

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John
5:39

A Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries



Volume 4, Number 2

February 2006

Search the Scriptures

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

Zola Levitt - Mark Levitt - Nancy Baker -
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For more information about our ministry, or to be added to our subscription list, you may contact Dr. Todd Baker by mail:

B'rit Hadashah Ministries
P.O. Box 796127
Dallas, Texas 75379-6127

or by E-mail: toddbus@yahoo.com

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Drawn to Yeshua

A NOVEMBER 2005 MISSION UPDATE, PART 2

BY BYRON ZAHM
guest author



Another mission to the Holy Land is being wrapped up. I'm waiting in the new Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv for my stopover flight to Vienna, Austria. My partner, Robert, was able to get the early flight, so I'll share some reflections with you during the last couple weeks of ministry here in Israel.

To be here in the Holy Land is a wonderful privilege. I am grateful to mention that this is my second mission in two years all made possible by the generosity of a number of ministries and individuals and their under-girding prayers.

First, I would like to thank the sponsoring ministries of Zola Levitt and B'rit Hadashah. We go as their representatives, but it is only made possible as you give to these dedicated ministries. When you give to either of these ministries or the Jew First Fund, you make it possible for us to minister the gospel on the streets of Israel. Second, I need to thank my humble church family in Minnesota who give liberally and exercise the faith that God is using them, through me, to reach God's people in Israel.

Finally, I need to thank my family, friends and co-workers who have

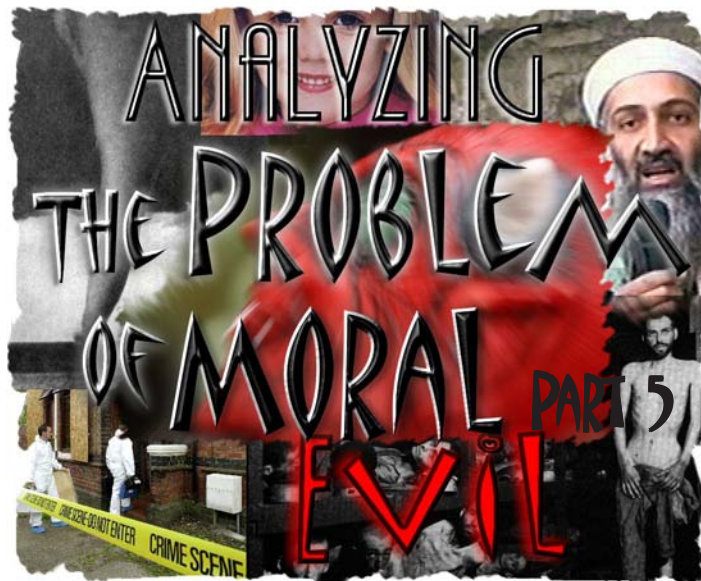
supported me and prayed for God's speed. Two days before I left for Israel, I learned my wife was expecting our sixth child. It is not easy leaving them behind. I have to trust God to take care of them and meet our family obligations, despite two weeks of unpaid leave. Knowing it is God's will, I am confident in my obedience. I'll say it again; it is a privilege to serve in the land of God's own people.

The work that we have done here will continue long after we return home. In fact, on this mission we have followed up on matters the Lord has done on at least two previous missions. In Haifa we spoke with *Arie*, operator of a music store. Robert and Todd had ministered to him once before. It wasn't long before he had recalled that initial encounter and was eager to engage in further discussion. It didn't hurt a bit that as Robert began to share the story of Isaac and Jacob that he declared "I've been thinking about that story all day long." As you can imagine, the dialogue progressed.

Arie had many questions, and we answered how Christ reigns supreme as prophet, priest and king. It

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As always, special thanks go out to Zola Levitt Ministries / To The Jew First Ministry for their ongoing funding contributions to B'rit Hadashah Ministries, helping to make these mission trips to Israel possible.



Dr. Todd Baker

Moral evil chiefly occurs when a wrong free choice is made. Moral free agency is not what is evil here, but it is in the misuse of that freedom by the wrong choice made that it becomes evil; an important distinction that always must be remembered when considering the problem of moral evil.

