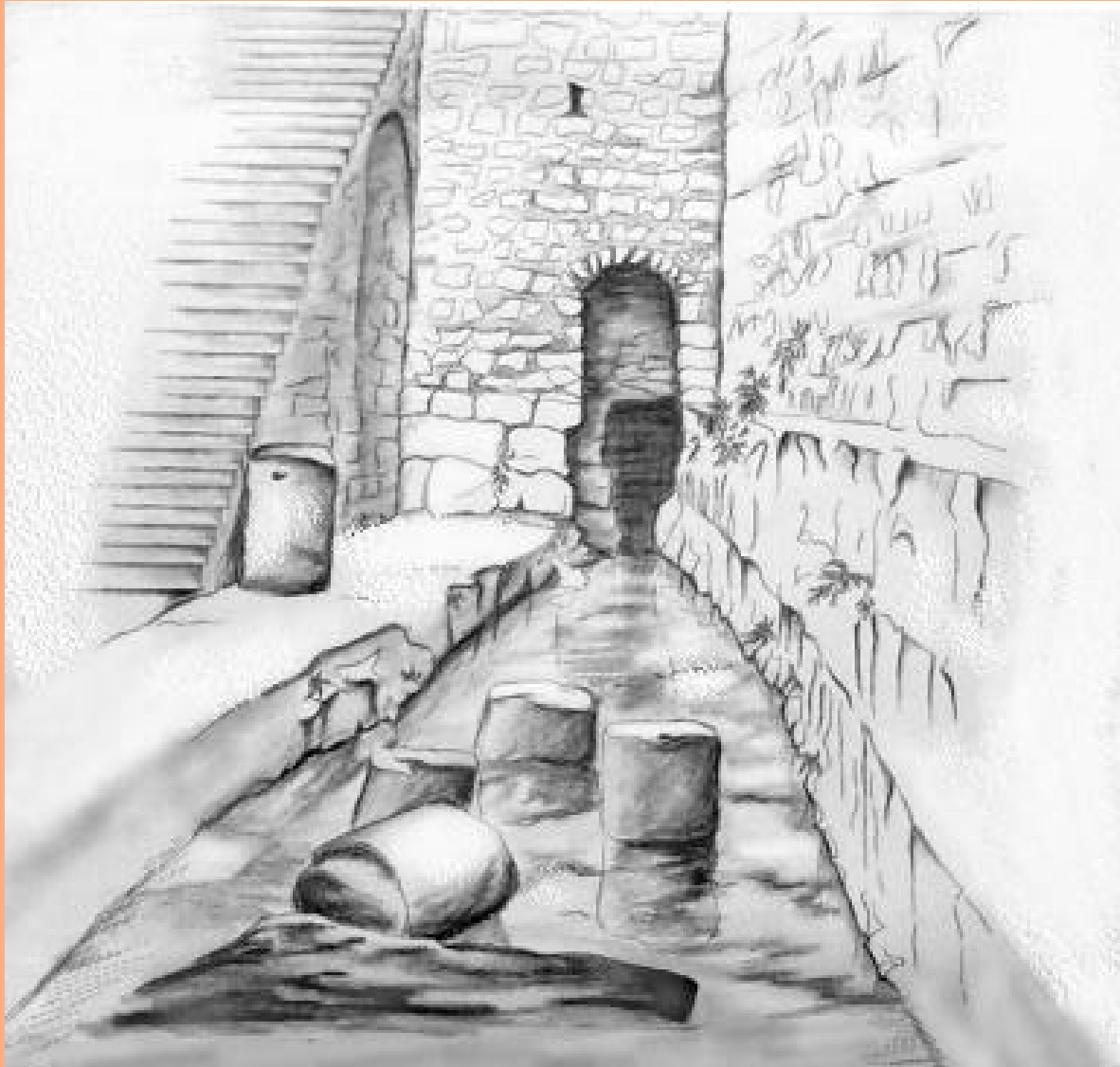
House of Caiaphas



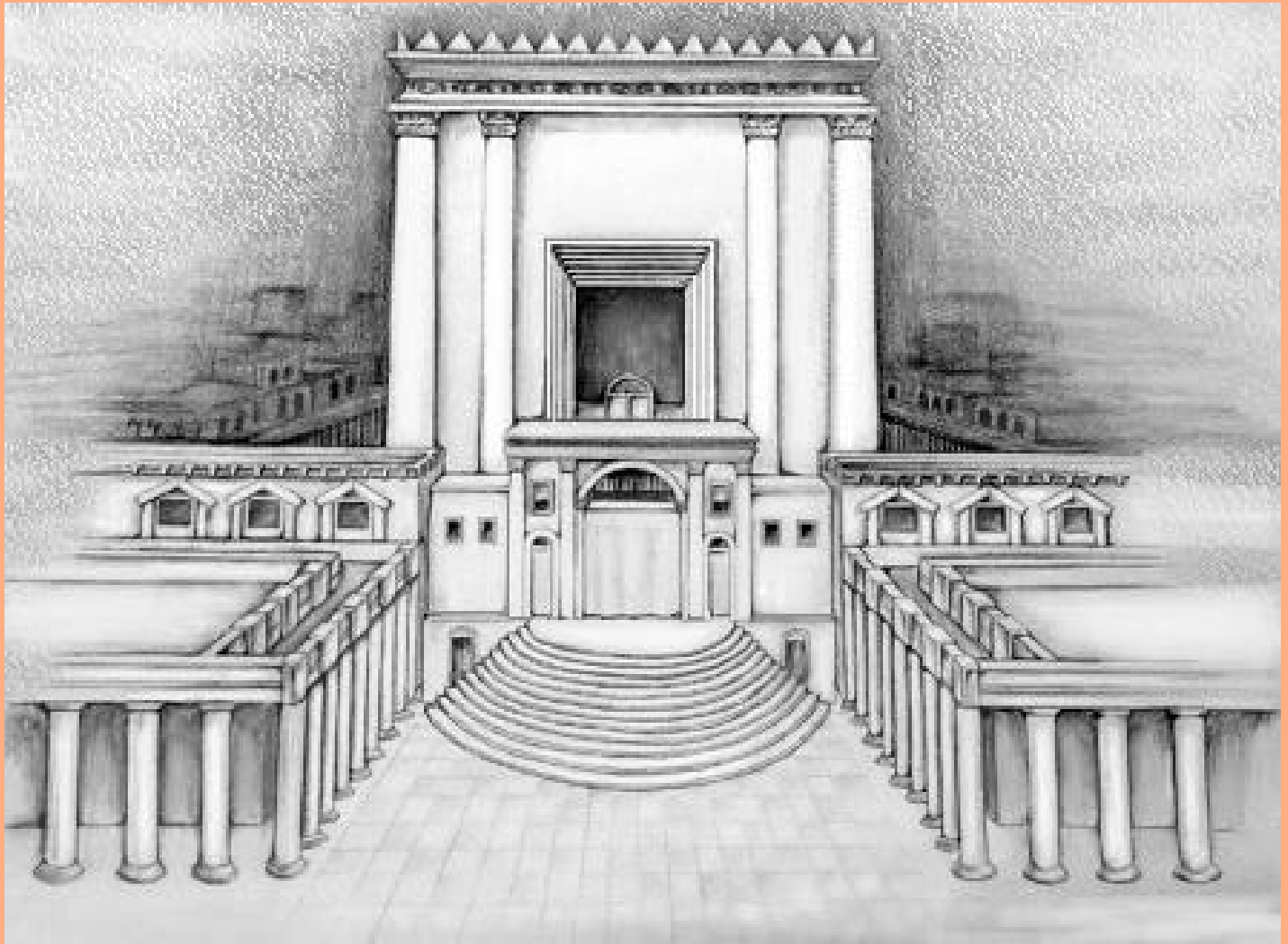
