

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John
5:39

A Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries



Volume 5, Number 8

August 2007

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.

The following series of articles is a detailed account of our thirteenth Gospel outreach to Israel that occurred from March to April 2007. I am happy to report that the Lord gave our outreach team, consisting of Robert Cuccia, Teresa Brown, Sue LeGrand, and myself, ample opportunities to boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah to His own people.



Todd Baker

This trip and these series of articles are devoted to the memory and ministry of Zola Levitt, whose passing into glory has now approached a year. But his vision of Jewish evangelism lives on in this very ministry to Israel. In these series of articles, the reader will hear from all four outreach team members.

Our second day in Tiberias was one of the roughest days of ministry in Israel. Robert and I were rebuffed and rejected in almost every place we brought the Gospel of Yeshua the Messiah. It's not so much that Robert and I were not received or welcomed, but the tragic fact that the Messiah who came to redeem Israel almost two thousand years ago and was rejected by much of Israel then sadly meets with the same rejection today in the person of His servants like ourselves; for Jesus said in Luke 10:6: **"He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."** While a few people on this day did receive the message of the Gospel both by spoken word and the printed word, by and large, once we made ourselves known as followers of Yeshua HaMashiach, we were summarily dismissed. But if God be for us who can be against us (Romans 8:31)?

Robert and I ventured into a ceramic art shop during the late afternoon. The owner, and what seemed to be her spiritual mentor and advisor, greeted us. This woman was obviously under the bewitching influence of this man. He was from India and was a quasi-guru advocating an Eastern mystic blend of Hinduism and Buddhism. The man's name was Silan. He seemed to exude a natural charisma by which the gullible, unlearned, and naive could be easily swayed. When we made clear that we were Bible-believing followers of Jesus the Messiah, Silan proceeded to tell us that he believes in an

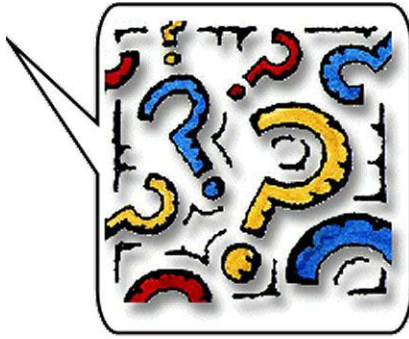


impersonal "Christ" defining him as a state of enlightened consciousness. He then went on to disturbingly claim that the human Jesus was not divine but simply attained a certain level of "divine" consciousness that we can all attain.

Such a heresy is not new and is flatly contradicted by the direct claims of exclusive deity Jesus made for Himself in the Gospels (see Matthew 22:41-46; Mark 16:61-62 John 8:58-59) and the rest of the New Testament as well (John 1:1-2, 14; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Timothy 3:16). This quasi guru claimed he personally knew Jesus, that he "walked" and "talked" with him. But his claims, when tested by the exposing light of the Scriptures, clearly showed Silan's supernatural encounter was not with the real Jesus of the Bible but a blasphemous counterfeit—one inspired by the Deceiver, Satan, who comes in the form of an "Angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11: 13-15) to deceive with "another gospel" proclaiming "another Christ" of a different kind. Bible-believing Christians are commanded from God's word to "test the spirits" whether they are from God (see 1 John 4:1-3).

When put to the test and scrutiny of Scripture, Silan's false "Christ" of Eastern Mysticism was found wanting and in great contradiction over who Jesus really is from the Scripture. How an individual answers the ultimate question of who Jesus Christ is will invariably determine a person's eternal destiny (John 3:16-21, 36). Silan's superficial diagnosis for man is that we are "ignorant" until we receive spiritual enlightenment after the mold of Eastern Mysticism. Scripture, however, we told him, teaches man's problem is sin (disobedience to God's Law as revealed in the Holy Scriptures) of which ignorance of the one true

Continued on page 4



**NOW THAT'S
A GOOD
QUESTION!!**

QUESTION:

Are there Apostles in the Church today like those who existed in the first century Church?

