

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

John
5:39



Volume 8, Number 4

July/Aug 2010

"I Am God - There is No Other Besides Me (Isaiah 43:10-11)"

Stories from our Spring 2010 Gospel Outreach to Israel - Part 2



Another unforgettable witnessing encounter on this outreach occurred in Nazareth. Ralph and Debbie Conn and I were able to strike up a conversation with an amiable security guard, Isaac. We were able to freely share the Gospel with this open and receptive Israeli. When he wanted to learn more about how Jesus the Messiah saves the sinner by faith



by
Todd Baker



Ralph and Todd with Isaac

death, and resurrection. We all agreed to meet together again when our outreach team returns to Israel to further discuss with Isaac what he has read in the Scriptures we gave him.

When we arrived at our hotel in Tiberias, I struck up a conversation with the hotel security guard. His name was Shlomi and he was the head of security at our hotel in Tiberias. When he told me he was an atheist, I proceeded to tell him of my former life in the misery and hopelessness of atheism. When I came to the point of sharing with Shlomi how Yeshua (Jesus) literally and visibly revealed His divine glory to me in my dark room of despair over twenty-five years ago which forever changed my life with God's love and forgiveness, he was so taken aback by the sheer supernatural power of this that he held out his large forearm to me and said, "Look, my hairs are standing on end." They were! The Spirit of God was

using my testimony to break down the wall of unbelief in Shlomi's life. But a more important element in my witness for Messiah Jesus to him occurred when I demonstrated how the Hebrew Bible has accurately foretold the history of the Jewish people up to the modern day as irrefutable proof for the existence of the all-knowing God of Israel. From there, I also showed him how the same Bible has given many specific prophecies about the Jewish Messiah and their amazing, historical fulfillment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.



Todd with Shlomi

At this point in our conversation, we then moved to the irrationality of atheism. Shlomi said he could not believe in God because one could not prove this with absolute certainty. I replied by saying that to arrive at one hundred percent certainty on any thing in life is virtually impossible to attain (philosophers call this *apodictic certainty*) especially when it comes to God. We live, rather, on practical probabilities and the evidence for the existence of God at this level is far more probable than anything else in the universe. Indeed the burden of proof rests on the atheist to prove God does not exist, and to do that you would have to possess absolute knowledge of all reality, be everywhere at once, and have the power to have such capabilities. In short, one would then have to be omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, hence he or she would have to be God to prove there is no God! So on this paradoxical ground atheism is

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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.

Dear Readers,

Dr. Shaun Baker, my older brother and Assistant Director at Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership at the U.S. Naval Academy, gives an excellent and comprehensive military analysis of what really transpired with the IDF, who were viciously attacked by Islamic terrorists when they rappelled on to the Turkish ship, *Mavi Marmara*. We now know that this “humanitarian” ship filled with “peace” protestors was in reality a Jihadist ship filled with illegal weapons sent to Hamas in Gaza by passengers who have clear ties with two main terror groups, Global Jihad and Al Qaeda. Dr. Baker convincingly demonstrates the following facts about the “flotilla” incident:

FACT 1: It was an Amphibious Jihad Assault.

FACT 2: The operational plan was to “bait” Israel into defending herself.

FACT 3: The jihadists knew the world would condemn Israel.

So once again Israel is wrongly indicted by the world for something the terrorist world of Islam set in motion. Universal anti-Semitism is one of the signs predicted to exist during the End-times. The Lord Jesus said of the Jewish people **“You shall be hated by all nations for my name sake”** (Matthew 24:9). This recent incident is proof again of this sad truth, as the nations and international media madly rush in to condemn Israel without carefully checking out the facts beforehand.

Todd

Israel and The Flotilla Fiasco



By Dr. Shaun Baker

No doubt this incident will serve as a military case study in the future; a case study of the challenges of military operations in a morally asymmetric environment. The people that organized the ‘flotilla’ read the IDF quite well. They had good reason to believe both that the Israelis would attempt to board, and would not use lethal force unless things became quite dangerous. So, they realized they could do some serious damage using knives, bats, chairs, etc., and one of two things would happen.

