

Tracing The Footsteps of Jesus Film Trip Update
April 6, - April 29, 2010

Report #1 - Sunday AM April 9, 2010



Resurrection of Lazarus Louvre

Dear Friends and Supporters of The Biblical World:
 Shalom from Jerusalem,

Helen and I have returned to Jerusalem for our final film trip for this wonderful project. We arrived early Thursday morning to prepare for the two remaining episodes that must be filmed. In addition there are many photographs and b-roll to be shot before Frederic and Dolson arrive next Thursday. This week I am hunting for the specific items needed to complete the series.

This is the 8th trip I have made to this part of the world during the past 33 months spending a cumulative 28 weeks here researching and filming. I was so naive when I began this project thinking that we could accomplish everything in just two--four week trips.

Yet we have been able to stay on budget by using frequent flyer tickets, driving a small rental car, and renting an apartment in Jerusalem where Helen prepares our food. I am embarrassed to report that on this trip we brought 6 checked pieces of luggage weighing on average 70 pounds each (no extra charge because of my status with the airline). While two bags were filled with equipment, 3 boxes (210 pounds) were food! Yes, the food is good in Israel, but it is expensive. So we brought soy milk, juice, canned beans, our preferred spaghetti sauce and the list goes on.

Although this series has been much more challenging to film than Paul, we are still coming in at \$15,000 per episode. Much of this is due to the blessing of Frederic Leduc our cameraman and Dolson Falau our audio specialist giving steeply discounted services. We are so grateful for their sacrifice and dedication to this project.

While we have stayed on budget on the production side we have not kept pace with our projected income. So many of you have been faithful and generous supporters and we want to say thank you. As we enter the home stretch I would like to invite you to give once again. You can make a secure donation online by going to our web site at www.biblicalworld.org and clicking on the donate page. Remember, no gift is too small or to large.

Centurions, thank you so much for your faithful support.

And a very special thank-you for those who have underwritten episodes (what a lasting legacy gift). And thanks for each and every gift, both small and large that has been toward this project.

By the way there are still many episodes available that can be underwritten. For more information on sponsoring an episode or becoming a Centurion Supporter see our web site for details.

To date we have filmed 26 episodes and edited 22 of them. In addition I have surveyed the remaining four episodes and determined that we need to re-shoot some footage for 5 of them.

While editing the episode on the destruction of Jerusalem I needed to illustrate the text describing how the rich were throwing their money into the temple treasury and a widow came by



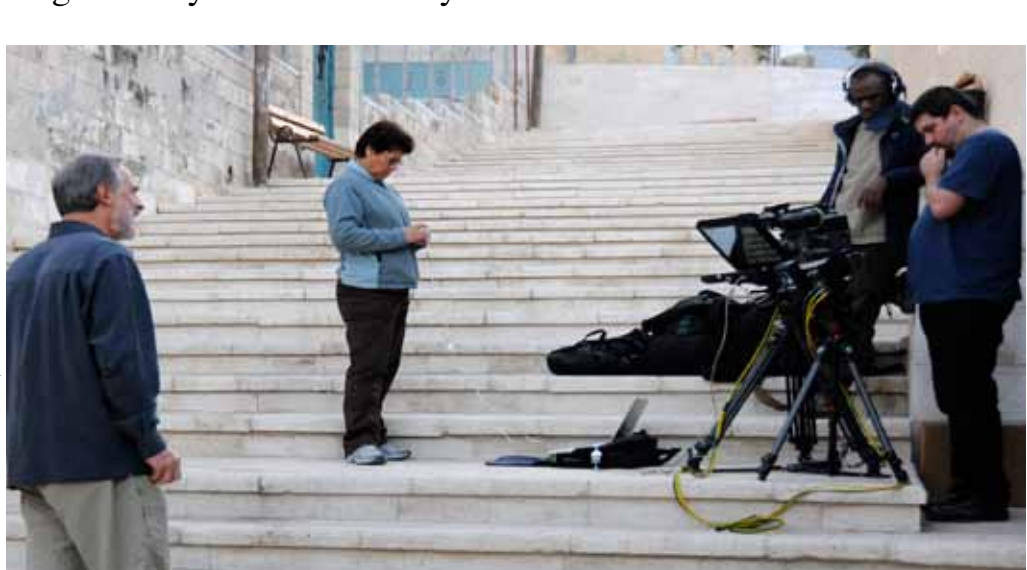
First century coins in episode 20 (courtesy of Khader Baidun)

