

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John  
5:39

A Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries



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## PROCLAIMING THE MESSIAH IN ISRAEL



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*B'rit Hadashah Ministries is a non-denominational 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.*

On the morning of April 22, our Gospel witness began at CaCao Restaurant with our waitress whose name was Leora. Robert and I simply expressed our sincere and deep gratitude for what her people gave to us — the Bible, Yeshua the Messiah, and the Judeo-Christian ethic by which most of Western civilization was greatly influenced and governed. We further elaborated that it is the Messiah who is the crowning achievement of the Jewish people. He is the central Person that unites the Tenach and the Brit Hadashah together. She marveled at what we said and remarked that this was all new to her. We went on to inform her that Jesus is the Messiah of her people by virtue of the fact that He fulfilled those specific prophecies made about the Messiah in the Jewish Bible (Tenach) through His epochal life, death, and resurrection. She gladly accepted the Brit Hadashah (Jewish New Testament) from us and said she would read it.

† ☆ † ☆ †

The next witnessing encounter that day tested our resolve (particularly mine) to preach God's love for the unlovable. The person I am referring to was an Arab man who was the attendant at the entrance to the Church of Gallicantu, the site where Peter denied Jesus three times and where Christ stood on trial before

Caiphas the High Priest in his palace. The Arab man was responsible for collecting the nominal fee required for entering this genuine Holy site. In our conversation with him, the Middle East crisis between Israel and the Arabs came up. Both he and an elderly British man sitting in the booth with him went absolutely ballistic when we casually mentioned that God is restoring the Jewish



Todd Baker

*"Love  
Your  
Enemies"*

people to their ancient homeland as the Bible precisely predicted beforehand. Both of these men, especially the Arab man, began spouting the most loathsome anti-Semitic vitriol against the Jewish people. They accused both America and Israel of being Terrorist States against the Arab world. In my mind, I was utterly appalled and enraged that I wanted to vociferously denounce them as vile anti-Semitic liars. But Robert took the lead by patiently

explaining to them that only the supernatural love of God revealed through Jesus the Messiah can bring positive change in the individual and, by outward extension,



permanent peace to the Middle East.

It was at this specific point that the Lord was testing my faithfulness to His teaching about loving one's enemies. My natural inclinations wanted to blast and verbally excoriate both of these hate-filled men. But I found the Holy Spirit sovereignly intervened and took control of my mind and heart on this matter. Softly, yet firmly,

I reiterated what Robert said about God's love for them as revealed through the Gospel freely given to all, both Jew and Arab, so that Messiah can unite them as one, which He will do perfectly when He returns. What Robert had eloquently said quelled their anger into attentive silence as they listened to the unique message of the Gospel he and I proclaimed.

***"A soft answer turns away wrath."***  
(Proverbs 15:1)

I reinforced Robert's witness with my personal testimony of how Christ's great love transformed me, once a violent, antipathetic atheist and hater of God and those who believed in Jesus Christ, into a faithful servant who wants to humbly share that love with a world in dire need. Jesus said all true followers of His are to love their enemies and bless those who curse them (Matthew 5:44). Robert and I did just that, but only by the power of the Spirit of God's supernatural grace. The best way for Christians to love the unlovable is by showing the character of Christ's love in both word and deed. We did this by giving them the Gospel. Our witness silenced the voice of the enemy speaking through them so much so that Robert was able to give this Arab man a New Testament to read in Hebrew! Quite amazing the power of God is!

† ☆ † ☆ †

Later that afternoon, I decided to buy an ice cream in the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem. We shared with the owner and his family that the God of Israel has

*Continued on page 6*

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he grace of God is a fundamental aspect of salvation and is the sole means by which man's redemption is accomplished. The renowned classic hymn "Amazing Grace" is the best-known hymn of the Christian Church and has been universally heard by both Christian and non-Christian alike. But what exactly is so amazing about this grace?

