

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

A Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

John  
5:39



Volume 7, Number 2

Mar/Apr 2009

## Closer to God in the Land of Israel

*March 2008 Mission Trip  
to Israel - Part 6*

Our first full day in Jerusalem fell on the Sabbath. Paul and I decided to walk to a local city park located just above the Valley of Gehenna, which lies directly below the biblically significant Mount Zion. Halfway there, we discovered a fenced in shallow cave. We noticed an elderly Israeli lady sitting on a park bench. We approached her to ask what the significance of this shallow cave was. The woman gladly told us about the history of that particular area. The elderly woman's name was Esther. Her grandfather had owned some of the land below us and was born there. She was extremely intelligent,



by Todd  
Baker



*Esther talked about her life and was interested in hearing about Todd and Paul's backgrounds which opened the door to sharing the Gospel of Yeshua with her.*

cosmopolitan, and well read in six languages. Esther told us all about her life. She was happy that we were genuinely interested in what she had to say. We discussed various aspects of Jewish history. She then asked us if we were Jewish. Paul said he was of Irish descent. I mentioned that I was of mixed descent and that my great-great-grandfather, Harry Friedman, was a Jewish immigrant who migrated from Germany to Florida at the turn of the twentieth century. Harry was an Orthodox Jew. Later, he became a Jewish believer in Yeshua. Stunned, Esther asked, "Why did he convert?" I said that he was curious about the New Testament and procured a copy to read. He compared the prophecies about the Messiah written in the Tenach with the life of Yeshua and came to the correct and objective conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel. Esther replied that Jews believing in Jesus seemed to be a dichotomy. Paul and I quickly corrected such a contradictory and incorrect notion by pointing out that Jesus was a Torah observant Israeli Jew. He had a Jewish mother, He was proficient in the Hebrew Scriptures, and He was a Jewish rabbi. All of His followers were Jewish and wrote the New Testament. Jesus followed the Law of Moses perfectly and observed all the feasts of Israel. He stated that His mission was to save "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).

Jesus loved the people of Jerusalem and wept over their lost condition (Matthew 23:37). The coming of the Messiah is a central tenet of biblical Judaism. A Jewish person accepting Jesus to be the Messiah is, therefore, the most sensible and natural thing to do. We then offered Esther a complete Jewish Bible and some Messianic Gospel literature. She said she was open to this and graciously accepted them. Esther was visibly elated

*Continued on page 2*

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.



that we spent so much time with her (about an hour and a half!). She then asked us to pray for her right there, which we did. Esther told us that she



*Paul goes through some of the Messianic prophecies with Esther*

loved us and was happy that she made new friends. She really brought me to tears when she said that being in Israel makes her cry with tears of joy and makes her proclaim to God, "This is the closest I feel to You." The Lord gave us great favor with Esther in so short a time in order to lovingly share the salvation the Messiah has provided for her over the power of sin and death.

Another precious Israeli that we spoke to about Jesus being the Jewish Messiah was our waitress, Nolga, where we ate lunch. Paul and I told her that it was our love for the Jewish people that brings us to Israel every year to return the gift of God's Word and the Gospel of the Messiah to them. To demonstrate this truth, we were able to give her a free copy of a Hebrew New Testament. She readily received it with gratitude.



*Nolga received a copy of the Hebrew New Testament*

After we had dinner at the Inbal hotel in Jerusalem, Paul and I decided to take a taxi down to Ben Yehudah Street—one of the busiest streets in the modern section of Jerusalem. Our taxi driver was a nominal Arab Muslim named Abel. He told us how he would like peace to be a reality in Israel without the evil of terrorism. I said to Abel that true and lasting peace in the

Middle East would permanently arrive when Jesus the Messiah returns. In fact, I informed him that the prophet Isaiah foretold that in that day the Arab nations of Syria and Egypt would form a strong friendship with Israel and their God. ***"In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, 'Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance'"*** (Isaiah 19:24-25). We further shared with Abel that God promised in Genesis 17:20 to richly bless both Ishmael and his descendents (the Arab people) along with Isaac and his descendants (the Jewish people). Boldly, we told Abel that God, however, gave the land of Israel to Isaac's descendants and chose them to bring the Messiah to the world for the redemption of all nations. Jesus loves all people. He died to save both Jews and Arabs. Abel intently listened to these things and afterwards thanked us and accepted a Gospel tract from us printed in the Arabic language.