and cast in two mites (all she had to live on). My small collection of coins includes a: silver temple shekel, a silver denarius, and a widow's mite. But these three coins were not adequate to illustrate the text. Friday afternoon I went to see my friend Khader Baidun, one of the most famous antiquities dealers in the Old City. He has worked with a long line of Archaeologists and Museum Curators.

He opened his safe and brought out a hoard of silver denarii, 3 golden denarii, a cache of temple shekels and a handful of widow's mites for good measure. He allowed me to photograph the coins which has already been incorporated into episode 20! I also got footage of the type of sword that Peter swung at Malchus in the garden.

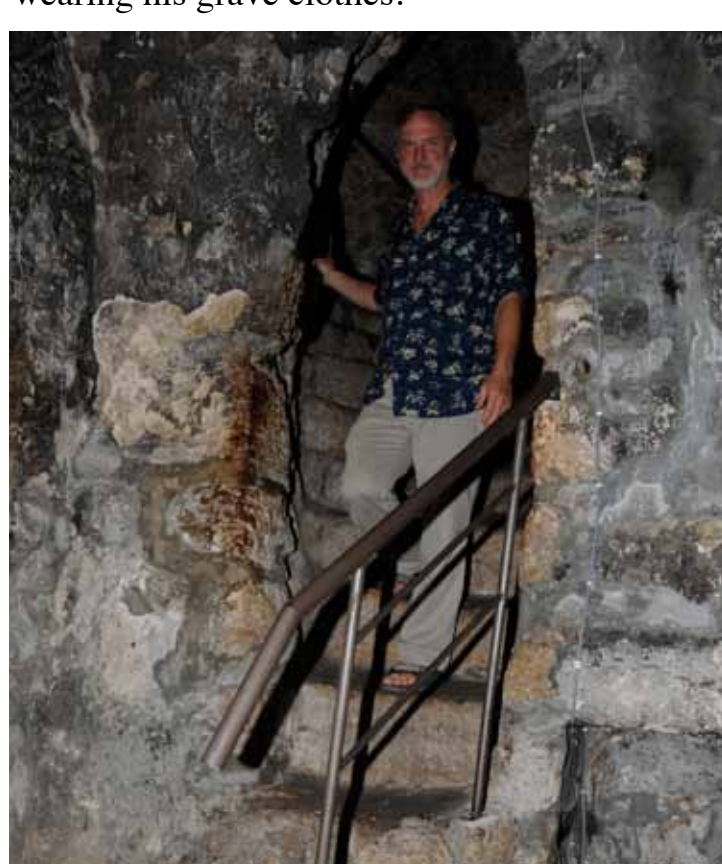
Last fall we were blessed by our Lord to be able to shoot the footage for the Passion of our Lord in Jerusalem and I sent out updates describing the providences of God in this regard. These episodes have now been edited and I can truly say "Praise the Lord." They are powerful, riveting and deeply spiritual. By God's grace they will touch many hearts and lives around the world.

We also shot a powerful episode on the death and resurrection of Lazarus in Bethany and I wanted to share some of this material with you. Today Bethany lies just outside of the 21 foot high wall that has been built to separate Israel from the West Bank. What used to be a five minute walk from the top of the Mount of Olives has turned into a difficult 45 minute drive.