ANSWER:

The word "apostle" in the New Testament Greek means "sent one." So in that sense all believers are apostles in that they are sent by God to witness for Christ. However, the office of an Apostle to which Paul and the eleven were called was unique and special, and only for that particular time. Indeed, Acts 1:22-23 lays down the requirement for being an Apostle in this regard. Thus, anyone who claims to be an Apostle in this way today is deceived or ignorant since one would have to have personally and physically been with Jesus from His baptism to His ascension to heaven.

QUESTION:

Were Jews saved before the coming of the Messiah?

ANSWER:

Jews who believed were saved before the coming of the Messiah because they trusted in the promises of God concerning redemption and the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah. Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced to see His coming and was glad to see by the prophetic perspective of his faith (see John 8:56). The same holds true of all the Jewish Old Testament saints (see Hebrews 11:13-16, 39-40) who also looked ahead to the coming of the Messiah who were saved by this forward look just as Christians are saved by looking back to the cross.

QUESTION:

Does the term Jew refer only to those who came from the Tribe of Judah?

ANSWER:

The Bible clearly uses the term Jews for all of Israel—the entire twelve tribes and not just Judah. Paul called himself a Jew and was from the Tribe of Benjamin (Acts 21:39; Philippians 3:5). In the New Testament the same people who are called Jews 174 times are also called Israel no fewer than 75 times (see also Acts 22:3; Rom. 11:1-2; 2 Corinthians 11:22; Romans 9:4-5). Furthermore, the Old Testament also used the term Judah and Israel synonymously in Ezra 6:17; 8:35; Zechariah 1:19; 10:6; 8:13 and other passages to show they are one and the same people.



**Do you have a question
about Christianity,
Judaism, or the Bible?
Ask Todd! Just send
him an email at:
todd@brit-hadashah.org**

**Don't have email?
Send your questions to:
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PO Box 796127
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About the Author

Dr. Todd Baker is president of B'rit Hadashah Ministries and Pastor of Shalom, Shalom Messianic Congregation in Dallas. He has been a chaplain at Medical City Hospital for over a decade. Todd holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biblical studies, a Master of Theology Degree from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Apologetics from Trinity Seminary under the auspices of Liverpool University at Liverpool, England. He is a theological consultant and writer for Zola Levitt Ministries and has appeared on Zola Levitt Presents. With his extensive experience in Jewish evangelism, he has led several Gospel outreaches to Israel. †

Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age



The Parable of
Hidden Treasure
Part 10
(Matthew 13:44)
by Todd Baker

The modern day rebirth of the nation of Israel in 1948 is a definite sign heralding the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The regathering of the Jews back to the Promised Land prior to the return of the Messiah was foretold by the Biblical prophets of old. God told Isaiah seven hundred years before the birth of Christ of Israel's dispersed and regathered condition in the last days: ***"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth"*** (Isaiah 11:11-12).



This great prophecy of Isaiah is in the process of fulfillment today. The prophecy is speaking about the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel from the second dispersion and destruction of their nation by the Romans in 70 A.D. ***"And He shall set up a banner for the nations"*** could refer to the flag or emblem of the fledgling nation of Israel raised on May 14, 1948 to announce the rebirth of Israel as a nation allowing the Jews to return to their native homeland by the hundreds of thousands. The Star of David has been a national symbol for some 2,500 years identifying the Jews as a chosen nation and people of God. The Star of David has been the

official "banner" to stand for the national rebirth of Israel since 1948. Before Isaiah's day, Moses prophesied Israel's future resurrection from the many nations of the earth some 3,500 years in advance! The full return of the Jews to the land of Israel will not occur until Christ returns to the earth to reclaim His long lost treasure. With this, agree the prophetic words God spoke to Moses in Deuteronomy 30:3-5: ***"That then the Lord your God will turn your captivity and have compassion upon you, and will return and gather you from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you. If any of yours be driven out to the outmost parts of heaven, from there will the Lord your God gather you, and from there will He fetch you. And the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed. And He will do you good, and multiply you above your fathers."***

