

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John
5:39

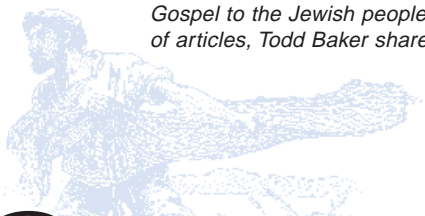
A Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries



Volume 1, Number 7

July 2003

B'rit Hadashah Ministries is a nondenominational evangelistic and teaching outreach devoted to proclaiming the Gospel to the Jewish people (Romans 1:16) with particular focus on Gospel outreaches to Israel. In this series of articles, Todd Baker shares stories of his recent mission trip with Robert Cuccia to Israel in April of this year.



"I will make you fishers of men"

Our first witnessing encounter in Tiberius took place in a fishing supply shop. How appropriate was this, I thought, since Jesus said in Matthew 4:19: **"I will make you fishers of men."** This is exactly what we were doing in Israel. The owner of the shop was named **Yehudah**. Initially our conversation with him was about the unexpected increase in rainfall for the Galilee region this year after suffering a severe drought for over three years. The lake of Galilee rose twelve feet, he told us, as a result of the much-needed rain. From that point on in the conversation, Robert and I told him the reason why we came to Israel. It was to encourage the Jewish people that the God of Israel will surely complete and fulfill His plan for them as decreed through the biblical Covenants and made central in the Messiah's first and second advent to Israel. The return of the Jewish people back into the land of Israel is a Messianic sign foretold by Moses and prophets that the Lord will return to them to establish His kingdom on earth (Deut 30:1-3; Jer. 12:14-15; Is. 11:10-12).

Yehudah listened as if he were tolerating us, but on the positive side, he did accept a Messianic Gospel tract in the end going into further detail about what we shared with him. He did admonish us to be careful about what we were saying because in some

areas of Israel, openly proclaiming Y'shua as Messiah is not tolerated. But we must do so regardless; and in keeping with what the Apostle Peter said in Acts 5:29 when charged not to preach Jesus



Todd with Yehudah

among the Jewish people anymore, our response must be: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

† ☆ † ☆ †

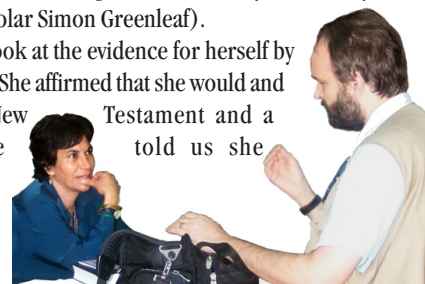
Next, we went two blocks up and felt led of the Spirit to enter a tourist information center. Once inside, Robert and I

met a Jewish lady at the information desk. Her name was **Katrina**. Our conversation and Gospel witness to her was extensive and lengthy. Working with tourism this lady had pretty much heard of everything under

the sun from tourists visiting from all over the world. Therefore our approach had to be memorable and unique from all the stuff she has heard before rehashed over and over again. Her view of the Bible - both the Tanakh (Old Testament) and B'rit Hadashah (New Testament) was somewhat New Age and egalitarian in that she believed all religious books of the major World Religions are equally valid and true. She alluded to the Kabala (a set of Jewish mystical occult writings of the Middle Ages) placing it on equal level with the Bible. Our answer was that the Bible authenticates itself as being inspired by God and superior in scope and content than any other religious literary rival because of manuscript evidence and transmission, fulfilled prophecy about Messiah and Israel, and archaeology. All of these taken together in their cumulative force have indisputably verified the Bible true in all the claims it makes. We further asserted that the gospel records are credible

eyewitness accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. They are accepted as admissible evidence in any competent court of law (see the book *"The Testimony of the Evangelists"* written by noted lawyer and eminent jurisprudence Scholar Simon Greenleaf).