Search the Scriptures

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Either (1) the IDF forces would retreat, and the ‘flotilla’ could claim victory, or (2) the IDF would use lethal force, and the ‘flotilla’ could do as they are doing now, cry “massacre”. In that case, a PR victory again, because the default position of the world press is to assume guilt and negligence on the part of Israeli forces when it comes to anything connected with Israel's protecting itself from threats emanating from Gaza or the West Bank.



*The Mavi Marmara cruise ship, part of the
Gaza “aid” flotilla.*

Photo by: Reuters

The set up for the present PR headache was masterful, even down to calling the blockade running ships a “flotilla” (I guess “regatta” would have been a bit much?) and festooning the vessel we see in the videos with flags, giving it a somewhat macabre holiday maker's facade. This all gives rise to a belief in the casual viewer that the boat was full of unarmed and peaceful if perhaps vociferous protesters with only humanitarian intent arrayed against a cold military that does not care that Palestinians are starving, nor about killing the innocents aboard the ships. An obvious canard, but it plays well.

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Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age



The Parable of
the Scribe and
the Householder
Part 1
(Matthew 13:51-52)

by Todd Baker

The parable of the scribe and the householder is the last and eighth parable that concludes the magnificent chapter of Matthew thirteen. This particular parable has suffered the infamous misfortune of being abandoned by many Bible commentators. Evidently, most of them failed to see its importance as the capstone and final seal, if you will, that completes the parabolic narrative of Matthew thirteen. Jesus spoke this parable to His disciples to simply summarize and conclude what He had taught them in the seven parables spoken earlier. Christ advised the disciples on how they were to thoroughly orientate themselves with the instruction of the divine Word. Consequently, He adds that as a result of this, they would understand and be teachers of the kingdom of heaven (i.e., the mysteries of Messiah). If one is not competently instructed in the kingdom of heaven, how can he expect to instruct others about the spiritual realities of it? Therefore in order to be qualified to begin teaching others about the kingdom of heaven, a believer must first be subject and taught by the great King Himself under the illuminating and teaching guidance of the Holy Spirit who leads into all truth and brings the words and teachings of Christ to a believer's remembrance whatever He has spoken to them from the Scriptures (John 14:26; 15:12-13). Some Bible commentators omit this parable because they consider it merely as an analogy or a simple illustration that is partially figurative of a specific aspect of the kingdom of heaven, and do not consider it a parable in the entire sense.

"Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes Lord." Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

- Matthew 13:51-52



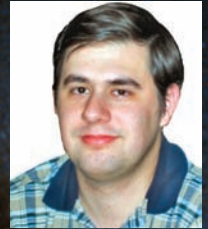
The Lord's brief discourse about the scribe and the householder is nothing else but a parable which is undeniably proven in verse 53 immediately after Jesus finished speaking it. For Matthew writes in this verse, ***"And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there."*** Thus the parable of the scribe and the householder was spoken by Christ immediately after the disciples answered His question, ***"Have you understood all these things."*** They answered, ***"Yes Lord."*** Here we see Jesus inquired of the disciples on their receptivity concerning the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The Lord by His word, ***"Have you understood all these things"***, desired His own disciples to have an appreciative and full understanding of what the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven were, to the extent that ***"their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"***

(Colossians 2:2-3). Once the disciples comprehended the simple teaching of Jesus, and the Gospel it embodies, they were then able to freely expound on the kingdom of heaven message, that they might inform many, which in turn would benefit and enrich the lives of many others to come after them. Until the heart and mouth of man, by the gracious revelation of the Spirit of God, believes and confesses the deity of Jesus Christ, as Peter did when saying, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God," he will blindly approach the Bible ***"as the words of a book that is sealed"*** (Isaiah 29:11) from his understanding. Unless one has the full assurance of who Jesus Christ really is, he or she will not so much as remotely grasp the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

The disciples understood the parabolic teachings of Christ in Matthew thirteen, but only in a limited degree. They were not fully cognizant of them until after Christ ascended into heaven and poured out the Holy Spirit on them, whereby they enlarged their spiritual understanding of what Jesus had

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GOD, THE BIG BANG, AND THE EXPERTS



By Aaron Levitt

My wife and I were watching a show the other day called “How The Universe Works.” Around the middle of the show, the narrator and the various physicists being interviewed started discussing the Big Bang theory—the theory that the universe and everything inside it came from a single explosion at the beginning of time. A very common objection to the official Big Bang theory was raised, namely that scientists don’t have an answer for the question: “Well, what *started* the Big Bang?” Rather, the Big Bang is supposed to be the very first thing that ever happened, period. But I’ve heard the objection raised many times, and have raised it myself many times, for years and years, and I never heard an answer... until now.