While walking on Ben Yehudah Street, Paul and I visited the various shops dotted along the thoroughfare. Paul spotted a T-shirt shop called *The Leprechaun* where a young Israeli was sitting in front of the store; he had a brooding face and long hair. Paul felt led by the Holy Spirit to stop in the shop and talk with this young man. After introducing ourselves, he told us his name was Ori. We shared with him how Yeshua



*Ori works at a T-shirt shop and listened to our team's witness of how Yeshua saved them from atheism and drug addiction*

the Messiah set us free from the bondage of sin—particularly from the God-hating belief of atheism and drug addiction. At about this time Ori's friend, Daniel, came into the shop for a visit.

I began witnessing and sharing with Daniel about the case for Yeshua being the Messiah of Israel from the Hebrew Scriptures. I gave my powerful testimony about how Adonai Yeshua (the Lord Jesus)

visibly shined His glory in my dark and depressed life giving me redemption, forgiveness of sin, and a new life filled with meaning and purpose. I communicated to Daniel that, from this glorious and life-giving light, the Lord Jesus gave me a commission to fulfill: to proclaim His name among His people and tell them He is coming soon. This part of that glorious vision and commission has brought me to Yeshua's ethnic people, Israel. Daniel's response was to ask me what was meant by "soon." I then



*God had already been working in Daniel's heart before our team ever met him to discuss Yeshua!*

explained to him that Yahweh and Yeshua had both predicted certain signs and events that would immediately precede and signal Messiah's return to the land of Israel. One major prophetic sign heralding the return of the Messiah would be the regathering of the Jewish people back to their ancient homeland from the long centuries of the Diaspora (Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Isaiah 11-11-12; 49). This was precisely fulfilled in May of 1948 when the State of Israel was reborn.

Daniel told me that his cousin was a Jewish believer in Yeshua who was a leader in a messianic congregation in a Jerusalem suburb. Daniel attended several times and enjoyed being there. So God had already been working on this young man's heart and mind, and it was obvious to me as he showed a keen interest in our testimony for the Messiah. I mentioned to Daniel that one of the items Paul and I prayed about before we embarked on this trip was that God would lead us to those who are open to the message of Messiah's great love for the Chosen People. I looked directly at Daniel and said you are an answer to this prayer and proof the Lord wants to draw you to Himself. Daniel was riveted and wide-eyed over this memorable encounter.

Paul and I spent an hour with Ori and Daniel. We were able to give them copies of the entire Bible in Hebrew and Messianic Gospel tracts explaining the biblical plan of salvation and how the sinner can receive Jesus in one's life to have a personal relationship with the Creator and Lord of the universe. †

### *About the Author*

**Dr. Todd Baker** is president of B'rit Hadashah Ministries and Pastor of Shalom, Shalom Messianic Congregation in Dallas, Texas. 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. †

Have you wanted to meet with us on Friday nights but haven't been able to make it? Would you like to be able to get the great teaching in a form that you can listen to whenever you want?



### ***We've got good news for you!***

Todd has been recording his Friday night teachings in order to make them available to you. They will be put on the website as we get them cleaned up and ready to go.

These lessons are available in two formats:

- as an MP3 file which you can download, and
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# Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age



The Parable of  
the Dragnet  
Part 4  
(Matthew 13:47-50)

by Todd Baker

Christ is the only One who is able to catch lost souls with the net of grace, despite the stubborn, resistant, and rebellious nature of man which, like the fish of the sea, would violently swim in the opposite direction to prevent from being captured by the divine net. The net of the Gospel is powerfully magnetic in its universal pull, drawing all men within its closing reach. It is by the preaching of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that the net is actually thrown into the sea of mass humanity, collecting both "good" and "bad" in its far reaching sweep. Several days before His crucifixion, the Lord Jesus foretold in John 12:32 that through His death the universal message of the Gospel would be preached drawing both good and bad people into the net of Christian profession as the fishing net catches both good and bad fish. **"And if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Me"** (John 12:32). The preaching of the cross by its ministers, like the net, is a preparatory instrument for catching the souls of men. The Lord's Gospel net secures the good fish in its fold with everlasting salvation with all the great company of the redeemed taken from past ages. **"Thus says the Lord God, I will therefore spread out My net over you with a great company, and they shall, bring you up in My net"** (Ezekiel 32:3).