The full spiritual regeneration of national Israel will not be completed until the period of the Great Tribulation, at which time they will embrace their Messiah Jesus, the One they spurned and rejected so long ago. Then shall come to pass the awesome prophecy of Isaiah who predicts the whole nation of Israel will be born-again and saved in one day: ***"Before she travailed, she brought forth. Before her pain came, she was delivered of a***



"Again the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hid in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

- Matthew 13:44



man child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth says the Lord? Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb says your God?" (Isaiah 66:7-9).

The current restoration of Israel as a nation indicates the Lord's gradual extrication of His buried earthen treasure, the Jews. However, this unearthing will not be completed until the end of the present age. But this detail is not included in the fifth mystery parable of Matthew 13. The ending of the parable seems abrupt and incomplete. The parable should logically conclude with the actual

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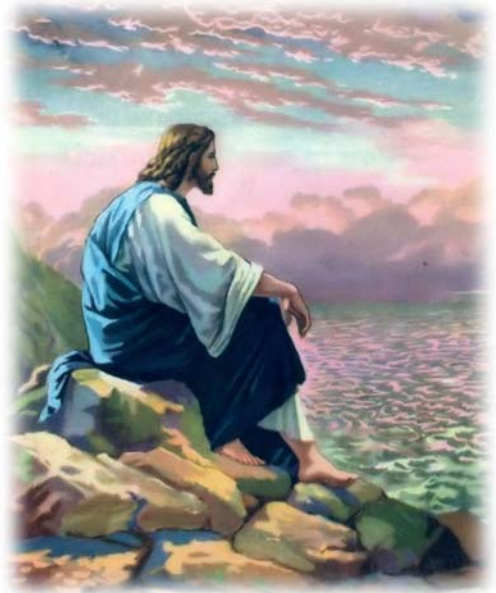
ownership and possession of the treasure by the man who bought it. The answer for this omission is found in the fact that during the course of the present age God is taking out both Jews and Gentiles from the world to form the one universal Church of Jesus Christ. Salvation by grace is now no longer predicated on Jewish nationality, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Israel refused to accept Him by faith and so now they remain hid in suspension until the present age expires.

The context of Matthew 13 deals only with the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven as it is seen during the present interadvent period within the world of humanity and the visible sphere of professing Christendom. From a Biblical perspective, God customarily deals separately with Israel and the Church. The restoration and reclamation of Israel is not a feature of the Church age, but only her rejected and hidden condition from God. Therefore, since Jesus is discussing events characterizing this present age only, the reconciliation and reinstatement of Israel as the leader among the Gentile nations is omitted. This will not happen until the termination of the present age when the Rapture of the Church

happens and God turns to Israel again to deal with them. The apparent disregard of Israel by the Lord for over 1,900 years is certainly not permanent, only temporary. After this dispensation of grace is over and the history of Christendom expired, Jesus the Messiah will at that time excavate and possess his long lost treasure of Israel. Never again will they be called a forsaken and wandering people, nor will they have to endure anymore the suffering, persecution, and stigma of being Jewish. They shall be a lustrous crown of God's glory on earth during the millennial reign of Christ:

"And the Gentiles shall see your righteousness, all kings your glory. And you shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. You shall no more be termed forsaken; neither shall your land anymore be termed desolate. But you shall be called Hephzibah (in whom is my delight), and your land Beulah (married). For the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married" (Isaiah 62:2-4).

