



**ARAB
VISION**
25
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ANNIVERSARY

Issue 59, September 2022



Much Loved Macho Men

Maryam: Award-Winning Short Film

Drama Series: Unlikely young heroes from the Bible

Where is God in all this?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is almost seven months old and, sadly, it is not difficult to imagine it lasting seven years. The thousands of civilians who have been killed or injured and millions have become refugees, inside and outside their own country, are slowly slipping down our media's priorities.

Sadly, the death and destruction we see in the media is not unique to Ukraine. For several weeks it was the number one news item because it was new, it was closer to home and perhaps we knew someone from Ukraine. Inevitably, like other conflicts around the world, it has slipped down the media's priorities. In Myanmar there have been 12,000 civilian deaths in the last year while in the Arab World, the UN have reported 350,000 civilian deaths in Syria in 10 years of war, yet these conflicts are now little more than footnotes in the daily news round.

Early in the Ukrainian war, I caught part of a brief radio interview with a Ukrainian pastor. The reporter asked:

"Where is God in all this?"

His reply was that God had created a beautiful world, but man has messed it all up. How true! Greed, the desire to stay in power at any cost and a complete disregard for human life are characteristics shared by the presidents of both Russia and Syria.

Unfortunately, this is true right across the Arab World. Arab Vision's staff know that their work carries considerable personal risk. Arbitrary arrest and trumped-up charges are a fact of everyday life. Please continue to support our production and follow up teams with your prayers.

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" James 5:17



Ian Sutherland
Arab Vision UK

Much loved macho men

Regular readers will know that Arab Vision has produced several programmes highlighting the abuse and lack of rights endured by many Arab women.

In many Arab societies, both men and women are trapped by role expectations that are difficult to break. Too often, the culture requires men to use physical force both to defend their family and to enforce obedience within it. At the same time, many Arab men feel worthless or unappreciated. They learn to hide their emotions and use violence in an attempt to command respect.

We will produce a series of short programmes showing a different, better way of life, showing that all men are children of God who are loved by their Heavenly Father. We want to show that this love is unconditional and that men do not need to resort to machismo or displays of power to create their own identity.

The series will not only create awareness but will seek to encourage men in the Arab World to be role models in society, family, and church, based on biblical principles.

The topics to be covered include:

- dealing with authority and power;
- self-awareness and self-confidence;
- the role of the man in the marriage and of the father in the family;
- dealing with sexuality in a healthy way;
- be an image bearer of God,

They will be discussed in a series of short video clips, suitable for social media.

We will be grateful for any gift you can make towards the cost of this project – see page 8. Thank you.



A background story

Youssef has worked in the Gulf for a long time to earn money for his family. During the corona virus pandemic, he returned home and discovered that for a long time his wife has encouraged their son to beat and abuse their daughter. He was shocked and discussed it with his wife:

"This is unacceptable. Our daughter will assume that it is normal to be abused and beaten and when she gets married, she will perpetuate this behaviour."

Although Youssef is very ashamed of what is happening in his family, he shares his story and his cry for help:

"How can I learn to deal with family problems?"

Award-winning short film

"A moving film with an important message: the joy of giving from the heart."

Maryam is the 8-year-old daughter from a poor caretaker's family. Her family lives in the basement of the building where the father works. Maryam is a Christian girl who faithfully attends Sunday school. One day they are told that there are many poorer children in Sudan and the Sunday School group is challenged to help them.

Maryam starts to save the small amounts she earns from doing chores and running errands for the residents of the building. Maryam's family have been invited to an uncle's wedding and Maryam's mother urges her to use her savings for a new dress for the wedding. But Maryam doesn't want a new dress; she wants to help the Sudanese children. Then, just before the wedding... well, watch on our YouTube channel on arabvision.org to see how it ends!

The short film, based on a true story, is simple and touching and won three prizes at the film festival in Alexandria, Egypt in May.

- Best scriptwriter,
- Best Director and,
- Best Actor (Maryam)

Here are some of the reviews:

"Important film that will be screened for a long time to come."

"High quality film, in script, image and direction."

"It has all the hallmarks of a powerful short film."

"Moving film with an important message: the joy of giving from your heart."

"Special tribute from the Festival Committee to the young actress who plays Maryam"



Drama series based on unlikely young heroes from the Bible

In August we completed the production of "Youth hold the key." It presented many challenges for our production team. The coronavirus restrictions prevented outside filming until late in the spring. However, one more day's filming was still needed, which couldn't be scheduled until August. Normally it is impossible to film in the intense summer heat, so the plan was to build the set at night, with filming beginning at 6.00 am.



