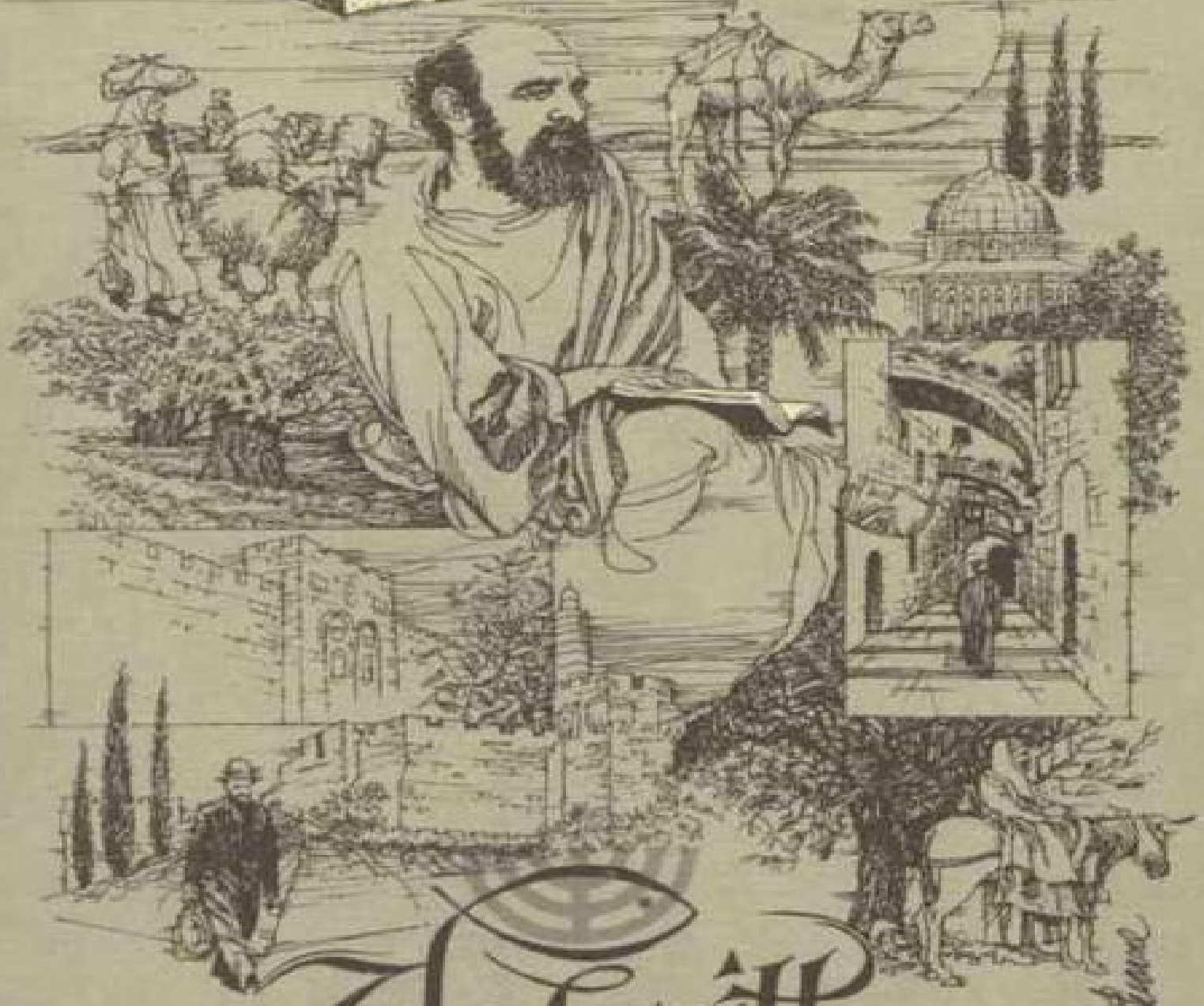
THE PROMISED LAND



Zola Levitt

ROM. 10:1

THE PROMISED LAND

by Zola Levitt

"And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (Gen. 13:14-17)



The crew of ZOLA LEVITT LIVE and loyal mascot pose before Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. (L. to R.) Major Lytton, Bonnie Lytton, George Handley, Joe Sutton, Zola, Ken Berg and Dottie Kingston.



Separating the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:32)

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

We began our location shooting in Jerusalem at what must be the world's oldest operating marketplace. It was terribly early on a Friday morning but we had to accommodate the schedule of the Arab sheep and goats traders. After all, they've been doing it their way for 5,000 years.

I would never be guilty of saying that I don't like Arab marketplaces, in so many words, but they wouldn't be my first choice when it comes to sunrise ceremonies. All the same, we made our 5:00 AM wake-up call and we were shortly setting up our equipment at the north wall of the Temple site with the market already well in progress. We had a certain amount of police protection, but we kept a wary eye on our gear just the same. The market was the usual pandemonium of shouting and screaming as the bargainers feigned mortal insult at each new offer and only reluctantly surrendered what they considered the

area's finest livestock at supposedly sacrificial prices. I was to stand in the midst of this carnival and soberly intone the magnificent lesson of our Lord on the separation of the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:3146).

Ken Berg, our plucky producer, was maintaining his bright and cheerful on-location demeanor, which in itself is enough to make the rest of the crew want to go back to the hotel for a few more hours of sleep. George, our 300-pound, no-nonsense camera man, wore his ten-gallon hat at a rakish and challenging angle. And Major, on sound, virtually chained his expensive machines to each other and to himself as he moved about the location. We had over $100,000 worth of equipment insured by flimsy policies with scary reservations about "confiscation by foreign governments". Dottie Kingston, the associate producer and "talent controller", kept up her brisk and lively chatter, aimed at making me feel like I really wanted to do this thing.

Two very tough looking Israeli policemen, toting the sort of weaponry that talks loud and clear, kept a steady watch on all the proceedings.

When the basic shots were lined up and the sound tested, I waded off into the melee of sundry Arabs and Bedouins, sheep, goats, dogs, cats and beverage salesmen. The animals had the right-of-way, it was clear from the start.

All of this was to make a point. The Lord had been here Himself and so had His audiences. Everyone in Jerusalem had surely seen the sheep and goats market all of their lives. How compelling it must have been for the youthful Teacher of Galilee to announce to the incredulous gathered multitudes that He and He alone would **"separate the sheep from the goats."** He would be their judge; He would establish their value for eternity. He would evaluate them, accepting them or rejecting them.

In that chaotic atmosphere then, I undertook to explain one of the most profound and deeply misunderstood messages of the entire Gospel.

The misunderstanding comes in just who is judged and what the results of the judgement are. Very often the judgment of the sheep and goats is confused with the Great White Throne judgement of Rev. 20, when the Father will judge all men at the end of the Kingdom. The sheep and goats judgment of Matt. 25:31-46 concerns only the Gentiles alive during the Tribulation Period. The judge is the Son, not the Father, and the time of the judgment is the Second Coming, not the end of the Millenium. The first two verses of the passage clarify all this:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: (Matt. 25: 31-32).

We might paraphrase the verses this way:

"When Jesus returns in the Second Coming, He will divide the people of the Gentile nations as to whether they're believers or unbelievers."

I stress that the people to be judged are Gentiles because in the Second Coming **"All Israel will be saved"** (Rom. 11:26; Zech. 12:10, 13:1). The surviving Israelites will see the Messiah come and will **"look upon Him whom they've pierced"** and be saved, so they are exempted from further judgment. Also, the very standard by which those to be judged are evaluated is their treatment of the Jewish People (see Matt. 25:40 and Rev. 7:4).

Thirdly, Israel is not spoken of in Scripture as one of the "nations". In modern politics we are used to thinking of Israel as just another nation, but Biblically, it is the Promised Land and not one of the nations. The scriptural word for nations is *goyim*, which is the same as the word for Gentiles.

By Gentiles we do not mean Christians, of course, but merely the unbelievers of the world. Christians will be returning with the Lord in the Second Coming, and, having previously been saved, are also exempted from judgment. The prophet Joel refers to this same trial in the clearest terms:

Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about (Joel 3:12).

Joel, one of the earliest prophets, foresaw the dispersion of the Hebrew people and the cruelty with which the unbelieving nations would treat them:

I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink (Joel 3:2-3).

In this latter day judgment, however, the treatment of those whom the Lord calls "my brethren" is in question, and these would be the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4. They will carry the testimony of Christ during the seven years of Tribulation and it is they who will need food and drink, nurturing and charity (see Matt. 25: 34-40). The unbelievers of all nations will have their chances as the Jewish witness for Christ travels through the terrified world of the Antichrist. Many Gentiles will listen to the witness and there will be believers in Christ in every nation; we sometimes don't think of the Tribulation Period as a time of salvation but it really is. If no one were saved during this period, then it wouldn't be necessary to have a judgment at all. Evidently those Gentiles of the nations who extend the charitable hand of brotherhood to the witnesses who come, will reap the Kingdom as their reward. And that, of course, draws another distinction between this judgment and the Great White Throne. In question at that final Judgment is eternity. At the Great White Throne the ultimate destination of every soul as to