The allowance for freedom will naturally include the ability to choose evil and refuse to do good. To do good by force or coercion from God would mean such created beings were mere automata under His dictatorial control without having the ability to freely love the Creator and choose to do the good. For love by its very nature is not a forced thing but a voluntary act of the will freely done by the one who decides to love that person. God is love (1 John 4:8) and by the very meaning of that He will not force Himself on anyone of His free moral creatures.

Scripture tells us that the Lord Jesus stands at the door and patiently knocks (Revelation 3:20); He does not kick the door in. The Lord waits for us to be persuaded and won over by His gentle but persistent wooing to turn from evil and embrace the ultimate good, which is God Himself. In every possible or actual world where true and significant freedom exists, there must be present the ability to choose evil instead of the good. Christian scholar Norman Geisler draws such an inescapable conclusion from simple logic observing that,

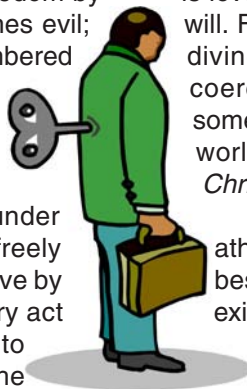
A free world where no one sins or even a free world where everyone sins and then gets saved is *conceivable* but it may not be *achievable*. As long as everyone is really free, it is always possible that someone will refuse the good. Of course,

God could force everyone to do good, but then they would not be free. Forced freedom is not freedom at all. Since God is love, he cannot force himself on anyone against their will. Forced love is not love; it is rape. And God is not a divine rapist. Love must work persuasively but not coercively. Hence, in every conceivable free world someone would choose to do evil, so a perfect evil-free world may not be possible (*Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, 224).

The Christian theist can legitimately point out to the atheist that the current present world order is not the best of all possible worlds created by God and that its existence is not permanent. God's design for the future is to defeat evil once and for all in a better world He has planned and promised for the future. The present world, though filled with gratuitous evil, is not the best of all possible worlds, but as ordained by the "manifold wisdom" of God is the best way to achieve and obtain the best possible world in the future.

Ultimately, the problem of moral evil is not a problem for God, but for man. Man was not created confirmed as morally perfect but was apparently created as spiritually immature for room to grow through obedience, but good and innocent. Nonetheless, in this state he was morally neutral, freely able to choose good or evil. Tragically, the wrong choice was made and confirmed throughout human posterity (see Genesis 2-3 and Romans 5). Moral evil, quite simply, is the consequence of human sin and the result of man's failure and disobedience to God.

But God mercifully did not allow man to remain in such a depraved state without a permanent remedy. He has offered this lasting remedy by sending His own unique Son Jesus Christ in the world to rectify and directly confront evil at every turn. Christ lived a morally perfect life outwardly proven in the face of evil, temptation, and tremendous suffering. Then He died on the cross to release us from its consuming power and rose again from death, to signify its



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Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age

The Parable
of the Leaven
Part 9
(Matthew 13:33)



When leaven is inserted into meal, it produces fermentation. It causes a convulsive disturbance generating strife, upheaval, trepidation, and antagonism. The leaven does not cease working in its vitriolic purpose until the fermentation process is complete—"till the whole is leavened." Leaven in this parable is the exact representation of false doctrine so that when it is inserted into the scriptural food of God's people, it tends to putrefaction, poisoning and polluting the Body of Christ with spiritual botulism. As to the pathological effects of the false doctrine of leaven, we are warned from the following Scriptures quoted below. It will do us well to seriously heed them, that we might rightfully discern the evil nature of this leaven so that we might purge it out and become a new lump.

"Now the [Holy] Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Timothy 4:1)

"For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail." (Isaiah 32: 6)

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

We have examined some of the various types of leaven permeating the church today. There is the leaven of false doctrine, the leaven of worldliness, the leaven of hypocrisy, the leaven of legalism, the leaven of selfishness, the leaven of man-centered religion, the leaven of modernism, the leaven of humanism, and the great many others that have crept into the church for centuries. The main leavening ingredient responsible for fermenting much of the present day church is of course

"The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."

