

# TIBI HERALD

## Editor

Steve Austin  
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*"Out of the most severe trial,  
their overflowing joy ...welled  
up in rich generosity.."  
2 Cor. 8:2*

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## Unstoppable



Leonardo Capodicasa (left) and another member in Merida, Venezuela baptized Haydé in a river

I share with you a report from one of the TIBI scholarship students, Leonardo Capodicasa. Struggling with the pandemic and many other problems in Venezuela, he and his wife Dayana have hosted a new small church in their neighborhood since last March during the pandemic. Now they see some of the fruits of their work. Leonardo says:

"I am excited as I write you. Today has been one of great blessing. A visitor to our house church was baptized. This is very important for us because it confirms that the work we do for the Lord is not in vain. Since I began at TIBI, we have prayed for a day like this to come. God has blessed my life, marriage, children, family, and now this blessing extends one more step, to a visitor God brought. It also confirms that it's possible to share the gospel in whatever situation. Above all, it takes away our fears, doubts, and thoughts that some things are impossible. I see that with God, all things are possible. The river was very cold and turbulent, so another brother helped me, so the river didn't carry away our new sister!"

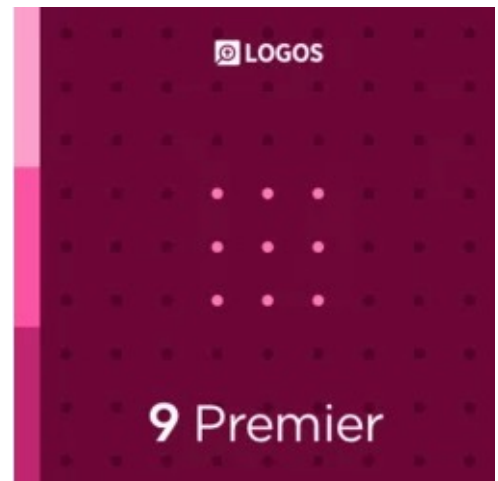
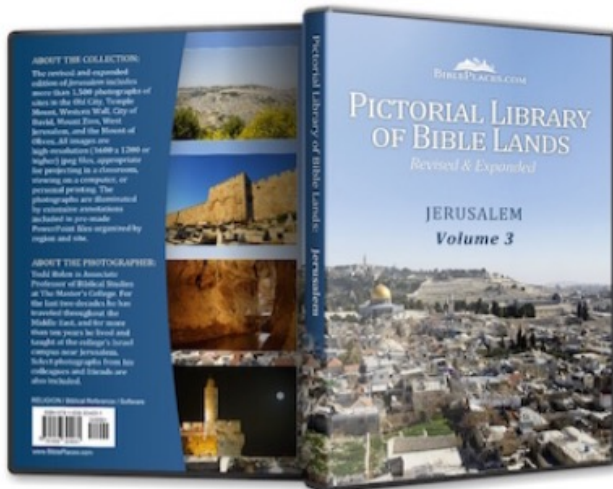
We rejoice with Leonardo and Dayana, and with all the faithful brothers and sisters who are working tirelessly, in spite of the difficult circumstances of their country. And there are many others like them, who in the middle of hurricanes, earthquakes, economic disasters, job losses, illnesses, deaths, coronavirus, and all the emotions these bring, still remain faithful and set us a brave example to follow. We ask for your prayers for them as they work, day by day.

### **TIBI receives grant from Duke University and the Lilly Foundation**

Our new association with AETH (the Hispanic theological education association) has quickly borne fruit for TIBI. We were selected as one of 23 churches or institutes nationwide to apply for a grant for capacity-building for part of our program. We responded immediately and were awarded a \$10,000 grant for this purpose. The grant is directly from Duke University Leadership Education, and indirectly from the Lilly Foundation, one of the major players in religious educational grants.

We chose to focus on further equipping our professors with several cutting-edge tools. Specifically, we plan to implement four projects, all of which should result in access to amazing resources for teaching text and ministry courses.