The Lord called some of the Apostles to be His followers and soul winners while they were still fishermen **"mending their nets"** (Matthew 4:18-21). The "net" in this parable is the Gospel net whose vast, comprehensive sweep began at Pentecost and will be drawn in at the second coming of the Lord. The net

*"Again the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind, which when it was full, they drew to shore; and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the age. The angels shall come forth, and separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

- Matthew 13:47-50



will gather both true and false believers into the borders of the kingdom of heaven during the present age. Finally, when the net was cast into the sea it caught a great multitude of good and bad fish until the net was completely full—leaving, of course, the great majority of the remaining fish in the water uncaught. From this implied detail, it is evidently seen that the Church will house both true and false believers, while the world, as a whole, will remain uncaught and unconverted by the Gospel. Thus, the Gospel net will only collect a minority from the sea. In light of this, the fact is made plain that there is no complete "conversion" of the world before the return of Christ.

The second symbol to be explained in the parable of the dragnet is the sea where the net was thrown. **"The Kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea and gathered every kind."** The sea in this parable symbolically represents all the nations of the world which are exposed to the Gospel net of Jesus Christ. Several quotations from the Holy Scriptures conclusively bear this out. The sea is a precise and accurate symbol that reveals the disquieted condition of restless, unsaved humanity. **"The wicked are like the troubled sea,**

**when it cannot find rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt"** (Isaiah 57:20-21). The sea, as everyone knows, is at times a turbulent and uproarious force, especially during hurricane season. The world of sinful humanity, just like the sea, is full of billowing commotions and overwhelming waves of confusion, lawlessness, and iniquity that seemingly knows no bounds in its uprising crescendo of immoral destruction and spiritual chaos. In Luke 21:25-26, Jesus prophetically spoke of the perplexity and distress of nations that is to befall the world in the closing days prior to His glorious return. A catastrophic outpouring of divine judgment unsettling the hearts and minds of men will occur. **"And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth"** (Luke 21:25-26).

Recently, within the last one hundred years, mankind has experienced the unprecedented horrors of two world wars, the atrocities of terrorism, and the violent revolutions and counter revolutions of nations—all of which have taken more



lives than any other time unparalleled in human history. With the terrifying prospect of the nuclear bomb, things are destined to get much worse before they get any better. It would seem, then, that man is actually devolving instead of evolving into a better "species" as some deluded evolutionists naively presuppose. The Bible plainly foretells that the world will continue on in escalating chaos and global unrest until the Prince of Peace comes, who shall usher in everlasting peace, which by His strength **"will still the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people"** (Psalm 64:7). But we, as the children of God by spiritual rebirth, "accepted in the beloved" have absolutely nothing to fear from this world of moral anarchy and bedlam. For Jesus, our Peace, gives complete peace with the security of undisturbed calmness in times of trouble when the rest of the world is embroiled in tempestuous unrest. **"For you rule the raging of the sea, when the waves arise You still them"** (Psalm 89:9).

Therefore, the believer in Christ can rest secure in Him when the world is at great unrest. When we come to Jesus in simple faith, He instills within us His supernatural peace, which the world cannot give or take away, nor disrupt. The Lord Jesus assures the believer deliverance and safe protection by a divine peace that is beyond human understanding (Philippians 4:7). When Jesus calls His good fish out of the

world, He gives them the conquering ability to endure and overcome the waves of tribulation and unrest through His comforting peace, of which the vast unbelieving world of fearful, troubled souls are unable to receive. **"But God has called us to peace, for He is our Peace. I have chosen you out of the world. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. These things I have spoken to you that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world"** (1 Corinthians 7:15; John 15:19; 14:27; 16:33).

The Bible speaks of the sea as picturing the Gentile nations of the world. Out of political upheaval and revolt, the Gentile kingdoms of this world arise and fall out of the agitated sea of human civilization (1 Chronicles 16:31-32; Psalm 2:1-2; 96:11; 98:7; Jeremiah 46:7-8; Daniel 7:1-7; Luke 21:25; Revelation 13:1;

17:15). The sea is often dangerously unpredictable and untrustworthy. Likewise, the student of world history will find that in the history of the nations dangerous intrigue and treachery have played a significant role in attaining political power. The sea tosses back and forth in restless activity. This also characterizes the history of the nations whose many births, deaths, and rebirths under new political regimes, indicates one of continual change and violent fluctuation. The element of instability has played an important factor for the emergence of world empires and their subsequent downfall. The sea, when under stormy weather, can be very destructive in its chaotic wake. World empires, similarly, use violence, bloodshed, and tyranny to sustain their ruling superiority over the people. They will unhesitatingly crush any who dare oppose them. Today, in our world, nothing has changed. Nations are continually undergoing civil strife, the threat of war, and actual warfare itself with other enemy nations.