Steps Into Tyropean Valley



Pool of Siloam



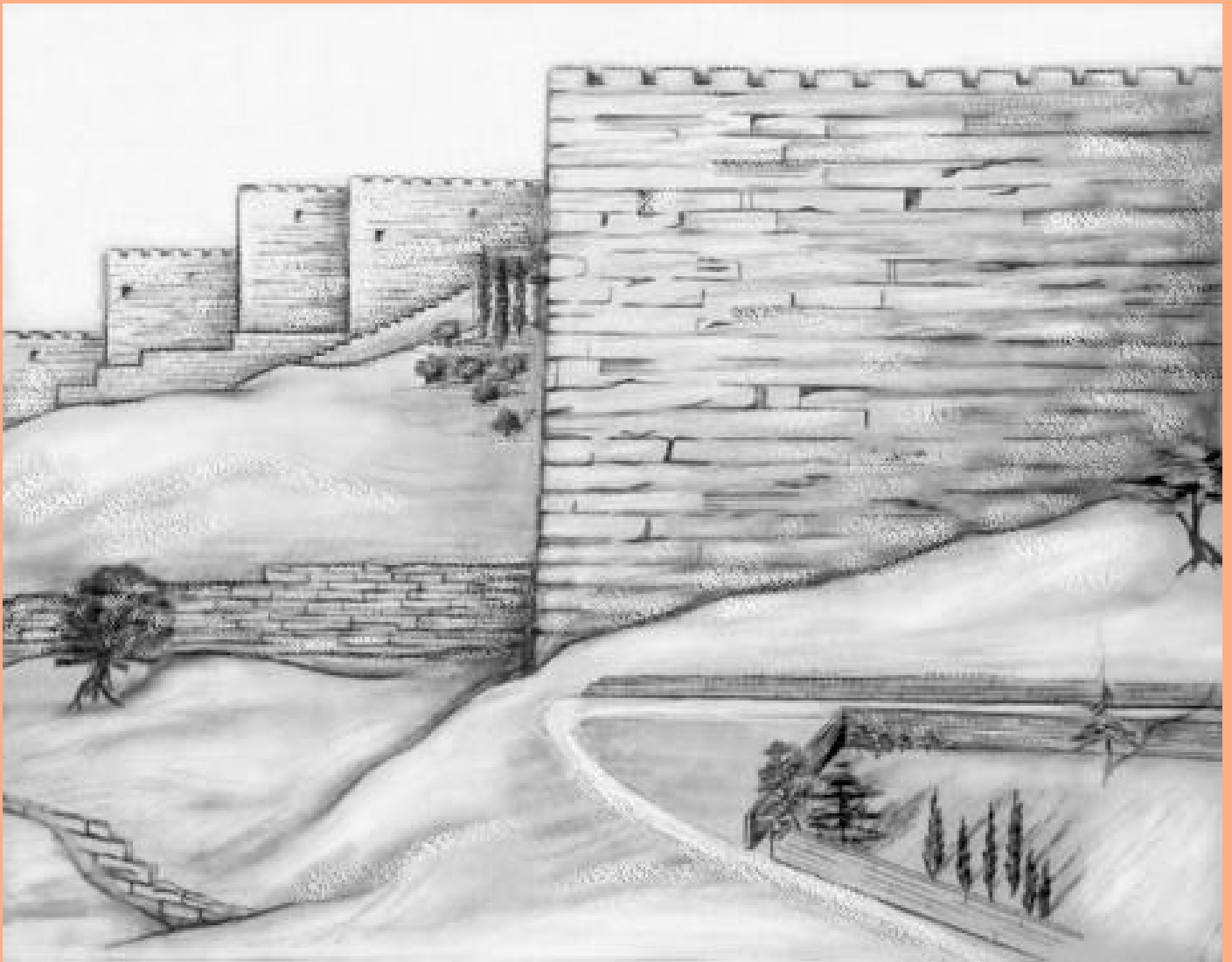