We challenged her to look at the evidence for herself by reading the New Testament. She affirmed that she would and gladly accepted a Hebrew New Testament and a Messianic Gospel tract. She would read both. Before leaving her, we concluded our conversation by telling her that, if she had doubts about the truth of Jesus being



Katrina with Todd

the Messiah, she should try a simple experiment: when she is at the end of her rope to call on Y'shua in the day of trouble and He will answer her and prove that He is who He claims to be - Lord and Messiah. If she did this with a sincere, seeking and open heart, she will not be disappointed but will personally verify and discover this truth. God's Word promises this very thing.

Continued on page 5

In This Issue:

<i>Proclaiming the Messiah in Israel!</i>	1
<i>Israel: The Sign of the End Times</i>	2
<i>Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables</i>	3
<i>Exodus 12: Christ Our Passover Lamb</i>	4

ISRAEL: THE SUPER SIGN OF THE END-TIMES (PART 4)

There have been two dispersions in Israel's history collectively referred to as the Diaspora. The first dispersion of Jews from the land of Israel began in 721 B.C. when the Assyrians invaded the Northern Kingdom of Israel and led them away into captivity for their gross idolatry and disobedience to the Law of Moses (Isaiah 10:5-7; 2 Kings 17:5-23). The last stage of this dispersion

occurred in 586 B.C. At that time, the Babylonian armies led by King Nebuchadnezzar laid siege against Jerusalem and conquered the Southern Kingdom and took the Jews of Judea and Jerusalem captive into Babylon for seventy years (Jeremiah 25:4-12; Daniel 9:1-2; 2 Chronicles 36:14-20). In 539 B.C., the Persian king, Cyrus, issued a decree allowing 50,000 Jews to return to the land of Israel under the leadership of Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah (Ezra 1:1-6:22; Nehemiah 11:1-13:31).

Both the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions are considered a single dispersion instead of two since half of the nation went into exile in 721 B.C. and the other half going into exile in 586 B.C. But before God scattered them in the first dispersion, He gave them warning after warning to forsake their disobedient and wicked ways through His servants, the prophets. Israel did not heed their warnings of divine judgment and calls for repentance. Because He knew they were reprobate and unwilling to return to Him, the Lord displaced and scattered them from the Land (Jeremiah 5-6; 8:7-17; 2 Chronicles 36:14-17).

The second dispersion of the nation came in 70 A.D. when Titus and his Roman legions burned and razed Jerusalem and razed the Temple, literally not leaving one stone upon another, thus fulfilling the

prophecies of Micah and Jesus, found in Micah 3:12 and Matthew 24:2. In fact, in the early 1990's, archaeologists doing excavations along the southern part of the Western Wall unearthed a pile of those original Temple stones that were dismantled stone by massive stone in 70 A.D. -- an ancient testament to the veracity of Jesus' prophecy and the historical accuracy of the New Testament.

The Bible not only predicted the fact of Israel's dispersion, but also the condition the Jews would be in during it. The Jews would not have a king to sit on David's throne, nor would they have a Temple in Jerusalem, nor priesthood to offer sacrifices; and finally, they would no longer worship idols.

Hosea foresaw this dispersed state after 70 A.D. and predicted this to be Israel's scattered condition "for many days." Hosea 3:4-5 reads:

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim."

In this prophecy as with several others found in the Old Testament, Israel's state and condition is accurately described during the long worldwide dispersion of their nation that has existed between the first and second advent of the Messiah Jesus! A closer look at the text in Hosea 3 provides a very detailed corroboration of how this prophecy is being fulfilled from the time of the first century A.D. until now. This period of Jewish history (which has already lasted for almost two thousand years) has been formally called by Jewish and secular historians "the Diaspora"; and it was foretold in the prophetic word in Hosea some 750

years before Christ!

In this dispersed state, Israel would no longer have a "prince or king." The throne of David has been vacant of a lineal successor (a prince) and broken down since 586 B.C. to this very day. This will remain so until the return of Jesus the Son of David who will sit on the Davidic throne after a long period of absence (see Ezekiel 21:25-27; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 15:14-17).

With the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. and the subsequent dissolution of the Levitical priesthood, Israel was left without the appropriate animal sacrifices or a Temple to sacrifice them in.

