

August 2024

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Greetings and blessings to you all. Summer is “on,” and we are well into it! Our summer began in June with lectures on the Gospel of John at University of the



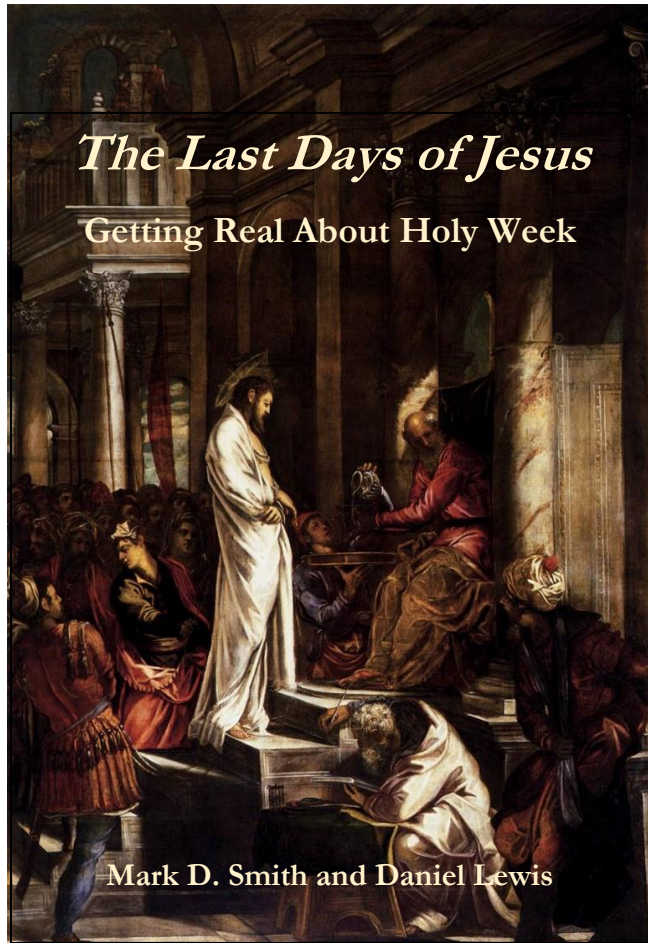
The U. of N. campus in Mexico is a combination of various buildings and plazas. Indeed, since the weather is often very nice, students (and myself) often leave the cafeteria and sit for lunch in one of these plazas.

Nations in San Antonio del Mar, Mexico. It seems that I get to this campus at least once per year, and I always thoroughly enjoy it. The students are great, the staff is helpful, the translators are super, and the campus itself is lovely.

This trip was a first for me in that I was able to teach the same set of students at the beginning of their studies (Genesis, in 2023) and their final biblical book (John, in 2024). Usually, every class I meet is composed of new faces, but in this case, they were all students I’d met nearly a year ago. As usual, they were a cross-section of nationalities, many from Mexico, but some also from Colombia, Canada, and the USA. There was also a fascinating variety of

Christian denominations represented, including Reformed, Baptist, Anglican, Pentecostal, and Catholic. This sort of range always makes for interesting

discussion! Cinthya, my translator with whom I have worked previously, did a fabulous job. Some translators are easier to work with than others, but Cinthya is among the best! A highlight, also, was the invitation to conduct a Eucharist for the students, so I prepared a shortened liturgy with both English and Spanish versions.



July saw Peggy and I in Idaho, this time not for lectures but for a special book project. A number of years ago, I was privileged to meet Dr. Mark Smith, who is the J. P. Weyerhauser Professor of History at the College of Idaho in Boise. Mark periodically teaches for the University of the Nations, as do I, but unlike me he is not retired but still a working professor. We've become good friends and seem to be kindred souls in many ways. Mark invited me to co-author a book with him, *The Last Days of Jesus*, which is aimed at engaged Christian readers who want more than just the surface details of Jesus' final days. The book is an intersection of the four gospels, archaeology, and Roman history,

along with reflections and discussion opportunities at the close of each chapter. With the basic writing complete, we are now in the editing stage, and Mark and I met together in Idaho for several days in a log cabin in the mountains for uninterrupted face-to-face editorial work. Hopefully, the book will be published some time in 2025.

Among the things that Mark brings to the work is his professional work in archaeology (he serves on the Board of Directors of the Bethsaida Excavations Project in Galilee). Indeed, while excavating in Galilee, he discovered a *sica*, one of the daggers used by Jewish assassins, who are described by the 1st century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus and associated with the zealots. You'll remember, of



course, that one of Jesus' disciples was a zealot, Simon Zealotes. Mark also is a specialist in Roman history. I, for my part, am a biblical

scholar and theologian, so in addition to contributing to some of the other areas, I cover the biblical reflections and discussion sections.

August was largely a quiet month with no international travel. I did pick up another Hebrew student and continue to work with my other language students as well. Learning the original languages of the Bible is a great deal of hard work, but it can be exhilarating, also, as one begins to read the ancient Scriptures in the same way as Jesus, not to mention exploring the language in which St. Paul wrote about a quarter of the New Testament.

The fall and early winter seasons ramp up considerably. In September, I'll be in Lausanne, Switzerland teaching a group of Bible teachers for two weeks. I'll be back in Switzerland in October for a week's lectures in Isaiah for a School of Biblical Studies and then a second week in Joshua and Judges for a Discipleship Bible School. November will see me in Costa Rico for two weeks of lecture (subject to be determined), while in December I'll be in Seattle for a week to do the Gospel of John and in Kona for a week to cover the letters of Paul. In the meantime, I'm doing preps for all these lectures. And oh, by the way, I've been invited back to Macomb Community College for their fall lectures series with MORE, where I'll lecture on the Archaeology of Jesus. In the spring, my lectures on the Dead Sea Scrolls seems to have been a "hit," so we'll see how this one goes.

Our deep thanks for all who follow us as well as those who offer support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan and Peggy Lewis".

Dan and Peggy Lewis