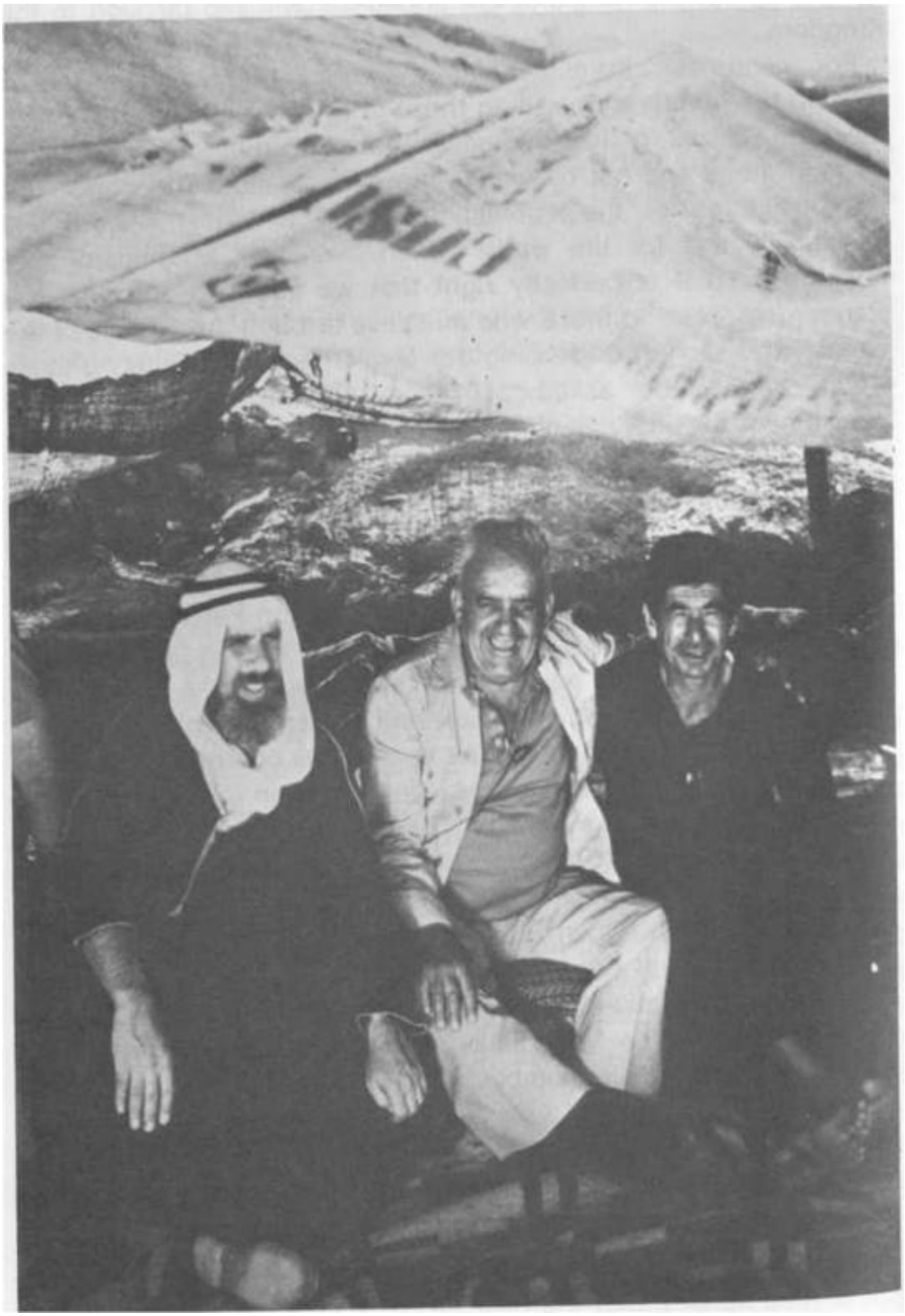
heaven or hell is finally decided. The sheep and goats judgment is more of an immigration procedure into the Kingdom. Naturally those who are the sheep—those who are found to be believers at the sheep and goats judgment—will be exempted from the Great White Throne judgment later on.

It is remarkable then, that God would take time out for the souls of a seven year period. In view of the thousands of years that have passed and the billions of souls who have lived and died, this is a small fraction indeed for the Almighty to be concerned with. But God is meticulous and perfectly fair. Not a single believer will be denied his reward. Not a single unbeliever will slip through to the Kingdom.

For centuries churchmen have quoted the passages about feeding the hungry and visiting those in prison, and so forth, which the Lord utilizes in this judgment. Salvation during any period is by faith alone and not by works, however splendid the works. But the distinction of the Tribulation Period is that the Lord will specifically ask for the works which invariably accompany that faith. And so it is perfectly right that we adopt in any age, the standards applied to those who must live through the horrors of the Great Tribulation in evidencing our own Christianity. Surely if these works are to be asked of those who might suffer capital punishment for undertaking them, then how much more would they be expected of those of us who exist in relative peace, when the works are quite easy to do. In fact, it is a convicting thing to realize that we are exempted from a trial in which our testimony might not actually pass the inspection of the Judge. If every believer of every age were questioned as those of the Tribulation Period will be, the Lord's flocks might actually be embarrassed. And in fact, believers of the present age *will* be questioned as to our works (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15). But salvation is relatively easy right now; it will come at a terrible price when the enemy has charge of this world.

And so God has left out no believer, not even in the final hours. If a soul would see the light on the day the King comes, he will indeed receive the Kingdom, though his rewards will almost certainly be fewer. Nevertheless, this is a good reason to keep up the witness, even when it looks like we're failing. Once an unbeliever is told of the faith in Christ, the Rapture of the Church, the coming Tribulation, and all of those details of the Day of the Lord, then even if he won't listen at the time, he may live to see it all. In that case, he'll remember. If you have witnessed to a Jewish person who has rebuffed you, you may have unwittingly selected one of the 144,000! If a Gentile has laughed off your testimony, you may have nevertheless better prepared him to become a sheep rather than a goat in the presence of the Judge.

And that is the difference between eternal life and eternal death.



Arabian Knights - Zola meets some long lost cousins.

THE SHEIK OF JERUSALEM

An Arab contact of ours, by the name of Ali, had arranged the sheep and goats market along with the necessary security payoffs and whatnot. We asked him if he could do a little more. We wanted to make a program in an authentic Bedouin tent. I wanted to interview one of those "shadows of the desert" who travel the sands in flowing robes and are rarely seen by anyone except in "Lawrence of Arabia".

Ali said he had a friend. For a price, Ali could make relations with anybody in Israel and when we had forked over, he actually did come up with an arrangement. It was to be the same afternoon as the visit to the sheep and goats market and we were all a little tired. Just the same, we showed up at our equipment van after lunch, dusted off and ready for more Arab custom and practice.

The Bedouins move from spot to spot, living in crude canvas tents and reporting to nobody. They love their freedom. They are said to wander from the eastern reaches of Iran and Afghanistan all the way over to the Atlantic coast by Morocco and Algeria. What they seem to like is desert and they apparently like it because no one else does. They don't vote, carry insurance or pay taxes. They don't care who's running the country and often they don't care what country it is at all. They don't have telephones or mailboxes. They don't belong to Triple A. I don't know if they have more than one robe each and I don't know if they even know that.

On the other hand, they're rather remarkable people if you can get anywhere near them. Their women are decorated head to toe with gorgeous colors, jingling jewelry and odd perfumes. They are said to be honest and they dispense justice fearfully quickly and in good measure. (I was told by our Israeli expert on the crew that I would be treated with perfect hospitality in the Bedouin tent but that I shouldn't bring up touchy Arab/Israeli questions. My host would smile and answer to the best of his ability but then after I left, when I reached a certain distance from, his tent, he would come after me and kill me).

They might disappear overnight, leaving no trace of where they have been. Their trade is normally husbandry and they somehow keep flocks of animals sustained in the deserts. They know the land and they respect it. They keep their heads covered under the merciless sun and they wear peculiar dark-colored floor-length robes which I found surprisingly cool and comfortable when I donned one for the program.

We arrived at their camp, or I should say at the nearest spot on the road from which one made the desert journey to their camp, in the early afternoon. It was

hot, and that's all there was to that. It was not a day for hill climbing or shooting a lot of different takes, but on the other hand, it was a difficult program to make. We kept the water handy and settled down to a real afternoon's work.

There was a screaming argument in Arabic, which we knew to be obligatory, as soon as we arrived at the camp. It seemed that one of the sons of the patriarch who had invited us was objecting strenuously to anyone in the camp appearing on film. He shouted and threw his arms in the air and jumped up and down until I almost began to believe him. It looked like a nervous disorder and that the poor man was having convulsions, but we cured him easily with an application of cash. Suddenly it was okay to film, as long as we didn't get his wife or children on camera. We decided to keep the interview to Ali, our host, and myself. I learned to say thank you in Arabic (" *Shokron")* and got into my robe and headdress.

I had nothing in the world to teach at such a setting. I didn't know how I would connect the Bible to a Bedouin tent, but when I saw the robes I realized that we were looking at the semblance of our father, Abraham. After all, he lived the same way. He migrated from Ur all the way to Canaan, maybe 1,000 miles. He evidently wore similar desert robes and he too knew how to take care of flocks in the thankless hills of Judea and the arid territory around Hebron. If he were alive today he would make a competent Bedouin. I decided to start the show on that note, walking along in my Abrahamic robes and pointing out (quietly) into my lapel microphone that this, in reality, was my land, by virtue of my ancestor Abraham.

My host was truly courteous, once the bargaining session was finished, and invited me to have a place of honor on a jutting stone that served as his living room floor. The place was simply awful in terms of modern or even prehistoric life, but it was what the old man preferred. As the interview progressed, I was amazed to learn that he owned four stone houses on the surrounding hills but still preferred his rustic tent for lazing away the afternoons and tending his flocks. Truly he was an entrepreneur, a real sheik of Jerusalem, and I would have liked to talk with him through a better interpreter.

Ali, trying to be as helpful as possible, hogged the show and upstaged both me and my guest. Being the only one of the three who spoke both Arabic and English, he rephrased my questions suspiciously for my host and often answered for him instead of letting him speak. All things considered, I was really interviewing our guide rather than the talent. Occasionally Ali let the sheik get a word in edgewise and by the time we edited the tape we made it look something like an intelligent interview.