They would no longer worship false gods in temples built with "**Sacred Pillar**" commonly used to worship the false gods of Canaan (Ex 34:13-14; Deut. 7:5). The "**Ephod**" was a part of the special dress the High Priest of Israel wore and also gave divine guidance and direction (Lev. 8:7; 1 Sam. 23:9-11; 30:7-8). Thus, Israel would be scattered throughout the world without centralized spiritual leadership and guidance provided by the High Priest for the nation. In addition to that, the Jews would be free from idolatry and the worship of idols or the

"**Teraphim**" while in a scattered state. The teraphim images in ancient Israel were household idols used for objects of worship and the forbidden practice of divination (see Gen. 31:19, 30,32; Jud. 18:17, 24; 1 Sam. 15:23; 2 Kgs. 23:24). When one closely examines the Prophecy of Hosea about the condition of Israel's dispersion in their past, present and future, one cannot help but agree with the comments of C. I. Scofield on this same passage of prophetic Scripture:

"This prediction has been remarkably fulfilled in the condition of Israel since the time of Christ. Scattered, without political entity under a king or a prince, and performing no sacrifices since the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in A.D. 70, they have yet retained their identity and avoided idolatrous worship of sacred stones or idols. Chapter 3 is one of the classic O.T. passages describing Israel's past, present, and future." (The New Scofield Study Bible, p. 894).

In next month's issue, we will examine the reasons why God scattered Israel throughout the nations as a sign for the entire world to see. †



from the Diaspora Museum, Tel Aviv



Teraphim



Ephod

Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age

Part 6 - the Parable of the Sower and the Seed

MATTHEW 13:7, 22

"And some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked them." (Matt. 13:7)

Continued from last month's article. The second thorn Jesus mentions in this parable is the "deceitfulness of riches."

Even if thorny-ground hearers had every mundane care met so that they would have no reason to worry about them anymore, there is yet another thorn that goads them on to pursue after the deceitfulness of riches. The pursuit of perishable riches is indeed harmful as a brier of thorns. **"For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"** (1Tim. 6:10). Much of the sins of murder, larceny, extortion, thievery, robbery, fraud, and embezzlement are always directly attributed to the love of money. It is one of the fundamental reasons why evil continues in the world today unabated. Today like never before, the covetous obsession with amassing a monetary fortune is the primary activity of our society. Go into any neighborhood bookstore and you will find whole rows devoted to this ever-popular topic, while hardly a shelf or two is given on sound Biblical teaching for the spiritual betterment of men.

Wealth, per se, is not evil or deceitful; but it is when those who have it prefer it above the Lord Jesus Christ and look to wealth as the answer and cure-all for everything. The deceiving nature of riches is that they may appear to promise security and fulfilling satisfaction, but are actually proven to be a poor filler for the God-shaped void in men's hearts crying for eternal fulfillment. Wealth can be lost in an unstable economy. In one moment, the money mogul finds himself basking in his millions, and in the next loses it all to bankruptcy or to some other unforeseeable economic calamity. For just when someone thinks acquired riches protect him from any harm and give unfailing security, they suddenly fly away unexpectedly out of the grasping hands of the greedy. Those who foolishly set their hearts on the temporal reality of wealth fail to realize it will gradually or speedily vanish away depending on the rate of spending. And if someone should steal it suddenly, it is gone without a trace, without hope of total retrieval (Prov. 23:5). Death will put an irreversible end to the wealth of the rich. Indeed, **"riches are not forever"** (Prov. 27:24). **"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is**

certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7).

The thorny-ground hearer's lustful heart disregards this, and spends all of his time trying to obtain more money for himself. The rest of the time is spent trying to retain the profits made at the expense of losing his eternal soul. There is no time for him to give his undivided attention to the gospel of Jesus Christ. His trust is in the "uncertain riches" of this world instead of the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17). The major personality trait of the thorny-ground hearer, which sticks out the most, is covetousness for earthly riches. He quickly abandons anything not subservient to this. Tragically, this includes the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Word of God sown in his heart is stifled out from a heart already filled with the thorns of worldly appetites and a pecuniary obsession. Covetous hunger for wealth that will eventually pass away is another satanic deception to keep men's hearts busily preoccupied from receiving "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8). Covetousness for wealth and worldly attainments are forbidden in Scripture. Jesus warns, **"Beware of covetousness. For one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses"** (Lk. 12:15).