These volatile activities should not surprise the well-read student of the Bible. Jesus predicted that perpetual wars, domestic strife, and unrest would universally exist among the nations of the world right before His return. **"And you shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars, see that you are not troubled. For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and**

**kingdom against kingdom"** (Matthew 24:6-7).

The sea in Scripture definitely refers to peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. **"The waters which you saw...are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues"** (Revelation 17:15). The waters of the sea cover three-fourths of the earth's surface and similarly represent, in this parable, the abundance of Gentiles who will be saved during the present age when the Gospel net is cast out upon them. The sea of God's world, however, contains both Jews and Gentiles alike, whom God equally loves. But during this present dispensation of grace, the greatest number of fish that will have been caught in the Gospel net of salvation will largely be Gentiles compared to the relatively few Jewish believers who are saved as well. The good fish are composed of both redeemed Jews and Gentiles. **"For the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon Him"** (Romans 10:12). †



# Only in Israel

from Stuart Arden

In this issue, we continue with our "photo-essay" series by our resident Israeli correspondent, Stuart Arden. These photos and captions will explain some of the behavioral, cultural, and religious practices of Israel and Israelis; some are unusual, most are unique, and all are informative.

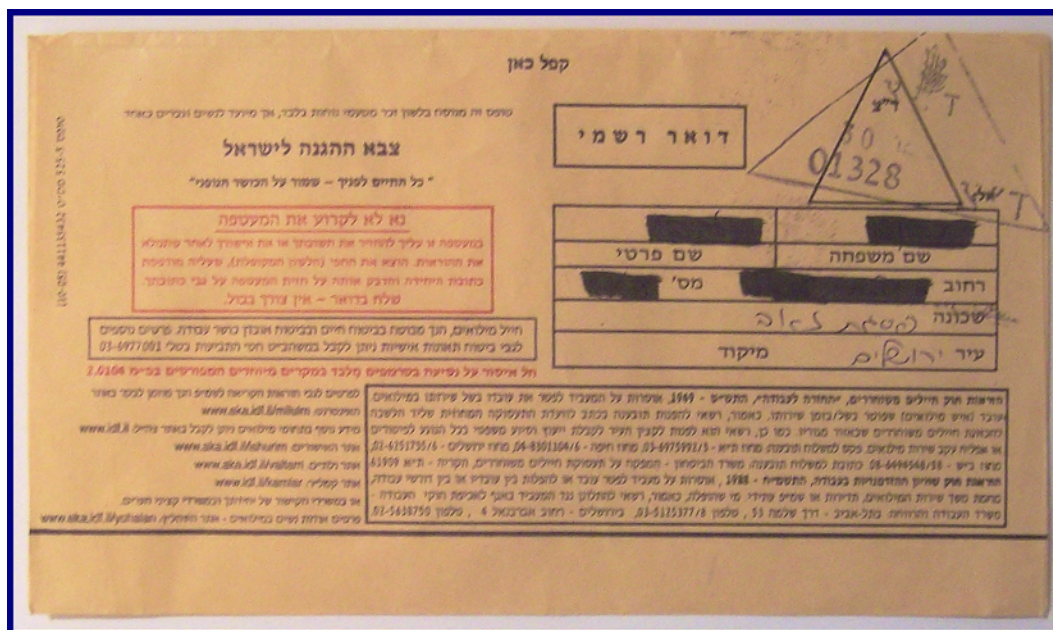
## RESERVE DUTY

A person receiving this envelope (with a military postmark) has been summoned to Reserve Duty in the IDF. Reserve Duty is usually anywhere from two weeks to a month. Women in certain specialized positions also get called to Reserve Duty, but they only serve a few days, and are released from Reserve Duty at age 25, for pregnancy, or for marriage. Presently,

men serve Reserve Duty until the age of 40, and having children and even grandchildren does not release a man from Reserve Duty. In Israel's wars, fathers and sons are both sent out to defend the country.