Ali, by answering for our sheik, was trying to build a character for American

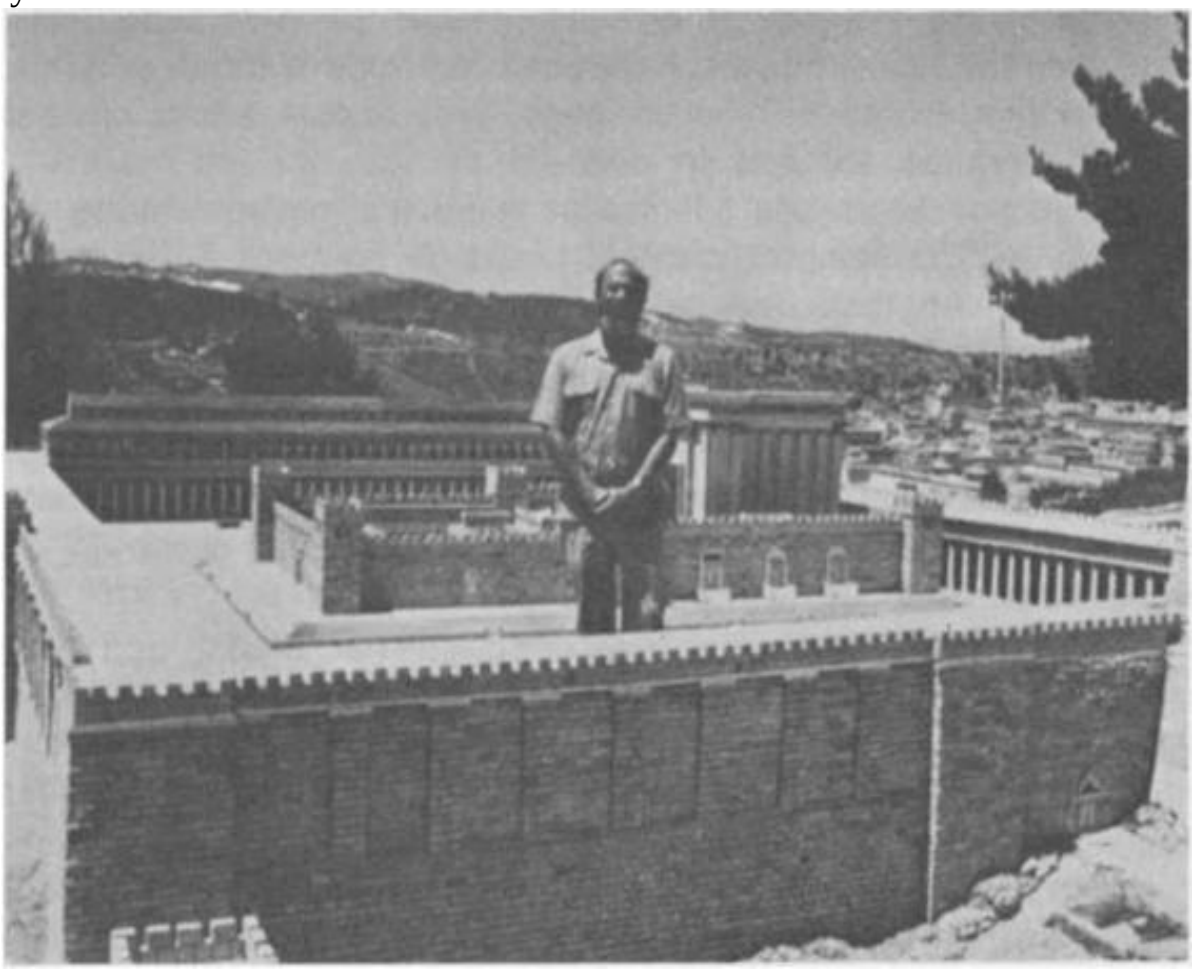
television that would be palatable. I asked about religion and Ali answered in English (without referring the question to our guest) "Oh, he prays five times daily. He's a devout Moslem." About his many children and grandchildren, the word was that the patriarch kept a firm and legalistic eye on these young sinners; the daughters of the family never went on dates but were sparingly loaned to other tent families for social visits, during which they might be noticed by an appropriate young man. I gathered that there wasn't much courtship in the desert and that our host followed the Arab tradition of keeping explosives and women out of sight. The lady of the "house" made us some tea (I think it was tea) and actually exchanged a smile or two with me, but she generally kept well away from the proceedings.

We realized as we went along that we were interviewing a very domesticated Bedouin and not one of the true desert wanderers. With his property, his flocks and his large family, it seemed that our host had mellowed into more of a conformist lifestyle, keeping only the trappings of the nomad. He may be roughly equal to those early American pioneers who, once they had staked out fences and found markets for their animals, turned into sedentary taxpayers. Our sheik still wore his robes in the manner that the well-established Texas rancher still wears his ten gallon hat and his boots.

Of course, the biggest point that we wanted to make with this program was that a pro-Israeli Jew and a Palestinian Arab can talk together in perfect peace, drink a beverage and even have a few laughs. Once he warmed to the occasion, our host even played an Arabic flute for me and generally hammed it up for the cameras. I found the visit altogether congenial and certainly wouldn't mind meeting the man again. He represents the vast majority of Palestinian people who live in Israel and are quite satisfied with their lot. He would never support a PLO uprising or the overthrow of the government of Israel, which guarantees his present freedoms and comforts, and he has what actually only a few Arabs in the world have—property, security, peace and contentment.

There was one moment that sticks with me from this particular shooting. As we packed up our gear to leave, several curious children watched and another son of our host turned up to look at our equipment. We were a group of seven who had been visiting a group of about the same number in this lonely wilderness location and a certain amount of human communication had evolved. Ali thanked our hosts in Arabic and Ken thanked the son with whom he'd had the theatrical disagreement at the beginning. The rest of the crew waved goodbye to the children and as we departed over the hillside I turned around one last time and saw the sheik watching me depart. I just smiled and waved my hand and he did the same.

I'm not aware of just why the rest of the Arab/Israeli confrontations go so badly.



Model City of Jerusalem.

O JERUSALEM!

The shows shot at the Model City of Jerusalem were early-bird specials again. We had barely recovered from our trip to the desert the previous afternoon and we had another 5:00 AM wake-up call.

Of course, when you get up at five in Israel, the sun is already shining brightly and lots of people are out and around. The work day for many begins at that early hour and continues until lunch, when the whole country takes a siesta. Then people report back to work in most businesses from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. Stores follow the same routine and tourists who want to go shopping are often confused by just when they can find someone on duty to sell them something.

Our problem was that the Model opened to tourists at 8:00 AM or so and we had to have relative peace to get in some of the tricky shots. The thing is worth a trip to Israel by itself; architects have created an exact 1/50 scale model of the entire city of Jerusalem as it looked in the time of King Herod (or in the time of

Jesus). The Temple Sanctuary stands some three feet high, giving it its due as something like a twenty story building. And the walls and streets, and even the tiniest houses, have been recreated faithfully to scale. The whole Jerusalem in all its glory is there to see in a circular layout, perhaps 100 feet in diameter.

About nine years ago I filmed at this same location during the making of "The Temple", a movie based on my book *Satan in the Sanctuary.* At that time we tried to dramatize the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by showing the buildings of the Model and recording the terrifying sounds of an invasion in progress. This time we were there to just talk about the place and give it credit as an architectural masterwork. There aren't many locations that lend themselves to visual effects of history, but this Model of the world's most important city is surely the best of them.

I frankly felt afraid to walk through the Model and start identifying buildings, since my, knowledge of first-century Jerusalem is limited. My primary interest in the city has always been confined to the Temple site and the places our Lord visited and traveled.

But God made a way as always. We discovered a particularly brilliant Israeli guide, Abraham Fradkin, who was willing to walk through the site with me and explain on television the relevance of each building. That would be the first show and I would do the Temple site, in which I felt comfortable, on the second show. The Model seemed altogether worth two shows if not more than that. We started at the northeastern end of the city, where Abraham was able to identify the palaces and streets and promenades of this very Roman looking nineteen-century old construction. The edifices look particularly convincing on television because they're not made of plastic or some such material; they are constructed of tiny stones, each cut out of the same quarries that Jerusalem itself is made of. It's merely a very small Jerusalem, but in building materials the same as the real one.

Abraham, with his deep rolling voice and craggy Old Testament countenance, walked us past the Pool of Bethesda and the Antonia Fortress, to begin with, and then, on the southern side of the Temple, the Pool of Siloam and the City of Zion. It was clear, from looking at the Model, where the rich folks had lived and where the poor folks had lived. As one moved south from the Temple, the houses got very small and the streets very narrow, until finally several dwellings would occupy a lot of the size of one house on the north side. Times haven't changed much the world around.

Abraham's show concluded with a very good understanding of at least the east side—the most important side—of first-century Jerusalem, with the exception of the Temple, which he left for me on the second show.

The shows speak for themselves in this instance and it would take a book the size of the Bible to recount the tragedies and frustrations, the glory and the grandeur that is and was the City of God. **"O Jerusalem,"** lamented the Messiah, when He perceived the unbelief and the unwillingness of the populace to merely accept free salvation. It's not a good reason for all the Jew-hating that has resulted, however. Paul could as well have said, "O Rome," or, "O Corinth." And we might talk today of New York or Los Angeles in the same terms. The people who failed to receive the Messiah when He came to Jerusalem acted the way they did because they did not understand Biblical prophecy. The people who refuse Him today in every city of the world act as they do for the very same reason. If the prophecies of the Old Testament are compared with the life of Jesus Christ, it is simply inescapable that He is the Promised One, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. His miracles might be discounted by skeptics, His teachings misquoted by cynics and His sacrifice classified as merely the routine assassination of a revolutionary. But the prophecies cannot be subverted or explained away. They existed before His time (the Dead Sea Scrolls prove) and they delineate His earthly career in high detail.

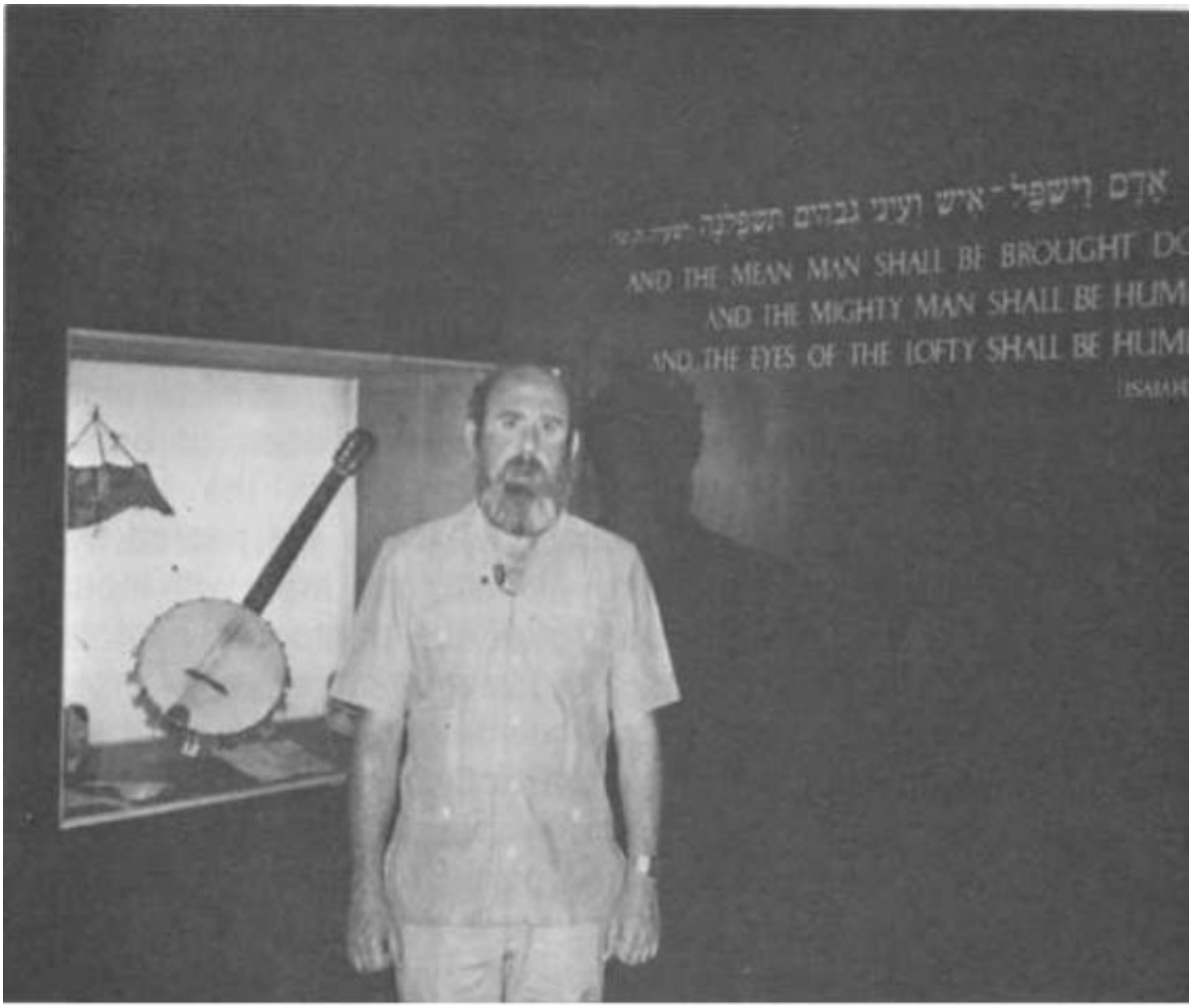
Our first program illustrated two of the more stunning miracles Jesus accomplished in Jerusalem at the pools of Siloam and Bethesda. A blind man and a lame man, both well known to the populace, were healed by the Teacher of Galilee in front of multitudes. Between the Temple site and the Pool of Siloam was a Roman hippodrome, a huge race track. The effort to Hellenize the population of the Roman province of Israel had gone on for some time, and would continue for another century but with no success. The Jewish people were scandalized by the almost naked wrestlers, the statuary and the brutal contact sports of the Romans and their Greek forebears, and in truth, they wanted nothing to do with them. Perhaps the hippodrome, in its proximity to the Holy Sanctuary, was one of the very serious affronts to first century Judaism. In any case, not a trace of it remains today and only archeologists could have found and reconstructed this remarkably out-of-place public sports arena of some 2,000 years ago.