The totality of existence is much more than what one materially has or the amount of currency in his possession. The real issue in life to be pointed out to the listener of the gospel inclined toward a thorny-ground disposition is not how much money you have, but have you given your undivided heart in faith to God, totally surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, then it is obvious Christ is not the center of your life as Lord and Savior. If He is, then you will forsake all at the

drop of hat to follow Him. If any person professes to be a Bible-believing Christian, yet spends most of his time musing over money matters, making investments, holding stocks and other financially related activities to increase personal revenue, and pays little regard, if any, to Christ and the Scriptures, his faith is a dead, barren, unsaving kind. The Word sown did not produce the saving results customary to a believing heart - **"for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also"** (Jms. 2:26). The Scriptures are not saying here that doing good works saves one, but one does good works through Christ because he is already saved by Him.

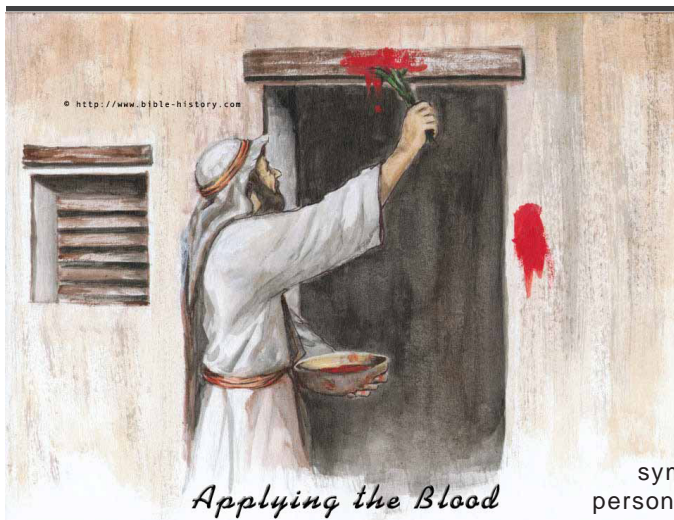
Next month we will continue our examination of the thorny-ground hearer and its practical implications for the Christian believer and the unbeliever. ✚



"Today like never before, the covetous obsession with amassing a monetary fortune is the primary activity of our society."

About the Author

Todd Baker is president of B'rit Hadashah Ministries — a Gospel outreach ministry to the Jewish people of Israel. He is also a full-time chaplain at Medical City Hospital. Since called to the ministry in 1984 his ministering experience includes Bible teaching, jail and prison chaplaincy, counseling, evangelism, and church ministry. Todd is also a theological consultant, writer, and tour leader in Israel for Zola Levitt Ministries. He has led several Gospel outreaches to the Jews of Israel commissioned and sent by Shalom, Shalom Messianic Congregation of Dallas, Texas. Todd holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biblical studies and a Master of Theology Degree from Dallas Theological Seminary. He is currently a Doctoral candidate at Trinity Seminary under the auspices of Liverpool University at Liverpool, England.✚



EXODUS 12: CHRIST OUR PASSOVER LAMB

Exodus chapter 12 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible for the simple fact that it is where God instituted the Passover for Israel and, at the same time, it establishes one of the most prominent types in the Bible that prefigures the Messiah in His atoning death on the cross. The Passover is the epochal event in Jewish history -- a Jewish celebration observed every year that has lasted for some 3,500 years, virtually making it the oldest holiday celebrated in the world! The Passover was the signal event that brought deliverance for Israel out of the bondage of slavery in Egypt. God instructed the Israelites on that first Passover night to slay a lamb and to sprinkle the blood of it upon the doorposts and lintels of their houses so that when the Lord passed through the land of Egypt to strike down the first born of Egypt, Israel and their firstborn would be spared and saved from the destruction that was coming (Ex. 12:1-13).