Yes, they’ve found the answer, folks! Are you ready? They’ve found out what caused the Big Bang. Scientists have finally come to terms with the fact that, by one of their very own laws—the law of causality—every event must have a cause. So, are you ready to hear the cause of the Big Bang? Okay, here it is. The Big Bang most certainly does have a cause, scientists now proclaim, and that cause is — and I quote — “absolutely nothing.”

This is not a joke. This is not a misquote. Over and over again on the television program referenced above, “absolutely nothing” was specifically named as the cause of the Big Bang. The phrase was even uttered that “everything came from absolutely nothing.” There are actually two distinct problems with that. Firstly, the lack of any cause whatsoever, and secondly, the lack of initial matter and energy. Pardon the strange grammar in this sentence, but it’s necessary in order to articulate their new position: evolutionists are claiming that a non-cause took nothingness, and with it made everything we see in our universe today. Nonsense much?

So, secular scientists have successfully managed to keep God out of their entire origins model. The only problem is, they had to suspend their scientific sanity—not to mention their public credibility—to do it. Yes, their theory of the universe still excludes God. But in the act of doing so, it has become remarkably unscientific. The lengths to which carnal man will go, not to have to face up to the implications of having a Creator! The idea of a creator-less universe is easier on the conscience, and irresistible to the unrepentant man.

It was next explained by a physicist on the program that “the laws of physics actually allow that,” meaning that they allow a completely causeless (and substance-less) beginning to everything. Dr. Baker of this newsletter and ministry has a personal friend who is a physicist, who summarily dismissed the causeless-start nonsense upon hearing it. He went even further to say that he could definitely prove it to be scientifically faulty.

Even suspending all reason for a moment, to imagine that the insane theory actually works, which of these two seems most likely to you: that an eternal creator of infinite power made the universe, or that “absolutely nothing” blew up—with zero cause, mind you—and accomplished the same thing? I think the answer is clear.

From a purely logical standpoint, if the idea were true, it would be gibberish to anyone who heard or tried to discuss it, be they highly-educated or otherwise, due to its circular reasoning, and thus would be a completely useless theory.

Also, since it was scientists who pronounced as fundamental scientific law the principle of cause and effect and since the theory of evolution is based on that law, their flouting of cause and effect places evolution on extremely shaky ground. They have now abandoned one of the foundations of all Science: the law of cause and effect. If that law isn’t true, then all scientific principles based on that law are now in limbo, *including* the theory of evolution. Really, if the Big Bang can start from no matter, energy, or cause, then who’s to say you and I didn’t just suddenly appear from out of nothingness ourselves?! Why even *have* a Big Bang theory if, as the show said, “everything” can, “according to the laws of physics”, come from “absolutely nothing?” Their logic supports spontaneous existence, where we instantly pop into being, all by ourselves.

Also, have you ever noticed how evolution is always presented by its promoters as well-known, absolute, and undeniable scientific fact—except for all the huge gaps? It’s taken to be sacred truth that anyone intelligent and reasonable must agree with the theory of evolution—except for the major parts of it which scientists sometimes let slip that they “have no idea” about. What arrogance! And this canard that any intelligent and reasonable person would naturally have to believe in the uncaused upward evolving of life appeals to man’s sinful pride. I believe Romans 1:18-22 applies to this situation, and I think the last sentence says it all:

photo courtesy of: NASA and The Hubble Heritage Team (AURA/STScI)

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.”