There was a time (when the population was smaller) that men served until age 55. What sort of country needs soldiers in their 40s and 50s? A country whose neighbors make no secret of their ongoing desire to destroy the Jewish state!

Serving Reserve Duty and the training that it implies is very important in Israel. Israel has a small standing army and when a war breaks out, the "regulars" must be capable of holding the line until the "reservists" are in-place. Israel is truly a nation of citizen-soldiers. The National Insurance Institute (Israeli Social Security) pays reservists and citizen-soldiers the salaries they would have been earning on their civilian jobs. ☆



## "STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES" RADIO SHOW

Don't forget! Todd's radio show, "Studying the Scriptures," is now playing on **WNVY (AM 1070)** in **Pensacola, FL**. If your radio will pick up this station, you will be able to catch him on Saturday mornings from 8:30 - 9:00am, then again Saturday nights from 8:30 - 9:00pm.

The show is also available in the Albuquerque, NM, area on **KXKS (AM 1190)**

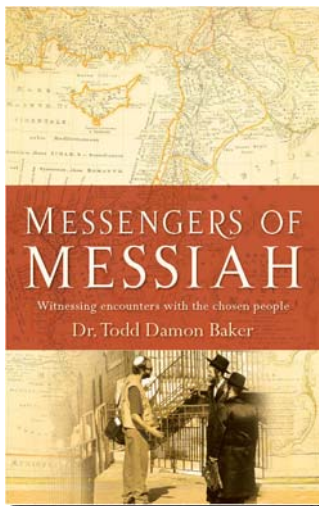
airing Saturdays from 12:30-1:00pm, then repeating Sundays from 6:00-6:30pm. If you have friends or family in either of these locations, tell them about his show so they can learn about the Jewish roots of our Christian faith.

As always, if you don't happen to live in Albuquerque or Pensacola, we are making his shows available to you on our website. Just go to [www.brit-hadashah.org](http://www.brit-hadashah.org) and click on the *Books & Media* tab at the bottom.





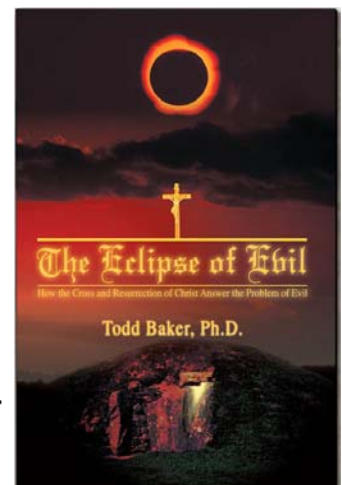
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*Messengers of Messiah* - \$12.00

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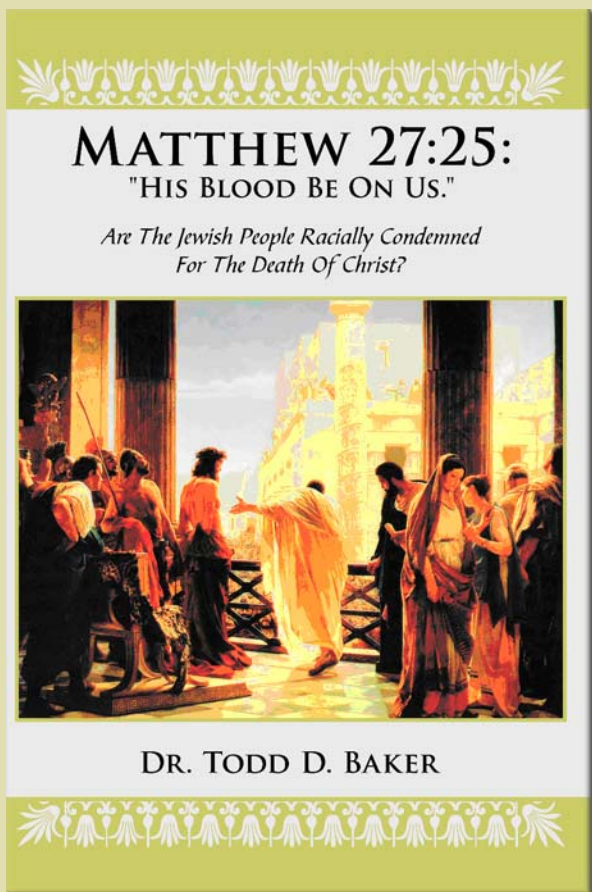
*Matthew 27:25: 'His Blood Be On Us'* - \$10.95

Shipping and handling charges will be added when you order.