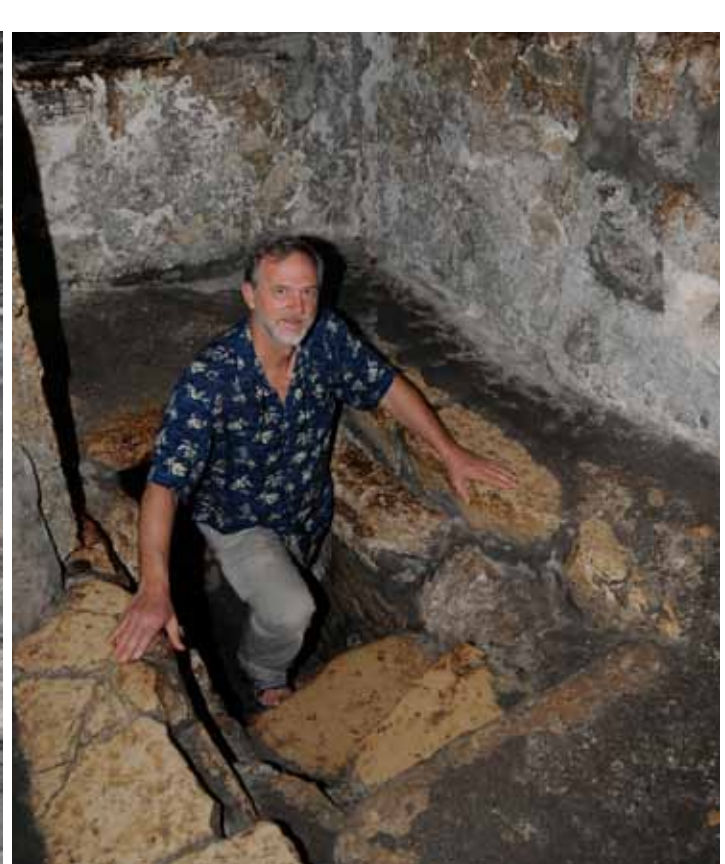


Film shoot near Lazarus Tomb in Bethany

The modern village of Bethany is known as Azariah, the Arabic pronunciation of Lazarus, it's most famous citizen. The Tomb of Lazarus has been honored here since Byzantine times when a church was built above it. After the Muslim conquest the church was converted into a Mosque. In the 16th century the Franciscans cut a new entrance into the tomb from the modern road. Today it is a real challenge to access the tomb, because of the steep steps and twists and turns. Ultimately you arrive at the antechamber, and realize that on the other side of the wall is the tomb where the dead man was sleeping. When Jesus called his name, Lazarus came back to life wearing his grave clothes.



Walking Down to Tomb Lazarus



Coming out of Tomb to Antechamber

This is a thrilling episode exploring Jesus teachings on Lazarus death being a sleep until his resurrection in the dead! This was Jesus most important miracle and it united the Sadducees and Pharisees in their opposition against Jesus. John notes: **So from that day on they plotted to take his life. Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples (John 11:54).**

I decided we should conclude this episode from Ephraim, which is the modern village of Taybe in the West Bank. Jesus was aware that the political tide had turned against Him and the authorities had put out a warrant for His death, so He retreated to this village on the edge of the desert.

Jesus used this time between the resurrection of Lazarus and the Passover to prepare Himself and His followers for the coming storm that would soon be upon them. Faith developed deeply among the people of Ephraim who had been honored by Jesus presence during this brief season. They became believers and they have continued to believe for nearly 2,000 years!

Today Taybe (Ephraim) is the only 100% Christian village in the land. It is surrounded by 16 Muslim villages and 3 Jewish settlements, yet it has remained 100% Christian since the early centuries. We conclude this episode by asking the question: Do you have an Ephraim in your life? Is there a place where you can retreat to be prepared for the storms ahead? It might be a retreat in the forest, or the mountains or the shore. Or it might just be your prayer closet where you live. We all need to discover our Ephraim where we can individually retreat for communion with our Lord so that we too will be prepared for the storms of life.

Please keep us in your prayers as we attempt to wrap up the filming of this series. In addition to the 28 "teaching" episodes we are preparing a more general three hour special that we hope to release for one of the more secular channels. We have wonderful, rich footage from the large series that can be used in this special. Please pray that God will give us health, strength, wisdom and courage as we walk through the doors that He is opening.

Shalom from Jerusalem, P.S. Episode 19, Dead Man Walking is still available for sponsorship!