The Passover lamb and the shedding of its blood was the crucial thing for Israel's redemption from Egypt and points to a greater reality in the very qualifications and specifications God required for Israel to use. Indeed, what God ordained here in the qualifications and stipulations for sacrificing the Passover lamb beautifully typify, and find detailed fulfillment in, the person and death of Jesus the Messiah as God's final Passover lamb. The forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist, astutely understood the paschal significance and Messianic type and made the prophetic application of the Passover lamb of Exodus 12 to Jesus when he prophetically declared of Him **"Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29).

Before delving into this study any further, it behooves us to first define what we mean by a Type. A Type in Scripture

is used to prefigure or symbolize an event or person yet to happen in the future. A Type is thus predictive in nature and prophetic in its primary use in the Bible. Every Type is a divinely ordained correspondence between a person, event, or institution that serves as a prophetic disclosure about the future. The large body of Types found in the Bible are Messianic; they point to a particular aspect of His person, life, and accomplishments foretold about the first and second advent. Therefore, since the whole of Scripture is the mirror of Messiah, we should expect to see the reflection of His image all throughout the pages of Holy Writ, particularly in the Types (see All the Messianic Prophecies of the Bible, by Herbert Lockyer, p. 212).

***"God told Israel to do
typically with the
Passover lamb what He
would fulfill actually
with the True Lamb"***

- Kevin J. Conner

The Anti-Type is the fulfillment by that thing or person represented or foreshadowed by the earlier type. The Passover lamb of Exodus 12 as a Type clearly points ahead to the Anti-Type -- Jesus Christ, our Passover lamb slain for us. Thus, as another author has written before us, "God told Israel to do **typically** with the Passover lamb what He would fulfill **actually** with the True Lamb" (Interpreting The Symbols And Types, by Kevin J. Conner). The Apostle Paul understood this Type all too well

when writing in 1 Corinthians 5:7 **"Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."** The Passover lamb as a type not only points ahead to Jesus Christ our Passover lamb slain and sacrificed for our sins, but also points back to the foreordained and predestined fact of God's plan before the world began that Jesus Christ, the lamb of God, would be slain for humanity's sins. In Revelation 13:8, we read that Jesus was the lamb **"slain from the foundation of the world."**

"From the foundation of the world" means before the world began, and thus from an eternal perspective, God determined in eternity past before time began and the cosmos was created that Christ should die for the sins of man. It was decreed and decided upon within the eternal counsels of the triune Godhead that God the Son would be man's Perfect Passover Lamb. In doing so, the Lord gave advance witness and prophetic type of this blessed reality by revealing through the Passover lamb of Exodus 12, the crucified and atoning Messiah to come. In His Person and death, Jesus fulfilled the prophetic picture and Type of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12 in every detail and aspect associated with it.

In the next issue or two, we will closely examine the manner, qualities, and characteristics God gave in association with this Passover Lamb in the Old Testament and how they are precisely fulfilled in God's final Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, in the New Testament. †



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Proclaiming the Messiah - Continued from page 1

"Call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me. Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know" (Psalm 50:15; Jeremiah 33:3).

† ☆ † ☆ †

Later that day, we drove to a place on the northern shore of the lake of Galilee where Jesus restored Peter in John 21 and where Jesus performed 18 of His 33 miracles in and around that area. While Robert and I were looking

out on the waters of Galilee, two young Jewish men approached us and asked us what happened at this place. Robert and I proceeded to tell them about the great events written in the 21st chapter of the Gospel of John. From that brief Bible lesson and witness about the resurrection of Y'shua the Messiah, one of the young men wanted to engage in a controversial political discussion about Israel, the Arabs and the whole Middle East crises involved with it. At this point, it was more of a monologue with this young man wanting to hear himself attempt to wax eloquent.