- Matthew 13:33



the leaven of false doctrine, as evident by the presence of pseudo-Christian cults and isms that are inharmonious with the Word of God bringing deceit and destruction in their hellish wake. From the Scriptures it has been conclusively demonstrated that the leaven prefigures something bad, not something good. The popular interpretation teaches the Gospel is symbolized by leaven, and will completely evangelize the world before the return of Christ. If this were true, then the somber prophetic utterances of Jesus and the Apostles would be patently untrue—if indeed the world is to universally experience a rapid moral improvement through the expanding work of the Gospel working like leaven, as the popular interpretation of the parable of the leaven would have us to believe.

According to the teaching of the New Testament, Jesus foretold that the moral and social conditions right before His return to earth would be the same as the moral depravities that existed in the days of Noah prior to the worldwide flood and like the days of Lot before Sodom was destroyed with fire and brimstone. **"And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, and they built; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom**

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final defeat when He gloriously returns to remove the presence of evil in all aspects and those evil doers who practice and promote it. In that day, yet to come, God will be "all in all" and evil, with all the attendant atrocities it has brought for millennia, shall forever be removed from the new heavens and the new earth when "God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Faith in the goodness and sovereignty of God waits for that certain day with unabated and eager anticipation. †

Drawn to Yeshua...Continued from page 1

became apparent that he was looking for what the living Christ could supply. The more we spoke of the new covenant where God would put a new law in his heart (Jer. 31:31-34) and even give him a new spirit and a heart of flesh (Ez. 11:17-21), the more he opened up to us.

He longed for the freedom we had in Christ. He wanted to be free from the regulations of Judaism. He longed for freedom from the world and its ways but did not know how to break away. Our dialogue easily covered two hours. We concluded with an invitation that he declined to accept. He had more questions, he said. We encouraged him to go straight to God himself. A sincere heart, God will by no means cast out.

Even though the net was cast, and there was no "catch," we are encouraged. Arie was simply not quite ready. Salvation, as I know it, is not an event that occurs independently of other events. Robert and I are confident that Arie has taken a step towards God. Lord willing, we'll see him again on another mission. If not us, another faithful messenger may lead him to God. The step Arie made today is towards God. I can't help but think that, as we return home, we have left a sweet aroma, the fragrance of Christ (II Cor. 2:14-17).

I could also say the same for **Ron**. He works at another music store there in Haifa. He was basically irreligious and didn't want to talk religion. Well, if you're a Christian, that's an open

door and we walked right through it. After small talk and common ground was found, we spoke of having a relationship with the living God of Israel. You know, he actually thanked us before we left. He tasted in our dialogue something different and it wasn't religious. Until that night, all he had known and misunderstood of Christianity was what he had been taught in school and through American movies.

Also, in Haifa we followed up with Michael, a Jewish believer, whom Robert and I met on last year's mission. He is a beautiful brother in Christ with a musical talent to be admired. He has recorded an instrumental Guitar Praise CD called Ronu Shamayim! Rejoice, O Heavens! This is absolutely beautiful music. If I could, I would like to recommend that you listen to a sample found on his site at www.michaelnissim.com.

Michael is the kind of person you are blessed to know. We wanted to arrange a meeting with him and a local who inquired about Christianity and the New Testament. Michael was kind enough to oblige and met with the three of us. That evening, we four explored the two streams of prophecy concerning the Suffering Servant and the Conquering King. It was as thrilling an evening for us as it was our guest. His knowledge of the Old Testament and Judaism wonderfully

About the Author

Dr. 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, a Master of Theology Degree from Dallas Theological Seminary, and he recently earned his Doctorate Degree from Trinity Seminary under the auspices of Liverpool University at Liverpool, England. †

complimented our discussion of prophecy and its fulfillment in Christ. That night our guest left with the English translation Bible he requested as well as a local Jewish believing friend. What's more, God showed His providential hand. You see, our guest knows Michael's brother. It so happens they share the same employer.