As we started to film the second program, visitors began to arrive to see the Model. Naturally they would ruin the pictures when we tried to show the buildings to scale. In other words, they would walk behind a three foot building and show that it was actually only a scale model (or else they would look like giants suddenly coming onto the screen). We had to do some very ticklish work with our "wild shots", the filler footage used to cut away during references to specific constructions as the talk goes on. For the main part of that second program I myself stood inside the Temple enclosure, virtually touching the

Sanctuary, which was about up to my waist. From this vantage point I could talk, as almost no man ever had, about one of the most important buildings in history. Having a dimensional object was much better than a picture, of course, and the show presents a striking reality. The Temple was big—it was huge. The walls measured some 1,000 feet by 1,500 feet in length and enclosed some 34 acres of stone construction on five levels. When people speak of the Temple today, they think of a church building. Rather they should think of something more like a state university campus or the Federal Government buildings. Those who say that the new Jerusalem Great Synagogue, a modest downtown structure on a single lot in New Jerusalem, is actually the Tribulation Temple need to see what the Temple was really like. In all its glory the mighty Sanctuary dominated the skyline of Jerusalem and it would dominate the skyline of any city today. It was the largest Temple ever built by men, bar none. The Greeks and Romans are celebrated for their temple architecture, as are the ancient Egyptians and perhaps the Chinese. But none of them ever imagined a structure of the magnitude of the Temple of God in Jerusalem. It stands alone in history to the present day as the largest house of worship man ever undertook to build.

It is sad that there is nothing left of it but a dollhouse sort of model, but in another way that model is significant. It shows that the people who built it remember. It shows that they very well intend to build it again, and the appearance of a new Temple of God in Jerusalem will herald the end of the world as we know it. It's safe to say that that 34-acre site is the world's most important real estate, now as then.

People interested in prophecy often ask if the Church will see the rebuilding of the Temple or if that is an event to take place after the Rapture. The only scriptural answer is that we know the Temple must be standing at the mid-point of the Tribulation Period when the Antichrist will enter it and desecrate it (II Thess. 2:3-4). When it will be built is another question. With modern construction techniques it could conceivably be built after the Rapture and functioning fully at that $3^1/2$-year point in the Tribulation. It's a question that can't be answered because of the basic principle that the Rapture depends on nothing. It's a free-floating surprise and God has kept all signs of it to Himself. If the rebuilding of the Temple were definitely specified to precede it, then we would have a sign of the Rapture. You can be sure, however, that if the Dome of the Rock, which now stands on the site of the ancient Temple, is somehow moved, it's time to get right with God!



Some of the artifacts made by the Nazis out of parchment scrolls of the Holy Scriptures are on display at the Yad Vashem, the museum of the Holocaust.

"STOP TRYING TO KILL ME!"

The program we made at the Yad Vashem turned out to be the blockbuster of the series. I was completely overcome at the end of it.

The Yad Vashem is a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust and it amounts to a grisly museum and library of the indisputable facts of a true attempt at genocide. Those anti-Semites who recently have been saying that the Holocaust never happened should be taken to, or dragged through, those heart-breaking displays of the methodical butchery of the cream of Europe. Six million Jewish people, from infants to the aged and infirm, were exterminated as though they were an infestation of insects. There's little I could add, I felt, to all that's been said and written about this ultimate degradation of the human spirit, but I wanted to show the Yad Vashem all the same.

The dark halls were difficult to light, and again we had to be up and working before the tourists came. It was a tough morning in more ways than one.

We began with displays of how the Nazis had treated the Jewish Torah—the

scrolls on which the Holy Scripture had been patiently hand-copied. There are disgusting artifacts on display such as lampshades made of Torah scrolls, and even inner soles so that the scoffers might have the comfort of walking on the Word of God as they went about their murderous work. We progressed to pictures of the burning of synagogues and the humiliation of orthodox Jewish patriarchs by grinning Nazi soldiers in the streets of Warsaw, Vienna and the other occupied areas. We passed by the displays of the famous trenches filled to the brim with corpses, emaciated and nameless, and we saw the photographs of ovens and even the bills of sale from the manufacturers who provided them. We saw all the authentic concentration camp gear, the piles of gold yanked from the teeth of the victims, the pitiful remnants of clothing stolen from the corpses. We passed through a long dark tunnel which represented the sewer pipes in which the defenders of the Warsaw ghetto made their last stand against the German army regulars. Each of these exhibitions has a story in itself, of course, but our intention was not to repeat the horror still again, as though none of it had been said before. Rather I wished to show the spirit of Israel toward this blackest moment in all of their tragic history. The caretakers had lovingly planted trees outside the buildings to commemorate those Gentiles who had helped the Jews to escape in various countries of Europe, and they had labeled the museum displays with simple and factual data, absent of malice or bitterness. The fact is, they seemed to be saying, "Human beings can become maniacs and in this particular case we happened to be on the receiving end. Let's keep these things and bear in mind that it must never happen again."

It was the final shot in the Hall of Names that finally got to me. As many times as I had passed through the museum, I had never stopped to consider the pathetic quality of this tomb-like room full of records. The Jewish people are attempting to gather the names of 6,000,000 of their perished brethren and the task is, of course, insurmountable. Nevertheless, they have accumulated 3.8 million names, each one carefully documented in writing, many with photographs attached. Boxes and boxes sit on shelf after shelf, each one filled with those tragic pieces of paper, giving the only surviving record of a living human being.

I had nothing scripted out for the Hall of Names and very sparse notes on teleprompter sheets. I merely started at the far end from the camera and slowly walked the length of the room, talking in a calm and controlled way about how many of my relatives were remembered in those boxes. We had pre-selected a certain box which had in it the record of a particular young girl gassed at Auschwitz in 1944. When I came to that box I put it on a stand and opened it so that the camera could read over my shoulder. I gave her name and her parents'

names and the fact that she was born in 1938. I looked at a photograph of a pretty little six year-old girl with curly brown hair and then stated that I too was born in 1938. It struck some kind of personal note in me as I turned for a full face shot.

And all at once I said, "Stop trying to kill me!"

The off-hand fact that the little girl who was gassed was born in the same year that I was, and would now have been my age, somehow made it all slam home in a very personal way. But for a few matters of chance and the grace of God, I might have gone to the burial trench and the little girl to America. And so I looked dead into the lens of the camera and to all who might even vaguely contemplate another Holocaust some day, I warned them to stop trying to kill me. My mind went all the way back to Pharoah trying to kill my people in Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar trying to kill them in Jerusalem, Titus again trying to kill them in Jerusalem after the Messiah had come and gone, Hadrian, the Moslems, the Crusaders, the Inquisitors, the Turks, the British, the modern Arabs and now, finally, the PLO.

It suddenly became a very personal matter that the madmen of the world continuously sought to kill my people. I had slipped through their grasp so far, but behind me were the names of millions who hadn't and standing on that honored spot, I decided to talk back.

I said, "Stop trying to kill me, not because I'm armed and ready, but because it's wrong."

What started out as an almost belligerent and indignant speech of protest soon began to dig at my heart and for the first time on television, my voice wavered and tears came to my eyes. Preachers and evangelists, especially the TV variety, are always reporting about tears coming to their eyes. But I've made nearly a hundred programs without a single tear and I don't even know what they mean. I don't weep when I pray nor when I confess. But I wept then and there over what is to me the ultimate injustice of history, that the Jewish people, who have persecuted no one and asked only for peace for 4,000 years, had nearly to be wiped out to the last man. It seemed so very wrong that I simply couldn't cope with it. At a point somewhere just before I would have broken down, I caught sight of my time cue and finished out with, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." As the lights finally went off I just walked back down the Hall of Names until I collapsed on the floor about fifty feet from the camera. That part wasn't filmed.

"The Yad Vashem Speech" was not written out beforehand or read from a teleprompter machine. As a matter of fact, it was completely extemporaneous and from the heart. I had just been through the horror of Yad Vashem and I was feeling every word as I spoke. But in a greater way the text of that speech which

follows shows just how effective the Holy Spirit can be. The Gospel says that when we stand up to testify, the Spirit will give us the words to say, and indeed if I had worked six months I don't suppose I could have written out a more compelling appeal for mercy. We run our shows one time through since we haven't got the money to cut and edit and perfect the programs as the bigger ministries do. And yet I can offer the thoughts below as a kind of message from the Lord, because I obviously had little to do with the content.