Like many theological words, the word and use of *grace* is one of the several common words Christians frequently use in their witness and testimony to the unbeliever without really defining and explaining what it exactly means. Grace has routinely been defined as the undeserved favor of God shown to man. A more precise definition would be to add an additional feature to that by stating:

***Grace is the unmerited favor of God given to sinful men who deserve nothing but positive demerit instead.***

The single source for this grace flows from God the Father through the incarnation of God the Son made effectual by the work of God the Holy Spirit in the heart of the one who believes. It is by this free and unmerited grace that sinners are forgiven, justified, and declared in right standing before God as objects of His everlasting love solely based on who God is and what He has done through Christ in spite of what we are and what we have done.

In this series of articles to come, we will study what grace is, the need for grace, the manifold aspects of grace, and the all-sufficiency of grace for the Christian life.

In the Old Testament, the word for grace is generally denoted by two Hebrew words—*hen* and *hesed*. The word *hen* basically connotes the unmerited favor a superior liberally shows to an inferior. The word can also be translated to mean "favor," "kindness," or to be "well-favored." The word is associated with God bestowing blessings on man, both temporal and physical, expressed by a deliverance from both physical and spiritual dangers (Jer. 31:2; Ex. 33:19). *Hesed* is translated to mean

# The Doctrine of Divine Grace

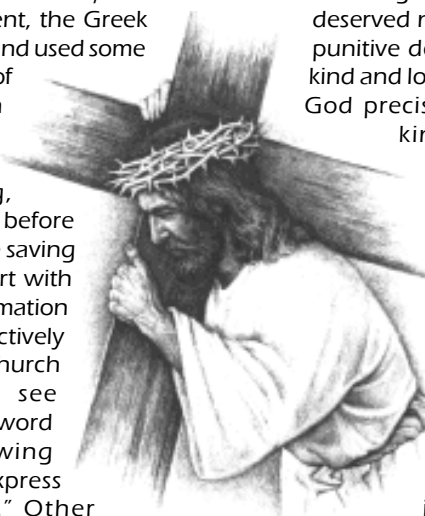
*(Psalm 86:15, 103;*

*Romans 5:21;*

*Ephesians 2:4-9)*

"loving-kindness" and is the unconditional love God expresses to His people Israel particularly as it is seen and revealed in the eternal and immutable covenants He made with them (2 Sam. 7:15; Ex. 20:6).

In the New Testament, the Greek word for grace is *Charis* and used some 125 times. The meaning of *Charis* conveys both an undeserved gift of overwhelming kindness to the undeserving, producing acceptability before God, and also the divine saving influence upon the heart with the subsequent transformation of the person's life collectively demonstrated in the Church for the world to see (Ephesians 1:1-14). The word can also mean "showing mercy," or "to freely express favor upon someone." Other synonyms used for grace in Scripture are loving-kindness, mercy, compassion, tender mercies, mercy, love, and long-suffering.




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***Grace is the heart and lifeblood of the gospel....***

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The fullest meaning, embodiment, and greatest expression of God's grace freely given to undeserving man occurred when God sent Jesus Christ into the world to be the atonement for man's sin and

thereby redeem him from its destructive and damning power. Grace, ultimately in this context of salvation, is not so much a principle or influence but is found in the Person of Jesus Christ. In Him God's love, mercy, favor, and acceptance is given to the undeserving and guilty sinner. ***"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"*** (John 1:17). The grace of God, as fully given through Jesus Christ, is the source and ground of eternal redemption (Titus 3:4-5; Ephesians 1:7). Love, mercy, redemption, kindness, and the forgiveness of sins are all kindred expressions of God's grace.