The logistics of bringing together the actors, extras, horses, narrator and crew at exactly the right time and before the heat became too intense, taxed the team to the limit. Our experienced producer, Samir, knew that he was dependent upon God and requested extra prayer for the filming, which God honoured.

The 26 part series looks at the lives of young people in the Bible including Joseph, Ruth, Jeremiah, Daniel and Mary, the threats and hostility that they faced because of their obedience to God and shows that God can also use young people today.

You can see a subtitled trailer of the series on our website arabvision.org. Our team are now editing the series for broadcasting on satellite TV in the new year. They will also produce shorter clips for social media. Please pray for wisdom and good judgement for the team as they complete the project.



Haidar wants to know more about God

Haidar is a Muslim from Libya. He follows our *Light of the World* page on Facebook and responds to the content that he finds interesting. He writes that he wants to know more about God and the way to salvation.

I talk to him about Christ and about his redemption for all people. I explain to him the steps to follow Christ accept in his heart. Haidar reacts positively to what I tell him but has not yet responded to the invitation to take the next step. We pray that God uses the seed that has been planted in Haidar's heart.

Impressed with the greatness of Christ

Farid is a young Egyptian Muslim, 30 years old. He started talking to us when he saw messages about tolerance on our Facebook page. The theme appealed to him, and we discussed it. We also sent him some links to YouTube videos on the subject. He told us he was familiar with some Christian songs, and we sent him more songs, parts of the Gospel of John and also the Jesus movie.

He was so impressed with the greatness of Christ, the mercy and tolerance, the theme that appealed to him so much that he decided to pray and accept Jesus into his life. This was very encouraging for us as a team. We contacted a pastor near Farid to meet him in person.

After a while Farid wrote to us again to thank us for our support. *"The conversations had cleared the way for me to see the light"*. We pray that the Lord will strengthen him in the faith and that he will grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. He wants to continue with the online relationship, so we will continue to do this to encourage and help him grow deeper in his new-found faith.

A desire to meet Jesus personally...

We are talking to a Syrian man who lives in Europe. He has marital problems and asks for prayer. Through our conversations, his desire to meet Jesus personally grows. Although he has a Christian background, he only knows God from a distance.

When he prays for dreams and visions and nothing happens, he becomes angry and disappointed. But one day when he was walking in the woods with his children, he met a group of Christians praying. He shared his concerns with them, and they prayed for him. Now he is feeling more at peace. We will keep in touch with him.

Now in Production

Katameros – daily devotionals

One of the goals of Arab Vision is to support the Church in the Arab World. We have been working with the Coptic Church, the oldest and largest church in Egypt, for several years.

Two years ago we produced a series of programmes not dissimilar to the alpha course, for Copts. This series has since been used in the Netherlands for work among Arabic-speaking refugees.

Now we are working on the production of 365 devotionals by Bishop Thomas of Qussia, based on the liturgical calendar of the Coptic Orthodox Church. With his emphasis on "Christ being the central point", the Bishop not only speaks to the Copts of his own church but also to Protestants and non-believers.

The first 60 clips of 365 were filmed in a two-day session with Bishop Thomas. The production team also spent time training young Coptic Christians in the various techniques of film-making.

Can you help?

It costs just £40 to produce and broadcast each episode. Could you support the church in Egypt by sponsoring just one (or even two) of these episodes?



Full of questions

Yasser is talking to me. He is 36 years old, Algerian and Muslim. He takes God very seriously and asks, 'how I can have a personal relationship with God'. I tell him about my own relationship with God and then he wants to know whether Islam or Christianity is the true religion. We discuss his questions about the Bible, whether Mohammed is mentioned in the Bible.

He is genuinely interested. I explain to him the Biblical texts that describe Christ and the Holy Spirit. We have a long conversation and I send him the text of the Sermon on the Mount. I tell him about Jesus Christ, His unique personality, and His work of redemption. We share links to more Bible explanations. Yasser is full of questions and really wants to be convinced. I keep talking to him and pray that the Lord will open his eyes to see the light."

"The teaching of Jesus is wonderful."

Hamid, a young Muslim from Yemen who is in conversation with our follow-up team.



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www.arabvision.org

Arab Vision is a registered charity in England (no. 1154993)

In the UK you can send your gift direct to our bank:

Lloyds Bank Plc Account name: Arab Vision
Sort Code: 30-97-24 Account no: 49415760

Or if you have a Stewardship account
<https://account.stewardship.org.uk/Give>

Cheques can be sent to:
23 Mill Lane, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2AS