Entrance to Herod's Temple



Vine Carving over Huldah Gate



Pinnacle of the Temple



Golden or Eastern Gate of Jerusalem



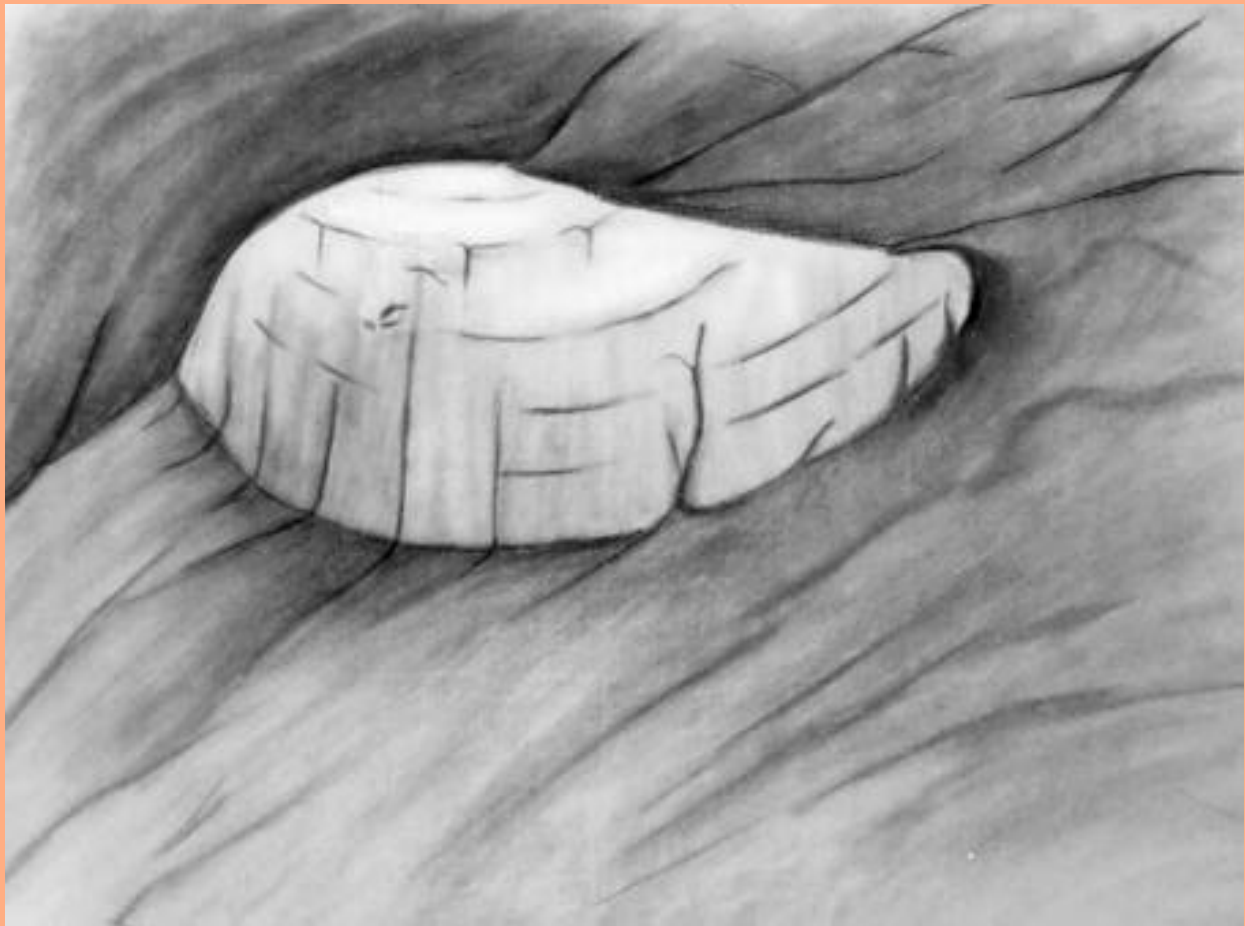
Jewish Graves (with memorial stones)