For those of you who requested it then, and for all the rest of you, here is "The Yad Vashem Speech" just as I gave at the Yad Vashem:

I'm in the Hall of Names right now. There are big volumes here containing sheets of paper—3.8 million sheets of paper—each one the record of a human being. For 30 years they've been collected in an effort to humanize those who perished in this Holocaust. In each box we find a little bit of evidence—where somebody was born, where they were killed, who their parents were. It's an almost hopeless task, maybe a little more than half done. If six million were killed, we're not quite there yet. But they have relatives, friends. You see, they died in such a dehumanized way. Their families were taken away from them. Their possessions were taken away, their jewelry, their clothing. They went into those ovens naked. Even their gold teeth were pulled out for use by the Reich. The hair was taken from women to stuff mattresses. And finally their names were taken away and they were given numbers on their arms—permanent tattoos as if those numbers would have to be used for a long time. Once in awhile you do meet somebody these days with his number. Most of those numbers weren't used very long.

This effort to individualize these human beings is a holy effort. Here are documents signed by relatives who looked for a grandfather, a mother. Some of my family is in here. It would be hard for me to find them because my name is so common. Halevi, the Levite. You say Levitt because it sounds very American, but my name is Zelig Halevi— Zola, the Levite. Hundreds of thousands of my relatives are in here. My father came from the old country. He came before the Holocaust. Thank God for that. He came from Latvia. A lot ofpeople were lost in Latvia, among them my father's father. He was a shoemaker and that's what I know about him. He was a shoemaker named Mr. Halevi.

I can't find my people but can find someone else's people here. Let's look into one of these boxes. I'm afraid a lot of people share a box here, a little like the way they died.

Here's somebody, a little girl. Her name—Elitzke. Her father's name was Abraham, her mother's name was Flora. She died in Auchwitz in 1944. She was born in 1938. So was I.

It brings up the whole subject of anti-Semitism. I don't know if you know it, you who are faithful viewers of the TV program, but I get an awful lot of anti-Semitism. One day I opened an envelope and the paper inside had just three words, "You stink, Jude ". Not "Jew, " but "Jude"—J-U-D-E, the German spelling with the umlaut over the U, the two dots, so I'd get it clearly that I'm hearing from a Nazi. And we've got some Nazis in America. Oh, they're pantywaists compared to the originals. Nothing much to be afraid of. But how disgusting to think that they're among us.

Well, I want to tell you something while I'm here. Don't try to kill me again. Don't try to kill me again! Not because now I'm armed and ready, but because it's wrong. Pharaoh killed me—he took my people in slavery. Nebuchadnezzar killed me—he threw down my Temple of God and took away my people of Judah in captivity. Antiochus killed me—he put a Greek statue in my Temple and he sacrificed a pig on my altar. Titus killed me—he threw down my second Temple. He burned my Holy City. He dispersed my people throughout the world. The Moslems killed me—they put their shrine on my land, on my Temple site. The Crusaders killed me—they came carrying crosses to teach me peace. They pushed my people into wooden synagogues and burned them to the ground. The inquisitors killed me—slowly, with the rack and the torch. The Turks killed me—they came here to Israel. They plowed seawater into the Valley of Sharon. They desecrated my land. The British killed me—they wouldn't let me come back, after this! When I survived this Holocaust and came here in ships, they sank in the harbors before they would let me back into my land. And now the PLO wants to kill me.

Well let me ask you something. What have we done? Do you remember us attacking anyone? Do you remember us persecuting anyone? We have a longer history than any of you—not "longer" but ten times as long, twenty times as long! We have a pretty good record, except they keep coming to kill us.

Don't do this anymore. Remember what they did to us. We came here personally to show it to you so you would remember. For God's sake, let my people go.

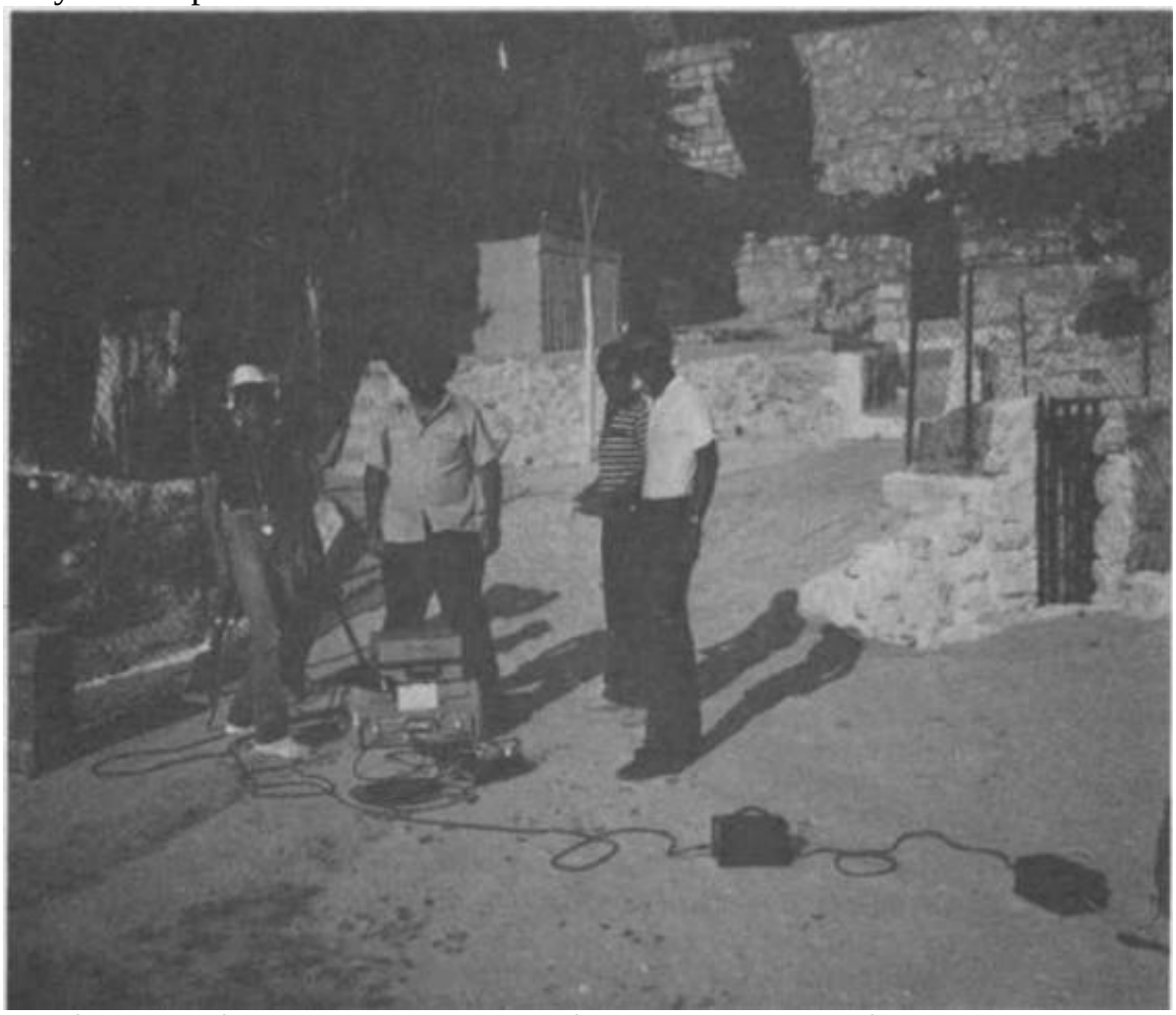
And Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim, pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

What can I say? Naturally I'm biased and naturally I favor the Jews, but surely common sense, if not the Scriptures themselves, compel us to love and to honor the people of Jesus Christ, not to persecute them and murder them. I don't think the Holocaust will happen again unless it happens under the Antichrist during the Tribulation Period. But at least for now, anti-Semitism of any kind reminds me of it. It's a little bit of the Holocaust when the Jew is not welcome in your church. It's a little bit of the Holocaust when he can't play golf at your club.

And simply omitting the witness to the Jews is a more effective way to kill them out than Hitler ever dreamed of. If you liked the Holocaust, you'll love seeing the millions and millions of Jewish people who have lived throughout the ages, be relegated to the second death because they had not the vaguest chance at salvation.

The Holocaust program was the only one of its kind in all of our location and studio shows. I had not planned it that way, but evidently the Lord had a message to get across and I was honored to be utilized in this particular setting.

Pray for the peace of Judaism.



Some of the members of the TV crew take a sunshine break before descending into the tombs of Zechariah, Haggai and Malachi.

ZECHARIAH'S TOMB

The days began to get mixed up, with our early risings and alternations between sites to catch wild shots not available during our actual filming time at a given place. But an afternoon I'll always remember was my communion with the remains of the prophets, Zechariah, Haggai and Malachi. They are buried

together, or so the tradition says, in a cold stone room under the surface of the Mount of Olives within sight of the Eastern Gate.

Abraham was with us again and I felt glad he was. For one thing, he knew his archeology and could speak for the authenticity of at least the age of those dark tombs. And he would provide someone to play off of, in my anxiety to keep the flow in such strange surroundings. I would be underground in a pitch-dark enclosure with no light but a sun gun. This remarkable hand-held source of "sunlight" uses up a huge battery pack every fifteen minutes and more or less toasts the talent as it lights the scene. We had used it previously during "The Holy Places" series when we ran overtime at the Sea of Galilee and were obliged to film in approaching twilight.

Abraham and I began cheerfully at the opening of the tomb which was hewn in the side of the mountain. Stone stairs led to the sepulchres below. We chatted about tombs in general and the authenticity of those I was going to examine. It seems that many and sundry people are buried on the Mt. of Olives, all the way from the summit, where the Lord mounted the donkey on the day of His grand procession, to the East Gate, His destination. The ones closer to the summit and along the mountain are Jews, ancient and modern, who wished to be buried along the route of the coming Messiah's entrance into Jerusalem. On this point Judaism and Christianity agree perfectly; the Messiah will come to the East Gate some day and commence His reign in the Kingdom to come. Where they differ, of course, is in just who that personality may be. While the Christians hold that the event is actually the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the Jewish people suppose that it will be the first coming of a yet unidentified Messiah, not having the shortcomings of the Galilean, in their view. This new Messiah will get the job done, say the Jewish believers, in His coming —making Israel the head of the nations, putting down her enemies and truly ruling the world. Jesus, they felt, aspired to those things but simply didn't accomplish them.