Grace is the heart and lifeblood of the gospel and seen in the act of God giving us His son (John 3:16). Grace of the saving order is personified alone in Christ in whom all the fullness of grace is given to all believers (John 1:14-16). Essentially defined, grace is the undeserving love and favor of God freely bestowed on the undeserving and ill-deserving who deserved nothing but positive and punitive demerit instead. Grace is kind and loving toward its enemies. God precisely demonstrated this kind of gracious love toward all of us when we were hostile enemies against His authority living contrary to His will according to the self-centered dictates of our own selfish will and ungodly pursuits rife with moral weaknesses coupled with immoral indulgences. Hence Paul,

once the enemy of Christ par excellence before He experienced the power of God's saving grace, could say for himself and for all of us believers in Christ now: ***"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us... For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life"*** (Romans 5:6-10). †



# Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age

Part 9 - the Parable of the  
Sower and the Seed

***“He that received seed into the good ground is he that bears the word, and understands it, which also bears fruit, and brings forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” (Matt 13:23).***

A third attribute of the good ground hearer is that he receives the whole counsel of God's Word, not only in his mind, but also more importantly with his entire heart. ***“If you shall confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made to salvation”*** (Romans 10:9-10). The implanted Word of God must come to fruition in the heart of faith.

The heart is a biblical metaphor for the center of man's being. It is the seat of all intellectual and emotional attributes of the personality. From the heart the wellspring of life flows (Proverbs 4:23). If salvation is to be experienced by the Word of God, it must be received with the whole heart focused on the Lord Jesus Christ alone. In doing that, the good ground hearer brings forth the fruits suitable for repentance, laying aside any moral wickedness and immoral excess so that he is able to receive the engrafted Word of God into his uncluttered heart. By using the plough of repentance given by God to till out the undesirable elements of ungodliness from his heart, the incorruptible seed of God's Word is able to freely grow to full maturity without hindrance, thereby producing the irrevocable fruit of eternal salvation in the soul.

The fourth attribute of the good ground heart is a “good” and “honest” heart (Luke. 8:15). The heart of a believer is transparent before God. He has nothing to hide nor a desire to keep things hidden from the all-seeing God in Whose sight ***“all things are naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we must give account”*** (Hebrews 4:13).

In what sense does Christ pronounce the good ground hearer “good”? He is certainly not good within his own heart. The heart of the natural man ***“is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked”*** (Jeremiah 17:9). The whole of his inner being is corrupted by sin — the will, emotions,

conscience, and intellect included. The Bible teaches that every person is born with a sinful, depraved nature estranged from, and at enmity with, God (Psalm 58:3; Romans 8:7). Hence, man is not inherently good as God esteems goodness. ***“There is none who does good, no, not one”*** is the divine testimony of Scripture (Romans 3:12). The only Person absolutely and perfectly good in the truest sense of the word is God. Jesus said, ***“There is none good but One, that is God”*** (Matthew 19:17). It is God alone who makes the human heart good by replacing it with an entirely new one through the implantation of the Word and regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. God promises, ***“a new heart I will also give you”*** (Ezekiel 36:26) to those who give their hearts to Him in faith. This is the “good work” God performs through Jesus Christ in the heart of every believer (Philippians 1:6). A new heart is created where the indwelling risen Christ inhabits. He is the sole reason why the good ground hearer is rendered “good” and by nothing else.

The heart of a good ground hearer is honest, too. That is, his faith is without guile and hypocrisy. From him the Word blossoms forth ***“out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned”*** (1 Timothy 1:5). In his heart there is no ulterior motive for accepting Christ. He is not in it for fame, fortune, or an easy living. His consummate goal is to press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The fifth attribute of the good ground hearer is that he keeps the Word of God (Luke 8:15). He yields constant obedience to the Word avouching his love for the Master and thereby shows proof that His profession of faith is real and not short lived, as the other three kinds of hearers previously examined proved to be. The good ground hearer is a practical doer of the Word and not just a casual listener of it. Because he abides in Christ, the living vine, and Christ the living Word lives in him, the good ground believer of the Gospel is fruitful for Him in every good work “increasing in the knowledge of God being rooted and grounded in the love of Christ” (Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:10). A true sincere believer, as the good ground hearted, will continue to grow in the grace of God from glory to glory.