### **MATTHEW 27:25: 'HIS BLOOD BE ON US'**

### **ARE THE JEWISH PEOPLE RACIALLY CONDEMNED FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST?**

*This book is an exegetical study of Matthew 27:25 conducted within the context of the Gospel of Matthew and the broader contexts of the Old and New Testaments. The purpose for this study is to dispel and disprove the traditional anti-Semitic meaning of Matthew 27:25 that has tragically led to the unwarranted condemnation of the Jewish people for the death of Jesus Christ. Hence, the particular focus of this book will directly address and answer the perennial, theological question that asks, "Does Matthew 27:25 mean and teach the Jews are altogether condemned by God for the crucifixion of Christ?" While it is true the Jewish nation, by and large, tragically rejected Jesus at His first coming, this in no way gives Christians theological license for the wholesale hatred, persecution, and destruction of the Jews, or for holding an anti-Semitic bias against them. Nowhere in the New Testament Scriptures is it taught that the Jewish race—past, present, and future are condemned and morally indicted as "Christ killers" for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This study is necessary to expose and correct the flawed interpretation of Matthew 27:25 that has historically persisted in Christendom and leads a person to build and develop an anti-Jewish theology. Factoring all this together, in a careful exegesis of Matthew 27, will manifestly demonstrate that the Jewish people are not guilty of deicide and therefore arbitrarily condemned by God as a race of "Christ killers." Quite the contrary.*



# MARCH 15-APRIL 2, 2009 MISSION TRIP TO ISRAEL

## *Be a Part of our 2009 Outreach to Israel*

Here we go again! Our annual mission trip is coming up soon. This year, Todd will be joined by David Newton to conduct a witnessing campaign across Israel, 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.

Please **pray** for us, and **pledge what financial support you can afford** to underwrite some of the cost for this outreach.

Did you know that the Israeli people do not have easy access to the New Testament (B'rit Hadashah)? Their bookstores usually do not carry it, and even some universities offer courses on Yeshua but only provide excerpts from the B'rit Hadashah.

Your donations during the months of January, February, and March can put the Gospel directly into the hands of Jewish people who may not otherwise have the opportunity to read about their Messiah. Throughout the year, your donations help make these trips possible. But during these months, our focus is on funding the gift of scripture and other materials such as tracts in Hebrew and Arabic that we give out as the Holy Spirit leads us.

We are excited about what God is doing through these mission trips. And it's equally as exciting to know that our partners will be blessed through their support which



makes all of this happen. Genesis 12:3 speaks specifically of those who bless His people, Israel:

***"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."***

What a way to bless the Jewish people, by giving them the words of life. Thank you for supporting this ministry and these outreaches to Israel. ✠✠✠

### **Missions Prayer List**

**Here is a suggested list from Scripture to use when praying for our missions.**

- ✠ 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). †



# 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.*

Make checks and money orders payable to:

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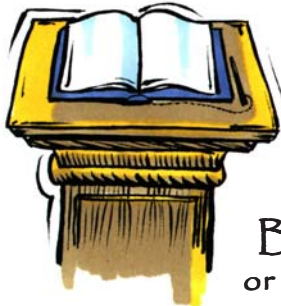
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If you would like to have Todd as a guest speaker at your church or function, visit our website:

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or contact us at:

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or call 866-910-0444.

### **Search the Scriptures**

This publication is a bi-monthly newsletter, free of charge, from B'rit Hadashah Ministries. **For more information** about our ministry, or to be added to, or removed from, our subscription list, you may contact Elisa by E-mail at:

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# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

John  
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Mar/Apr 2009 issue

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Join Dr. Todd Baker in an enriching evening  
of teaching the Bible and the Jewish roots of  
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שלום

### UPCOMING FRIDAY NIGHT MESSAGES

Topics for March and  
April's lessons are:

- Defending the Faith series
- Illuminations From Isaiah series
- Greg Hartwig will be speaking on Islam
- Mark Carney will be speaking on Trusting God in Tough Economic Times
- We will have a slide show of Todd's mission trip pictures after he returns