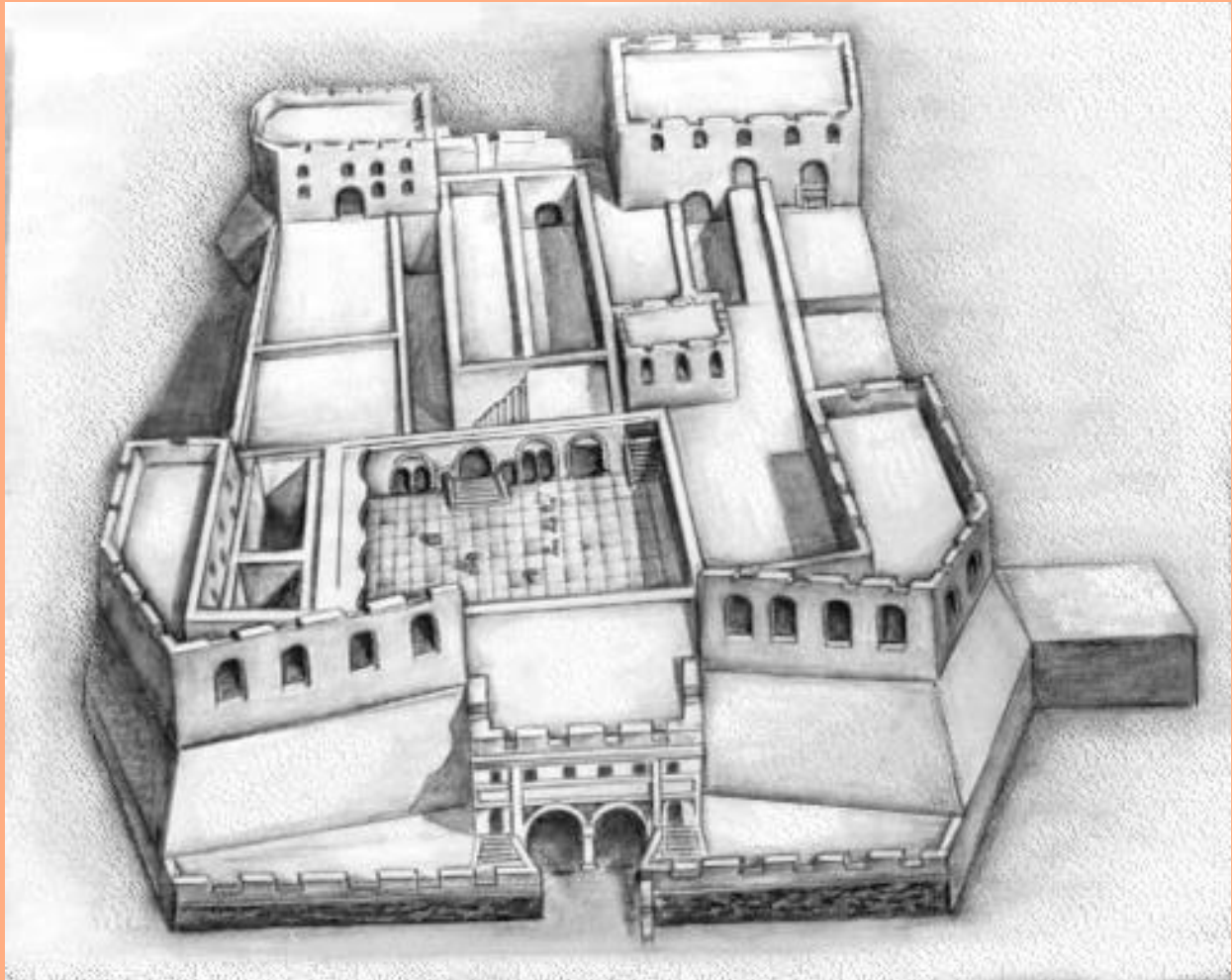
Olive Trees in Garden of Gethsemane



Dungeon (Cistern) in Caiaphas' House



Judgment Hall of the Sanhedrin



The Antonium (Pilate's Judgment Hall)



Gabbatha (The Judgment Pavement)



Lithosotros (The Stone of Torment)



Via Dolorosa (The Way of the Cross)



Golgotha (The Place of the Skull)