The sixth attribute of the good ground hearer of the Gospel is endurance. The good ground hearer endures by the enabling grace of God and bears spiritual fruit on a variety of levels (30, 60, and 100 according to our Lord's calculation). The endurance of a good ground soul in the midst of severe trial, temptation, and excruciating testing reveals the quality of his faith in Christ is true and unimpeachable. The fruitful outcome of his service and perseverance is the perfection of Christian character infused in him by the impartation of God's Word which guides, consoles, feeds, and sustains him during the dark, unsure troubling moments in this difficult life. ✠



## 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.✠

# ISRAEL: The Super Sign of the End-Times (Part 7)

**T**he regathering and restoration of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland of Israel is one of the most prominent and recurring prophecies in Holy Scripture. As previously mentioned in past articles in this series, the Bible mentions two periods in which the Jewish people would be scattered from the land of Israel due to their disobedience to God.

The first dispersion initially began with the Northern Kingdom of Israel being taken into exile and captivity by the Assyrian invaders around 721 B.C. and was completed when the Southern Kingdom was conquered and deported to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. The Jews from the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom were allowed to return to the land seventy years later under the joint and capable leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The Jews remained in the land for over four hundred years under Gentile supervision and control.

The second dispersion of the Jews from the land, that was predicted by Jesus thirty years before it happened, occurred by the Romans in 70 A.D.

It is important to determine and distinguish which of the two dispersions

is meant when looking at the prophecies that deal with the scattering and regathering of the Jewish people because the prophecies about the second dispersion and regathering are frequently made as an antecedent and conspicuous sign

indicating the soon return of the Messiah to save the Jewish people (e.g., Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Isaiah 11, 49, 51, 59-66; Jeremiah 3, 16, 23, 30-33, Ezekiel 11, 20, 34, 36-39; Hosea 2, 6, 11, 14, Joel 3; Amos 9 Obadiah 1 and so forth).

Whenever these restoration/regathering to the land prophecies are found in Scripture, they are prefaced or include the word "again"

to thus denote a second time and must refer to the regathering after the second dispersion from Israel in A.D. 70. With both dispersions, the Jewish people never forgot their God-given homeland of Israel or its capital Jerusalem. The Psalms and the Prophets are filled with the Jewish longing and ardent desire to return

to the land and worship the Lord in Jerusalem by those Jews who were scattered and removed from the land God gave to them forever. This longing of millenniums is what the Jewish people simply call **Zionism**.

Zionism has its roots squarely in the Jewish Bible and has been the unifying force for uniting Jews together as a

people and a nation to return to the land of Israel and permanently remain there never to be removed or dispersed again. Zionism derives from the word Zion—another name for Jerusalem and by extension the land of Israel that has Biblical, national, religious, political, and Messianic overtones and implications. Wendell Stearns in his excellent Biblical survey of Zionism provides a good comprehensive overview on the central place Zionism holds in the life of the Jewish people when he writes:

"*Zionism*, formerly a desire realized in a movement first to establish, now to support, the State of Israel is a national, religious, and spiritual concept that goes back for millennia. It is debated as a concrete, geo-political concept and was struggled over, up to and since the physical restoration of the State. It has become the unifying concept of world Jewry, as much in the woes as in the wonders of Israel's regained nationhood...For many, Zionism has become so completely identified as a national and political movement that secular Zionists resent the claims Judaism and Christianity have made

upon it... Nevertheless, to identify Zion and Zionism only as a recent phenomenon or to reckon it solely as a Jewish expression of mankind's aspiration for ethnic and governmental sovereignty is a mistake. We err if we overlook the historical and spiritual foundations and core that make it such a pivotal force in today's world" (*Biblical Zionism*, pp. xi-xii).

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Zionism enjoyed a strong reemergence and took on

a more secular and geo-political outlook for the return of the Jewish people back to the land of Israel with the chief pioneer of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl. Yet despite the lack of biblical emphasis that is at the core of modern secular Zionism, God moved on Herzl to become one of the major influences to see the Jewish people return to the land.