The point in common is the resurrection. The Jewish people who have taken the trouble to be buried on the Mount of Olives ever since Old Testament days, surely expect to be brought forth from their graves at the Messiah's coming. And Jewish people are *still* being buried there in anticipation of this one-of-a-kind event. Christian people don't tend to be buried along the path of their re-entering Messiah since their view of the resurrection is universal; they will be raised just as effectively if they are buried in Los Angeles or Tokyo as Jerusalem, they believe.

Then toward the East Gate, Moslem grave sites are found. These are divided between devout Moslems who wished to be buried within the very shadow of the Dome of the Rock, which of course is standing on the ancient site of the Temple

of God, to those who mischievously want to block the entrance of the Jewish King. As it was in the days of Moses, and again in the days of Herod, the unbeliever is hedging his bet; just in case the prophecies about the coming Jewish Deliverer are accurate, they want to interfere with them. Moses' pharaoh killed the Jewish male infants to try to prevent the birth of their deliverer. King Herod also stooped to infanticide for the same purpose. The Moslem view is that grave sites along His pathway will discourage Him from entering the city since Jewish priests are not allowed to encounter dead bodies or trod among tombs. The whole mountainside and the opposite Kidron Valley present a huge cemetery of differing and opposing views held by people of various doctrines, having only in common their faith in an afterlife and their interest in the King of the Jews.

Zechariah, Haggai and Malachi, as we would expect, are buried high on the summit amongst the Jewish graves and evidently were interred there for the purpose of being among the first to meet God's servant, of whom they spoke so clearly and reverently.

In our opening dialogue, Abraham allowed that the authenticity of the tomb might be reliable. There are tombs of well known Biblical personalities throughout Israel and after all, everybody's got to be buried somewhere. Naturally it begs the question as to whether human recollection is adequate to certify these particular graves we were examining. Might some past wishful thinker simply labeled an unknown tomb with the names of his favorite prophets and thereby sanctified a piece of ground in sight of the magnificent Eastern Wall? Or perhaps a past Minister of Tourism decided that one more attraction for Bible-reading people would be good for the Holy Land in general. Or finally, perhaps, a bygone Arab family who lived on the Mount might have turned their plot of land into a concession for which they could collect a fee by elevating it to some sort of holy place. As a matter of fact, it was an Arab family, very kind and generous to us, who gave us permission to film at the site. They served us cold drinks and accepted our gratuities very gracefully.

After I finished talking with Abraham at the entrance to the tomb, I descended the stairs alone, explaining that members of my tribe—Levites, or priests—simply did not enter tombs under the old law. On the other hand, I said, I felt very respectful of and familiar with these particular prophets, whose lessons I often refer to in my own teaching. And after all, I was under grace, free to go where I may in the mission of winning souls for the Messiah.

But all things considered, if we weren't making a television show I wouldn't have gone there. The tomb itself was a clammy dark cellar with catacombs leading past openings in the stone walls. Haggai and Malachi were said to have

shared the largest opening and Zechariah was interred along with many of his students among the smaller openings. I had to get on my knees to look into Zechariah's particular resting place, though I could walk upright into that of Haggai and Malachi. With the sun gun full in my face from four or five feet away,

I tried to quote appropriate passages to honor these last three of the writing prophets of the Old Testament.

They had hard ministries. They dealt with the returned captives of Babylon, who slowly and agonizingly rebuilt the Temple and the whole city of Jerusalem by stages. At the same time that beleaguered remnant held off armies of the Samaritans who did not want to see Temple worship restored at Jerusalem. It was a time not unlike today when only a remnant of dispersed Jewry had returned to the land and they had to rebuild and fight simultaneously.

With Haggai, my favorite passages involve his encouragement of the Temple rebuilders and his Messianic prophecies. Haggai reassured the returned remnant that God was still with them:

According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not (Haggai 2:5).

And more so, the Messiah would indeed come and would grace this new Temple with His very presence:

And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts (Haggai 2:7,9).

Malachi, whose name means "my messenger", sounds a warning about formal and insincere worship, which indeed characterized the style of the second Temple through most of its career. He prophesied about the ministry of John the Baptist:

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts (Malachi 3:1).

And he prophesied the coming of Elijah as preceding the second advent of Messiah:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: (Malachi 4:5).

Malachi was indeed God's messenger, and he foretold the comings of two more important messengers.

The latter prophecy, about Elijah, is instrumental in modern Jewish practice, being acted out at every Passover observance. The youngest child is sent to the door toward the end of the seder, or worship feast, to see if Elijah has indeed arrived to announce the coming of Messiah. Since every one was once the

youngest child, then every Jew who ever celebrated Passover spent a moment contemplating the possible coming of that prophet of fire to announce the appearance of the King of the Jews.

Zechariah's marvelous book prophesies both advents of Christ and clearly differentiates them:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass (Zech. 9:9).

Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east... (Zech. 14:3,4).

We have seen the former prophecy fulfilled (Matt. 21:1-11) and the second obviously concerns the battle of Armageddon, which will be raging as the Lord returns. It is this sort of accurate differing between the two comings that needs so badly to be pointed out to Jewish people who still await the initial coming of Messiah. As in comparing Isaiah 53 with Isaiah 9:6 and 7, the difference between the two advents is manifest and the first has obviously already been accomplished.

The enormous scope of Zechariah's vision requires a book in itself, but suffice it to say that his prophecies sweep from his own time well into the future Kingdom. The pictures of Kingdom worship provided by this "minor" prophet are nowhere else so emphatic (Zech. 14: 1619). And so far as the so called "Palestinian problem" goes, Zechariah concludes his book with the fact that it will certainly be solved in the Kingdom:

...and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts (Zech. 14:21).

Zechariah is an example (if indeed this is his tomb) of those Jewish people who well knew that the Messiah would come to the Mount of Olives **("And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east..."** Zech. 14:4) and had himself buried where he could conveniently welcome the King.

The program was one of those frustrating instances of having too little time to teach the available material. It also underlined the importance of what cursory Bible readers have come to regard as the less effective prophets. It seems that those prophets who wrote with brevity are taken less seriously, and in that view we only cheat ourselves. The three we have discussed in such inadequate detail had so very much to say really. And outstanding features of the length and breadth of the entire Church Age rest on the principles of modest writers like Habakkuk ("the just shall live by faith") and Joel ("I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh").

We were later in our travels to visit the tomb of mighty King David, but I was just as glad to commune with these others of my ancestors on that lovely green mountain called Olives.



Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek takes a break from one of the world's busiest jobs to share some thoughts with Zola.

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR

I didn't know what to expect when I learned that the Mayor of Jerusalem was going to kindly receive us for a televised interview. I imagined that a man of his importance, occupying such a hot spot, would be so surrounded by security people and official procedures that we would spend the day in just trying to get in to see him.

But on the contrary, "City Hall" in Jerusalem could be mistaken for any ordinary small office building and the police were nowhere in sight. We strolled into the vestibule and were greeted by two calm, almost laconic, civil servants in street clothes who acknowledged that the Mayor was expecting us. We were shown into the office of what could have been the manager of any small business and that was that. Without fanfare, without a string of secretaries and deputies, and without all the mumbo-jumbo that goes with American municipal government setups, we were introduced to the mayor of the most important city in the world.

He was busy, to be sure. The phone on his desk had a line of lights indicating people holding the lines to speak to him, and he didn't stop his work while we set up our equipment. Chattering in Hebrew on the telephone, he smiled a greeting and welcomed us warmly. He was altogether a friendly man, corpulent, rugged and cheerful looking and he made us feel right at home.

I'll let the interview on television speak for itself, but suffice it to say that the Mayor didn't really surprise us with his message. He came right to the point about the difficulty of his job—trying to keep happy all those various factions of Jews, Christians, Moslems, and whatnot that make up this teeming 3,000 year old metropolis. Few people would change places with him no matter what their job and he has put up with being re-elected time and again so that his leadership of Jerusalem has become a lifetime career. Perhaps only Nehemiah (445 B.C.), in the almost timeless annals of the "mayors" of Jerusalem, had to deal with so much danger and confusion in similar reconstruction times (Neh. 2: 17-20).

I tried to bring him to Biblical topics but he was quite an experienced and adept interviewee. He certainly wasn't about to discuss his personal faith before a television camera but he did say that if the Messiah were to come at this time it wouldn't surprise him. Furthermore he added that he would be glad to hand over all of his troubles to that more competent Leader.

In his talk about the Christian factions of Jerusalem, he indicated that they were practically innumerable. I wanted to pin him down to commentary about the American born-again believers and he said that he certainly recognized the group. "They are our very best friends," he assured me (though our Israeli guide speculated afterwards that he might have said that about any group related to our crew). I was convinced, however, that he understood the distinction of Biblical believers and mere pretenders to Christianity. He cited the Feast of Tabernacles celebrations, which bring tens of thousands of true believers to Jerusalem every October, as being inspiring and helpful to Jerusalem. He liked those people and that much was clear.