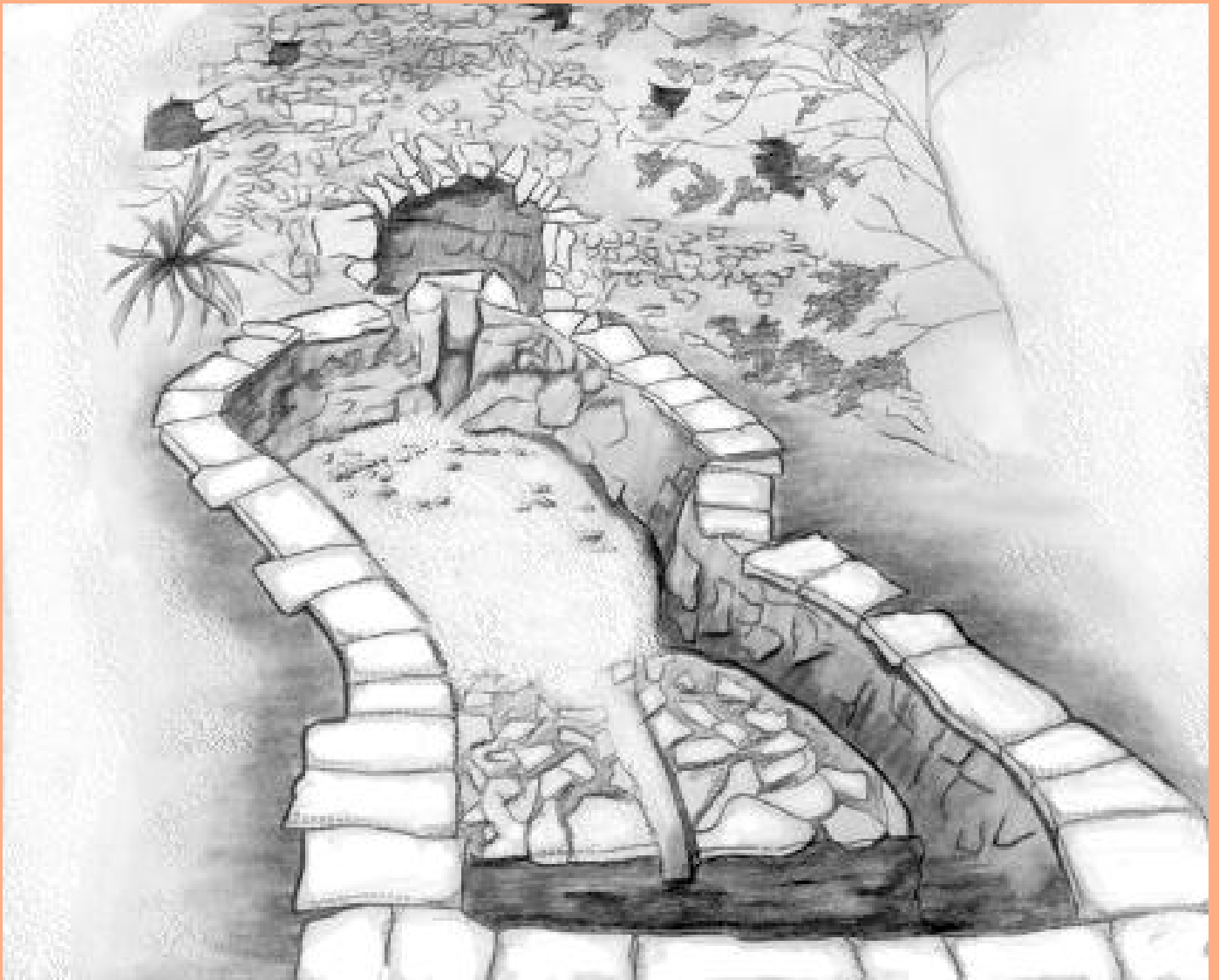
Rock Strata on Hill Facing Golgotha



The Garden Tomb



Winepress by the Garden Tomb



The Crucifixion

Diorama Picture from God Has a Plan (Dawn)