First, we are giving to each of these professors a complete set of pictures and text from Bible Places, which helps identify and illustrate hundreds of biblical sites, customs, and cultures. The set has 59 DVDs with about 29,000 photos and 4000 pages of text to illustrate them, all in jpeg and power point formats, and indexed. It is a truly unique and amazing resource, in my opinion far and away the best of its kind in the world.



Second, we are giving to each a digital library of Logos resources; again, we believe, the best of its kind in the world. It has more than 450 books, with a value of \$6,600. It includes resources for the study of biblical languages, history, culture, ministry, and much more, all cross-referenced and indexed for easy use.

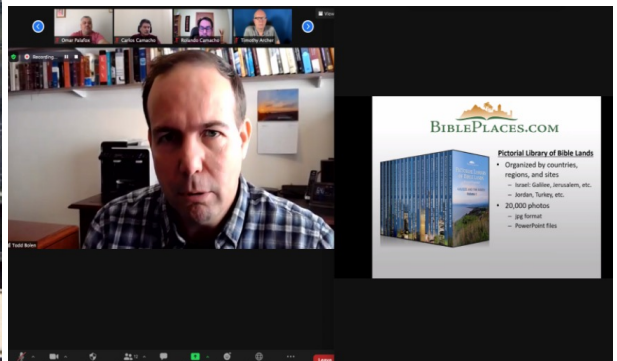
Third, we plan to begin to use Canvas as a learning management system for our undergrad courses. This is one of the best LMSs, with various tools for sharing information and resources between students and professors. We can also embed Zoom in it, and thus integrate all our technology in one place.

For these first three, the resource will be complemented by a seminar with either the creators of the resource, or experts in its use. This will orient the teachers to how to best use the resources in their particular contexts and give an overview of the tools available. We just had the first seminar (see article below about Bible Places.)

Fourth, we are planning a Saturday seminar by video conference with the curator of the Dead Seas Scrolls collection at the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem, Israel. Adolfo Roitman has held this position for 25 years and is an expert in the scrolls and the temple, and its impact on Judaism and Israel in the time of Christ. On two of our trips to Israel, he has given us personal tours of the Museum and scrolls, and also given us private classes on two other occasions, either in Israel or by video conference.



Adolfo Roitman with the scrolls



Todd Bolen, explaining his resources

## Bible Places

On Saturday, March 20, we had the privilege of spending three hours with Todd Bolen, the creator of the Bible Places visual resources. He gave an overview of four collections of photos for Bible study—the Pictorial Library of Bible Lands, the Historic Views of the Holy Lands, Photo Companion to the Bible, and the Museum collection. He showed how to best use the pictures for developing classes, sermons, or simple Bible study, and how to locate images among the 29,000 pictures. He gave tips on how to utilize the jpeg or power point formats, and background information on the sources from which they came. He also explained his system of text and notes that accompany the collections.

We are excited about the possibilities as our professors incorporate this amazing resource into their courses, sermons, and study. If you are interested in acquiring this resource, you can contact us at [slaustin@cebridge.net](mailto:slaustin@cebridge.net), or visit [www.bibleplaces.com](http://www.bibleplaces.com).

## **Record enrollment!**

This week, TIBI began its Spring 2 cycle of classes. We currently offer 8 courses—four for first-year students, four for second-year students. We saw a record total of 91 students enrolled in live classes, from 15 different countries.

As we are closing our 16<sup>th</sup> year of classes, we reflect on what the Lord has made possible since we began. I think of the first night class in Houston in 2004, with five students, or the first class of two full-time students graduating in December 2007. I remember the early days of Polycom video conferencing, when it was amazing to have 7 sites connected at once! I recall that our initial goal was to train five preachers at a time for the Houston area.

But the Lord had bigger plans! Now it's common to have 30+ sites connected from 10 countries in a single class. And counting our online students and EBL students, we have a total of over 3700 students currently studying with TIBI in different formats, from 76 countries. Our system has the capacity for thousands of students at once.

The Lord is good, and the future is bright. We thank you for your support and interest in our work. Please pray for God to continue to give us wisdom, insight, humility, faith and vision as we forge ahead into the future. Pray he will open doors, provide resources, and guide into new opportunities. We look forward to what is possible under his guidance and blessing.

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