Now, if you're a believer, and you likely are as a reader of this newsletter, you recognize that God is definitely up to something. As you look back on events in your life it is often only then that we recognize what God has done. God wants to perform more than acts to the sons of Israel; he wants us to know His ways as He did with Moses (Psalm 103:7). So then pray, agree with God in what He is doing and listen. You may hear the heavens rejoice with the sound of another soul who has found The Way. †

Matthew 13...Continued from page 3

it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30). The Apostles further confirmed these things in their inspired writings (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 2 Timothy 2:1-5; 2 Peter 3:3-4; 1 John 2:18; Jude 18). †

B'rit Hadashah Ministries

Growth in any ministry is a very important thing to happen, says Dr. Todd Baker, founder of B'rit Hadashah Ministries. For the first two years, we have greatly been supported by fewer than anticipated supporters whose donations, combined, average less than \$1500 per month which is far short of the \$7000 monthly budget needed to go full time. However, we do see growth, which is very important. In this age of "the prosperity gospel," we dislike having to ask for financial support, but the reality is that it is a necessity.

Presently, B'rit Hadashah Ministries is comprised of all volunteer staff so the majority of funds received goes straight to ministry newsletters, mission trips, Tanachs and other materials needed for the mission field. Even Todd Baker himself does not receive compensation at this point, but instead chooses to continue to work as a chaplain at a local Dallas hospital.

One thing for sure though, God is working through this Ministry in Israel. One of the ministry's faithful supporters is none other than Zola Levitt as well as others who give their financial support, as well as time and talent like Eric Oler and Elisa Retzlaff. These two are indeed sowing good seeds in heaven.

Most importantly, says Todd, we are very thankful to all who can support the ministry and are encouraging members of the ministry to take the challenge and sign up for any automatic contribution they can afford. Even with as little as \$15 per month, contributions from many supporters can make the difference we need to make our budget goal and increase the mission trips to Israel. We are undertaking a great mission with a greater reward.

May God Bless each of you as you give and may it be on a consistent basis.

Checks and money orders can be made out to:
B'rit Hadashah Ministries.

Name: _____

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Comments? Suggestions?

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other ways you can help...

If you would like to help this ministry but can't afford a financial commitment, suggest to your church pastor that Dr. Todd Baker come speak to your congregation about his work in Israel. Todd is available for speaking engagements, and can be reached via e-mail (toddbus@yahoo.com) or phone (214-356-2583) for scheduling information.

If you have access to the internet and the world wide web, would you consider receiving our newsletter via your e-mail rather than through the postal system? The money you would be saving our ministry in printing and postage cost by doing this would be a big help to us. Thank you to those of you who have already made the switch!

You will be able to see the newsletter in its full color form! And you will of course be able to print the newsletter at any time if you so desire. You will also have access to past editions. All you need is Adobe Acrobat reader (which is free).

Just send an e-mail to Todd at toddbus@yahoo.com and tell him to remove your postal address (include it in your note) and add your e-mail address. Or go to our updated web site (www.searchthescrpturesonline.org) and you can make the change yourself! It's that simple!



thank you for your support

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P.O. Box 796127

Dallas, Texas 75379-6127

e-mail: toddbus@yahoo.com

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February 2006 issue

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Dear readers,

Our newest Gospel outreach to Israel is planned for **March 19-April 6** of this year. This year, we will have TWO missionary teams going to Israel. **Paul Colley** and I will be teamed up as before, and our new team will consist of **Teresa Brown and Sue LeGrand!** Our teams will conduct a witnessing campaign sharing the Gospel of Yeshua with His people. It is because of your prayers and God's will that each mission has been so amazingly successful. And this year, we look forward to being twice as successful!

Please pray for us, and pledge what financial support you can afford 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. As always, we will give a full report of how things go over there in future newsletters.

Your servant in the Messiah,
Todd Baker

- ✧ 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).

Visit either of our websites:

www.SearchTheScripturesOnline.org

www.worshipradio.com/B'ritHadashahMinistries.htm



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 7:00 at Fellowship Bible Church located at Meadow Road and Central in Dallas, Texas. For more information, visit <http://www.levitt.com/congregation.html> or call (214) 356-2583.

- ✧ 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). †