Indeed, from 1948 to everlasting, the Jewish people shall remain unmoved in the Promised Land that God irrevocably promised Abraham their forefather, and his physical descendants forever (Genesis 13:15;



17:7-8). **"I will bring back the captives of My people Israel. They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them says the Lord your God" (Amos 9:14-15).** Israel will always be the Lord's Chosen People forevermore, a living jewel of His unflinching faithfulness for His peculiar ornamentation. **"They shall be Mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels, and spare them as a man spares his son who serves him" (Malachi 3:17).** ✠

Reaching Israel... Continued from page 1

God is a universal symptom that Silan ironically exhibited concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. When Robert and I posed the question to him about how his worldview answers the problem of sin (moral evil) and death, Silan suddenly became dismissive and his insincere hospitality then became quite evident. He totally refused to deal with the issue of sin in his mystical and unrealistic worldview. Why? John 3:19-20 answers that: showing that Silan loves the darkness of his flesh-pleasing lies instead of coming in repentance and faith to the biblical light of Christ where such soul-damning heresies are exposed! **"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For**

everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed" (John 3:19-

20). In the coming kingdom of the Messiah, false prophets and teachers like this one we encountered in Tiberias, who lead the Chosen People astray, will be permanently removed and purged from the Promised Land in one day—the apocalyptic day when Yeshua the Messiah returns to earth to rule and reign from Israel and establish the immovable truth about God over all the earth. For the Scripture says, **"It shall be in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land" (Zechariah 13:2).** †



Eastern Mysticism does not deal with the problem of sin

B'rit Hadashah Ministries

† Partner With Us ☆

This is a humble but effective ministry whose goal is to bring the gospel of Yeshua to Israel and to raise awareness in America about God's preeminent call to take the Gospel to the Jews - Romans 1:16.

Because of the support of our faithful partners, there is a young Jewish woman attending a university in Jerusalem who now has a B'rit Hadashah (New Testament in Hebrew), and IDF soldiers in Haifa who can read that the Messiah Yeshua has come to bring hope and peace to their souls. Your donations have changed the life of an Arab shop keeper in

Tiberias who has accepted Yeshua as his Messiah and Savior.

Please consider (if you have not already done so) becoming a monthly partner. As you can read for yourself in the newsletter articles, these worthwhile donations are directly impacting individual lives in Israel. Isn't that what Yeshua's earthly ministry was about?

We thank you deeply for your support, whether you are able to give monthly or a onetime donation. It all goes a long way in helping us achieve God's purpose and plan for this outreach ministry.

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ATTENTION READERS!

You'll be seeing a new format for our newsletter starting in September, and we're excited about it! Instead of the 6-page issue that you now get every month, it will be a larger issue (10-12 pages) every other month. And in the months in between, you'll get a Personal Letter from Dr. Todd Baker. We hope that the larger issues will give us a chance to include more types of information. We also hope to be able to have reader input such as your own pictures of Israel, or witnessing testimonies. So pray for us as we start putting this new format together, that it will be God's will and that we will still have His hand guiding us.

Search the Scriptures

This publication is a monthly newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries. For **more information** about our ministry, or to be added to our subscription list, you may contact Elisa at: bhm@brit-hadashah.org.



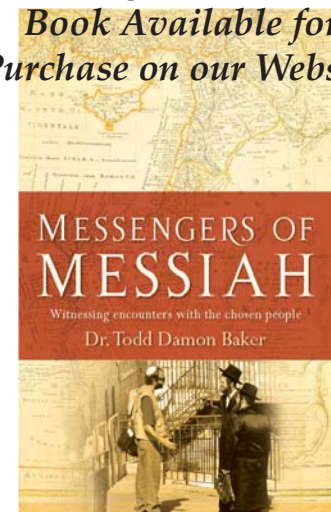
If you would like to have Todd as a guest speaker at your church or function, visit our website:

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Join Dr. 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 now located at 9330 N. Central Expy, Room 101, Dallas, Texas. For more information, please visit brit-hadashah.org/fellowshiptours.html or call (214) 356-2583.

שלום

UPCOMING FRIDAY NIGHT MESSAGES

Topics for August's lessons are:

- Messiah in the Tabernacle series
- Illuminations From Isaiah series