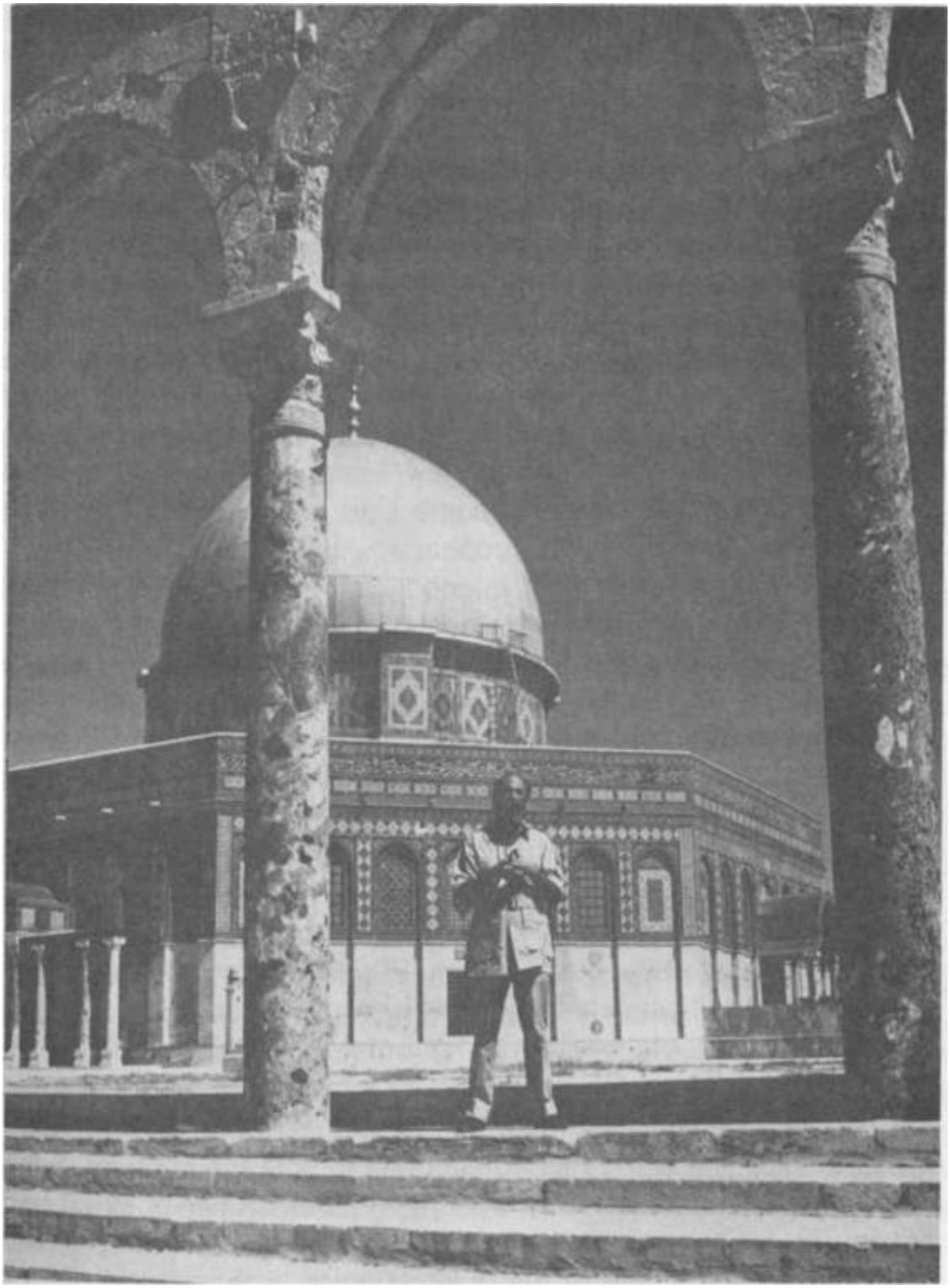
I have the distinct feeling that if Jesus Christ were to return right now, Mayor Kollek would not be surprised that He was indeed the promised Messiah. A man who spends his days meeting with Christians of every stripe, Moslems of violently differing views and the extremely varied selection of Jewish citizens under his direction has a very open mind. But I knew that he had endured a Christian witness on many occasions and I refrained from taking our interview time to run him through what he had already rebuffed so many times.

After the interview he was most gracious with his time, posing for pictures with each of us and seeming to enjoy wrapping his bear-like arms around us for the still cameras. I was able to get my own mug into a photograph with him even

as his telephone clamoured for his attention.

We were served cold drinks by the mayor's secretary and we departed, again without fanfare or undue suspicion on anybody's part. As a matter of fact, the mayor agreed to provide beautiful sketches of Jerusalem by a local artist for offering on our television program and we thanked him kindly.

It was an altogether pleasant afternoon and I'd like to do it again, this time without the cameras.



Zola at the Dome of the Rock.

THE DOME

I was ready for anything on the morning we went to the Dome of the Rock. Ali had connections at the Dome just as effective as those at the sheep and goats market and the Bedouin tent. He was able to persuade the Moslem authorities that they should let us film at their holiest site in Jerusalem. I gather he appealed to their sense of international cooperation and religious unity. In other words, he passed along some cash, our cash.

The worrisome part was the timing of our arrival at this sensitive monument to the Islam faith. The Israelis were already pushing into Lebanon and the PLO had fallen back to Beirut. The Dome of the Rock has been a bone of contention for 13 centuries but the situation was rarely more tense. Jerusalem authorities expected some kind of Moslem protest to the goings on in the North and the guards of the Dome were very edgy. The building itself was on a restricted schedule to tourism. And technical equipment that might conceal explosives (such as video tape recorders and the like) was officially forbidden. Furthermore a few weeks earlier a madman had been shooting up the place in some kind of attempt to help God fulfill His tribulation period prophecies.

So we were greeted with a goodly amount of suspicion and followed about by armed representatives of the Temple guard.

It is commendable that the Israelis allow the Moslem holy site to function normally as it had in the centuries preceding the restoration of the Jewish people to Israel. Arab authorities control the Temple Mount, and Israel, even though it overran the area in 1967, has never interfered with the worship or the comings and goings of Arabs and foreign tourists alike. On the other hand, such interference would probably start World War III and the Israelis well know it. So it is perhaps in a spirit of discretion rather than cooperation that they put up with the Moslem ceremonies.

By way of contrast, when King Hussein of Jordan had control of the Eastern part of Jerusalem, he unfeelingly bulldozed Jewish graves off the Mt. of Olives, destroyed synagogues and prevented the people of Israel from approaching the Western Wall for their own worship. The world has not stopped to note the contrast in the peacefulness of the Holy City when it is in Jewish hands. What had previously been an armed camp in the hands of the so-called Palestinians is now one of the quietest cities in the world in terms of crimes against persons or political demonstrations and the like. For all its publicity as a powder keg, Jerusalem invariably presents a vista of colorful quietude to those who visit.

But of course we were the sort of visitors who keep everybody watching. We began our filming with long shots of the Dome but we really wanted to focus on a smaller building to the north of it. The little cupola known as the Dome of the Winds lies some 200 feet to the northwest of the Dome of the Rock itself and

scholars have recently proposed that it is the more likely site of the ancient Holy of Holies. It lines up better with the position of the Eastern Gate in the Temple wall facing the Mt. of Olives and it seems to cover outcroppings of foundation stones under the surface of the mount. That is to say, some scholars suppose it was built where it is to cover up the evidence of the location of the pristine Jewish holy site. Needless to say, a Jewish discovery of the very spot of the Holy of Holies would cause some hue and cry to start the rebuilding of the Temple. The Moslems surely don't need that and so it is possible that some forward looking Arab soul placed the Dome of the Winds in a most strategic spot some time in the past. He must have anticipated that those indomitable Jews would be back and start looking around for the location of their Holy of Holies.

As our filming went on I moved toward the Dome of the Winds and got out the Scriptures. Standing on what may have been the very site of God's apartment on the earth (Exodus 25:8) I taught from the Book of Hebrews about Jesus now being in the Holy of Holies in heaven. I was really getting into the passage when I began to notice the police gathering around. One particular plain clothes authority was really glaring at me as we filmed. When we came to a break he stepped forward and began to object to the proceedings. The presence of the Bible, it seems, is what touched off his protest.

"Pictures are okay," he said in very Arabic English, "but no talking!" And he gestured derisively toward my Bible.

I got the picture pretty quickly. We had paid him off to let us film, but evidently Ali had not made clear that we were going to bring such a disgusting Jewish artifact as the Bible to his holy mountain. It was quite a situation. Here we were standing on Mt. Moriah, which God had chosen out of all the mountains in Israel as His special holy place, and we were not supposed to open His Book at that site. Moreover, our argument was taking place at what was probably the very dwelling place of Almighty God on earth and we were being told to put away the very sword of the Lord.

The crew started in with every sort of mollification of the angry official, assuring him that the Bible was merely a prop, etc., and we certainly weren't saying anything anti-Islamic. The man looked a bit weak to me as I studied those dark Arab eyes; after all, he did say that we could continue with our "pictures". He wasn't protesting to the degree of throwing us and our cameras off the mountain entirely. After all, he had a pocketful of our money and it was clear that his avarice had gotten the best of his religious convictions.

I judged that the situation couldn't be preserved, and anyway I had gotten in the bulk of the teaching. I figured we could close out the show with some footage of the Dome from the Mount of Olives and a voice-over from me

concluding the lesson. It certainly wasn't worth an incident, or chancing the confiscation of our film or equipment.

Nodding in agreement with our persecutor, I pleasantly pronounced my one word of Arabic, "Shokron," and told the crew to begin moving out. With that, the official remarked that we might move our cameras to the east, away from the Dome of the Winds, and get some more pictures as long as there was no talking. He seemed to be backing off to the point of saying, "Well, after all, you did pay us. We're honorable men, and a bribe is a bribe."

We did move over toward the Eastern Gate then and, under still more watchful eyes, took a silent shot or two of the general area. But by this time, Ken was in a hurry, realizing that our best move was to get off that mountain with what we had.

All in all, it was one of the most interesting days I've ever had on the Mount. I hadn't even stopped to think when I pulled out the Bible during that filming, that there would be any objections to it. Ironically 100 feet away at the Western Wall there were thousands of Bibles in use. But then again, I have to admit that I'd get at least the same reaction if I strolled up to the Western Wall and started teaching the

Koran! And again, I could go another 100 feet or so toward the northwest and encounter the very orthodox Christian sites of the Via Dolorosa at which neither the Jewish Torah nor the Moslem Koran would be acceptable.

You could draw a circle around a few city blocks there in the heart of old Jerusalem and cover the three largest and most vital of the world's religions going full blast. And unfortunately they really don't have much to say to each other except, "Stay out of my space."

It's surely the most interesting place in the world.



"His sepulchre is with us unto this day." Peter utilized the tomb of King David in teaching the meaning of the Resurrection (Acts 2:29). The traditional sepulchre, shown above, is still "with us unto this day."

"HE LIVES ON”

What does one say in the presence of King David?

It was early evening when we went to the tomb of mighty David, honored in the opening statement of the New Testament (**"The book of Jesus Christ, the son of David..."** Matt. 1:1). The imposing sepulchre lay covered by a purple cloth on which was written in Hebrew, "David, the King of Israel, lives on." The darkened room was decorated with Torahs, silver lamps and various other orthodox Jewish artifacts. I wore Biblical robes in keeping with the occasion. The program had an overall visually striking effect.

It must be said, in all fairness to the archeologists, that David probably lies somewhere else. There is less evidence to support the reality of this tomb than of

that of the three prophets we had filmed earlier. David was more probably buried in the city of Zion to the south of the Temple site and not on Mount Zion, more to the west of it. But again, that wasn't the point. Evidently Peter was able to cite for his spellbound audience at Pentecost a certified tomb of King David (Acts 2:29) and with it he made his point about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The people of Peter's day well knew that they had two important tombs in Jerusalem; one was David's and it lay undisturbed, and the other was Christ's and it remained inexplicably empty.