He rambled on about how Israel (believe it or not!) was the real terrorist state and the Arabs were the innocent victims from the beginning of the conflict. He even went so far as to say, against Scripture, history, and archaeology, the Arabs lived in the land long before the Jews lived there and they should give more land away to the Palestinian Arabs to bring about peace (contra the failed Oslo Peace Accords which brought more terrorism and death to Israel afterwards than any time before!). Sadly, this young man's myopic perspective seems to have blinded him to the dangerous realities of Israel's threatened existence in the Middle East. The very nation he falsely



Todd with Judas (center) and his friend

accused in our hearing of being no better than the Arab dictatorship around it actually is the only nation in that region that guarantees his democratic rights to speak out against the state of Israel. I believe he has been hoodwinked by the radical left in Israel whom he was parroting, and also by the Arab fifth column working undercover in Israel against Israel by dividing the Jews against each other over the current Middle East crisis.

In his political naiveté and detached idealism, this young man thought dictators like Arafat and all the other dictators of the Arab world could easily

be appeased by giving into their demands. But we obligingly pointed out to this person that history has repeatedly taught us those dictators and tyrants simply cannot be appeased; therefore it has been and will be no different with Arab dictators of the likes of Arafat, Hussein, Assad, and others. We firmly and calmly told him that he was dead wrong in his wild assertions; that the Scriptures, history, and the plain facts of the case as they stand clearly refute his ridiculous and absurd claims made against his own country.

Any patriotic Jew of Israel would have rightly considered his insane denunciations made against the Jewish State of Israel treasonous and this person a "meshumed" (Hebrew for "traitor"). As a chilling conclusion to this unpleasant affair, when we parted company from this man and his friend, the young man told us his name - he said: **"My name is Judas!"** Pray that this Judas will not meet the same horrible end as Judas of old did in his treachery. Ask God to open his blind eyes to the great truths of Y'shua and God's unconditional love for and defense of Israel (see Isaiah 54:17; Jeremiah 33:3), lest this person find himself opposing God and losing his own soul in eternal perdition. †

Comments? Suggestions?

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John
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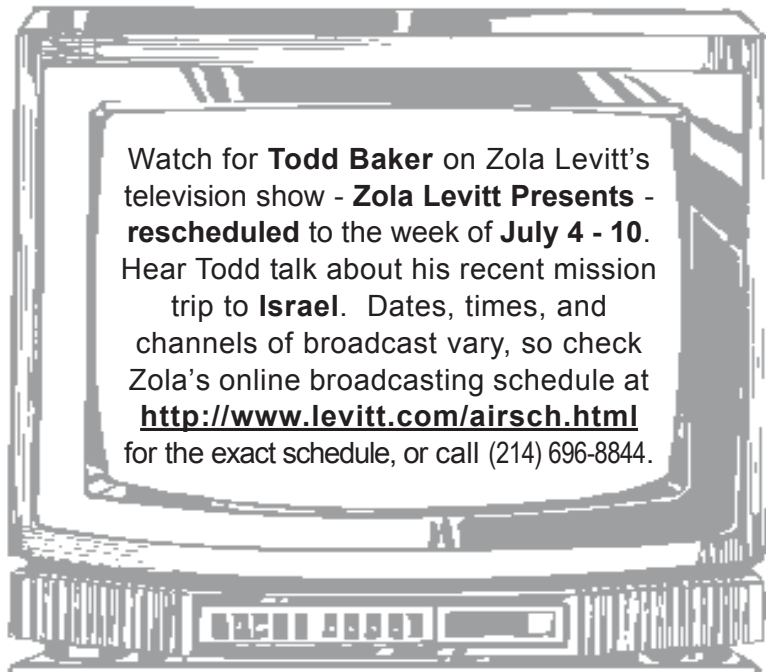
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Join Todd Baker as he assists Zola Levitt in an enriching evening of teaching the Bible and the Jewish roots of Christianity. Each Friday evening at 7:30 at the Biblical Arts Center located at Park Lane and Boedeker in Dallas, Texas. For more information, visit <http://www.levitt.com/congregation.html> or call (214) 696-8844 during normal business hours.

Search the Scriptures

This is a monthly newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries. Special thanks go to several people who helped to make this newsletter possible:

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