In several articles to come in this series, we will examine and explore how Zionism was the impetus God used for the rebirth of the nation of Israel in 1948 and was thus the greatest single fulfillment of Bible prophecy in the last two thousand years since the time of Christ. †



Masada, site of the Jews' last stand against Rome



Theodor Herzl, the chief pioneer of modern Zionism

## Search the Scriptures

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## PRAYER REQUEST



Dear readers,


Please pray for our Gospel outreach team consisting of Robert Cuccia and myself as we go to Israel from **November 2nd through 20th** to conduct another witnessing campaign sharing the Gospel of Yeshua with His people. It is not too late to pledge your financial support to underwrite some of the cost for this outreach. May God bless you as you do so in blessing the Jewish people (Genesis 12:3).

Here is a suggested prayer list to use when praying for us.

We will give a full report of how things go over there in future newsletters.

Your servant in the Messiah,

Todd Baker



Join Todd Baker in an enriching evening of teaching the Bible and the Jewish roots of Christianity. The Shalom Shalom Congregation meets 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.

- ☆ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6).
- ☆ Pray that we have the Father's wisdom and guidance in everything we do (Psalm 32:8; 48:14; Colossians 4:5).
- ☆ Pray for witnessing opportunities (John 4:35; Luke 10:2; Acts 1:8).
- ☆ Pray that God will open the hearts of those who will hear (Psalm 110:3; Acts 16:14).

- ☆ Pray that God will give us the boldness to proclaim the Gospel to the Jew first and also the Gentile (Acts 4:31; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 6:19).
- ☆ Pray for spiritual unity and agreement among us (Psalm 133:1).
- ☆ Pray for our health, protection, safety, and God's protection from the hand of the enemy, both seen and unseen (Psalm 91; Matthew 6:13).
- ☆ Pray for spiritual fruit that will last (John 15:7-8; Galatians 5:22-23).
- ☆ Pray for favor among the Chosen People as we share the Gospel with them (Proverbs 12:2).
- ☆ Pray that the Chosen People will come to faith in Messiah (Christ) Jesus (Romans 10:1; Matthew 15:16; Mark 8:27-29, 14:61-62; Luke 9:18-20; John 4:25-26). †



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### Proclaiming the Messiah... Continued from page 1

not forgotten the promises and covenants He has made with their people Israel. These promises contained in the covenants find their fulfillment and blessing to them through the person and work of the Messiah whom we proclaimed to them was Yeshua. They heartily thanked us for our support and received a Gospel tract about why Jesus is the Messiah of Israel.



Todd at the ice cream parlor



When we returned to our hotel at the end of the day, Robert went downstairs and talked to the desk clerk who was at the front desk. Robert witnessed to her about the case for Jesus being the Messiah through the fulfillment of prophecies given in the Jewish Scriptures. He challenged her to read the New Testament and see for herself. I then came downstairs and offered her a complete Bible in Hebrew containing both the Old and New Testaments. She received it and a tract that has these prophecies and where they are found in the Scriptures.



The next day was sadly the day of our departure from Israel. We had to take a taxi from Jerusalem to the airport in Tel Aviv because our rental car was locked up in a public garage that would not open up until the day after we

left. Needless to say I was very upset and in my limited and self-centered perspective at that point began wondering why the Lord allowed this trying circumstance to occur. Ah, but God says in His Word,

***“My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor My ways your ways, says the Lord.”***  
(Isaiah 55:8-9)

The Lord allowed this significant inconvenience to happen so that we could witness to our taxi driver on the way to the airport.

She was a middle-aged woman. Her name was Ety. We told her that we were grateful for the gift of the Messiah and the Scriptures the Jewish people gave the Gentile world. She was happy to hear this and when we reached our destination, we were able to give her a Hebrew New Testament and materials about Jesus being the Messiah. We would not have been able to share the Messiah with her had our car not been inaccessible. God allowed this misfortune so that she could hear and believe in the good tidings of salvation.

*“Lord, forgive me when things do not go my way at times and I think circumstances should be scheduled around my convenience and ease. Often times You allow the inconveniences of life, the inconveniences of difficulty and hardship, to provide an opportunity to serve You, as You did in this particular event.”*

Lord willing, we are bound again for Israel from November 2 to November 20 to conduct our sixth Gospel outreach. Like the five Gospel outreaches before, I know the Lord will do ***“awesome things we do not expect”*** (Isaiah 64:3). †