That was the text of the lesson that I undertook at the tomb. We began outside the actual burial room in a pleasant garden-like setting where a passing orthodox Jew paused to watch our efforts. Such spectators make Christian filming in Israel what it is—a slightly nervous experience. If that particular viewer heard me teaching a New Testament text, or mentioning the name of Jesus Christ, we would have another situation like at the Dome of the Rock. But there was much setting up in progress and he didn't stay long enough to hear me start the actual program. I just kept looking at him and smiling, and all at once he approached me, took the skull cap off his head and simply gave it to me. Then he departed, having made what he felt was a contribution to advancing the cause of Judaism, which maybe he had. I still have the skull cap and I value it enormously. I wore it on the program.

The technical difficulties were without end in filming that cramped and dimly lit enclosure where David supposedly lies. But by now we were veteran tomb televisors and Ken rose to the occasion. Some shots had to be repeated and we always had to be wary of further passing worshippers, but we somehow got it all in and it made a very nice program.

Early after the opening I bent over and lifted the purple cloth covering the actual bier to show the stone surface. There, in a crack in the stone, were the familiar folded pieces of paper with prayers written on them. These are found at the Western Wall and I had also seen them at Zechariah's tomb (but not at Haggai's or Malachi's). Evidently

the Jewish people have a private concept of sainthood and believe that prayers made to certain personalities who are with God will be especially efficacious. The papers at the Western Wall are meant for God Almighty, of course, Who, if He in fact still occupies the Holy of Holies, simply "lives" behind that wall. In simplest terms, the Western Wall is like God's mailbox since it is the wall of the Temple Mount and therefore of the Holy of Holies.

In Zechariah's case, however, we have something like the prayers of Roman Catholics to venerated bygone holy men. Why Zechariah is favored over Haggai and Malachi is a curiosity, but the Jewish people view the prophets as major and

minor also, giving Zechariah rather more credit than the Christians do in general. It's actually a sorry note on the part of any Bible reader to value a Scriptural personality by the size of his book or, in reality, to overly value any earthbound personality at all. Only Jesus Christ among all Jewish holy men claimed Deity. And He also was named by Isaiah and other prophets as "Intercessor for our transgressions" (Isaiah 53:12) and therefore is the appropriate One to take our prayers before the Father.

Zechariah must be surprised to be receiving the written prayers of the people of Israel, if indeed he is, and King David must feel the same way. The prayers placed in the Western Wall would seem to have somewhat more validity, but really the whole idea of written notes to God is unnecessary, Biblically speaking. God is a personal God in the Old Testament and the New, and if Jehovah seems remote, then Jesus, Who was present among us, must surely be the alternative. But then it is difficult to sit in judgment on those who pray with such earnestness as to put their petitions in writing. And perhaps God looks with favor on the whole idea.

After my part of the filming was done at David's tomb, I retired to an outside room to escape those hot lights. In almost every program there are "wild shots" to get after the filming when "the talent" is finished. Anything I may have referred to during my teaching is duly noted but the cameras don't move very much during the teaching. Afterward they pick up the detail shots and the tape is edited together. So I usually get a rest break after finishing a teaching and the crew picks up the necessary extras. Well, I was relaxing in the outer room when an orthodox Jew in the most emphatically ornate costume entered the place. He wore the high black socks, black knickers, long black coat and black hat of the scholars seen roaming the streets of Jerusalem. His sideburns were fully six inches long and beautifully curled, and his great brown beard made mine look like a worn out hairbrush. He carried a tattered prayer book and was mumbling to himself in prayer even as he entered.

I greeted him but he didn't pause in his prayers. He saw that David's tomb was strangely lit up and occupied by our crew and so he waited. We had been told that the place was closed to ordinary worship at that hour and that's why we had waited until so late in the day. But this lone prayerful one evidently didn't know the rules.

A watchman happened by and I looked at him as if to say, "You assured us we'd be alone here," but he sort of shrugged and smiled and made some kind of forgiving gesture toward our wayward worshipper.

I didn't realize the impact of the situation until the crew was finished and had departed from the tomb. At that point our worshipper looked up at the watchman

and spoke to him in garbled, slurred Hebrew. His eyes rolled with the effort of talking and I realized, to my shame, that he was retarded. Our Lord would have loved this simple-minded one who came to worship even when the place was closed. I could picture him spending whole days getting his remarkable outfit together and showing up far too late for the hours of the place. And I could picture the watchman patiently letting him in every night so that he could commune with King David, and the little trespass was their secret.

I've thought of him from time to time since then and how his faith exceeds my own.

The reigning King of Israel said, **"Except ye be as a little child, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven."**



Walking where Jesus walked, Zola meditates on the Mount of Olives.

GETHSEMANE

The trickiest part about making a program at the Garden of Gethsemane was getting permission to film it. It seems that the priests who presently operate the place think they own it.

It sits in a quiet spot on the Mount of Olives across from the Eastern Gate and is certainly a very authentic location. If this was not the actual garden, then it was very near the spot. The presence of a grove of eight very ancient olive trees argue for this being the real site, since the olive tree drops shoots and replants itself where it stands. Tour guides who claim that "these very trees shaded Jesus Christ and his men" do have credibility.

But nowadays along with the gnarled magnificent old trees come flowers of every color and variety planted by the priests who minister at the adjacent Church of All Nations. This Roman Catholic sanctuary was built with contributions from many countries in order to preserve the Garden of Gethsemane and to mark the spot, but it has almost swallowed up the garden in its bureaucracy. We had to write more letters, make more phone calls, and beg more authorities to film at this peaceful, uncontested site than we did for the Dome of the Rock, David's tomb, or even our visit with the Mayor of Jerusalem. It was as if our cameras would somehow make their flowers wilt. I couldn't help a certain feeling of exasperation; in our past "Holy Places" series, we had, virtually without special permission, approached such sensitive and holy sites as the Western Wall and the Garden Tomb. The keepers of those places were gracious and courteous, and glad enough to share their ministries with the world.

Trying to see their side of things we did realize that allowing television crews into the actual garden would soon bring plenty of tourists, and ultimately all those flowers would end up in American and European vases, decorating homes of the faithful everywhere. We did witness an incident of a priest shooing off a father and his little girl who somehow got over the high iron gates into the garden.

Ultimately we had to compromise with the authorities of the site and agree to just shoot over their fence. In other words I couldn't stroll in the garden or sit down on the ground as the King did, but rather I could lean on their gate and the camera could get the flowers in the background.

When we got to the site and lined up the shot we saw that we couldn't make a whole show that way. I simply couldn't stand still with the garden behind me like a painting. I had to walk among the trees and bring the thing to life. Otherwise we could as well have done it in a studio in Dallas, with a little help from a flower shop. We decided to just do a two minute open at the gate and then move

across the road to a secluded spot on the mount itself, where there were plenty of olive trees possessed by nobody in particular. The iron gate posed a problem immediately for that opening sequence since it was high enough that it would show in the picture. I therefore stood on an equipment crate

some three feet high and the camera was raised up to its maximum. I was to say my part and then walk off. But I found that strolling away off with a three foot drop on the first step is a bit complicated. In the first take we had me opening with sober reflections on intercessory prayer and then literally falling out of the picture. We were a lot happier when we packed up our things and left the priests to their gardening.

Across the road and up the hill a bit we found lots of olive trees and lots of privacy, other than for one colorful Arab camel driver who came wandering along on his wonderfully decorated animal. Ken though it might make a good shot and told the driver he'd give him a buck if he'd ride through in front of the camera and the driver replied in excellent, courteous English, "I'll do it for fifty."

And so we had no camel shot in the Garden of Gethsemane program.

We shot another opening in which I come strolling along the terraced hillside, passing the olive trees and generally grousing about how the place we ended up was a better garden site anyhow. At least it offered the seclusion that Jesus and His men undoubtedly sought when they spent their nights in prayer and fellowship on this mountain. And it didn't feature garlands of colorful flowers, which probably were not present at the original site in the Gospel times.

It was the last program of the trip and surely one of the most difficult. I found out very quickly that one just doesn't stroll along the Mount of Olives in open-toed sandals. The soil is sowed with little spiked brambles all along the pathways and they stick into human skin so tenaciously that you could collect a dozen of them in as many steps. The Lord and His men were a lot tougher than I thought. Ken had one of his re-take mornings where he never seemed satisfied and we had to go over and over the same shots. I got busy sweeping up a walking path that would spare me making a blood atonement. To add to all of our woes it was a particularly hot day and shady spots were hard to come by. In all of these programs I had to stand in full sunlight for the benefit of good-looking television. It should be appreciated that many of our summer filmings were done in three-digit temperatures and if the host seemed a little weary there was a good reason.

My heart problems were acting up by this time so that I was experiencing uncomfortable chest pain and taking nitro pills right along as we worked. I began to fear having some real trouble, and as we moved to different locations up and down the steep hillside the crew was kind enough to send the equipment truck

for me back and forth (as it happened I had to pretty much take the rest of the summer of 1982 off when I returned to Dallas. The chest pain continued and I had to buy a lot of pills).

In the rest of the message I talked about Peter and his small failures of the time. He fell asleep, he tried to defend our submissive Lord with a sword, he followed only at a distance and he denied that he even knew the Lord three times that fateful night. My Point was not to denigrate Peter in any way, but to sympathize with the heaviness of the cross that we all bear. How many of today's Christians could pass those tests on such a night? And yet, having seen the resurrection, Peter turned into a spiritual giant who seven weeks later could preach the sermon that saved 3,000 people!

And I talked about Jesus' sacrifice in the garden and how He was willing to pay the bride price to marry Israel. The crucifixion was the highest price a bridegroom ever paid but Israel, and all of those who would follow the Messiah of Israel, are a choice bride in the eyes of God. I borrowed from my earlier booklet, *"A Christian Love Story*", to make the point that the Lord and His Father had a choice that night in the garden, and that contemplating His execution, our Lord sweated **"as it were, drops of blood falling to the ground"**. In the supreme example of following the Father's plan, Jesus finally uttered the difficult, **"Not my will but thine be done."**

There's no more powerful lesson in the Gospels, I suppose, and it seemed a fitting one to close our series. The shows normally air in a different order than the way we film them (which is decided by the controllers of the religious sites and their schedules) but for us it was the conclusion of a satisfying good work.

Only God could have planned out in my life that traveling through Israel is a necessary part of my ministry for Him. He knows how I love the place and how I love to explain the Word. As a very young Christian I was told, "God has a wonderful plan for your life," which was quoted to me from a Campus Crusade booklet, and I guess truer words were never written. We must be patient, we must work hard and we must listen. And we must ultimately realize the fundamental lesson of Gethsemane.

"Not my will but thine be done."