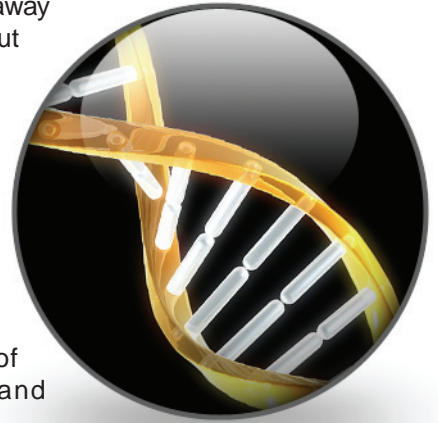
Pride blinds people to their own personal faults as well as to their own errors, and it's hard for a group of people to get more prideful than to formally declare to the world that they know, for an undeniable fact, how life, the universe, and everything came to be, from the very beginning cause of it all to our present-day reality. One simply cannot make a more sweepingly grandiose statement about the vastness of one's own knowledge. We Believers choose, in contrast, to take God at His Word, and we don't pretend or profess to know how He made everything. We let God be God, and we don't try to play Him on TV.



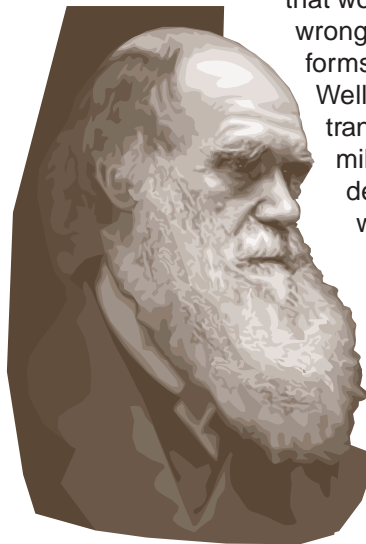
The Bible indicates that wisdom actually comes more through the realization of just how *little* we know, than it does in scrambling to know a vast number of things, as is glorified in our universities today. A little pride can effectively sabotage a lot of wisdom, just as “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,” as Paul observed in an analogy about sin in our lives (1 Cor 5:6).

But let's go back to the gaping holes in the “fact” called evolution. The presumed bridging of the chasm between inorganic matter and life, which evolution is said to have accomplished, is one such gap. Some of the world's leading secular scientists

do sometimes flatly admit that they have “no idea” how non-living matter evolved into life. This is a big deal! If they don't have *that*, they don't have much! One cannot explain away the idea of a creating being without first explaining how life came to exist. Conjecture about how life “might have come about” is simply not sufficient cause for abandoning one's faith in God. An infinite creator who exists eternally, and who then decides to create time, space, matter, and energy, makes more sense anyway, because the cause of creation is both clearly and reasonably given.



Another major gap in the almighty theory of evolution is the fossil record itself, the very thing which Darwin himself referenced in his famous work “The Origin of Species” as something



that would prove his theory of evolution quite wrong if that record did not show transitional forms after it was substantially excavated. Well, we're there now, and there are no transitional forms—not a one. It would take millions of them to fill in the mostly large design gaps between the species, yet we haven't found *a single one*? All we've seen in the fossil record to date is all we've ever seen on Earth: several elegantly-formed creatures which have, for the most part, vast gulfs of design difference between them. If Darwin were alive today and true to his writings, he would chide those who loudly champion his name, for making a mockery of his at-the-time reasonable theory, by taking it in

modern times to embarrassingly ridiculous and grotesque extents, far beyond the limits of its design.

In ancient Greece, Socrates often argued with the *Sophists*, which can be translated “wise ones”. They were men who spoke eloquently of ideas that seemed wise and true, and they claimed they could find the answers to all questions. (Sound familiar? Science also strives toward, and even promises, eventually reaching that goal.) But the Sophists were often in fact talking nonsense, and Socrates, among others, called them out on it, by asking the right kinds of simple questions to cause the Sophists to reveal themselves in their proud responses as fools. †

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Here you have a hard dilemma for the Israeli government and the IDF. They are enforcing a blockade. They knew, days before, that this 'flotilla' was coming. It had been heavily publicized. They expected the 'flotilla' to be full of people, including some high profile protester types that would at most protest visibly and loudly. They knew the primary intent of the 'flotilla' was to make a political statement and create/reinforce an impression via broadcast news media and the Internet. The primary intent was obviously not to simply deliver aid. If that were the case, there are other well known and well established routes, dependable routes, for doing so, yes policed by the Israelis, but routes that do reliably deliver all aid funneled through them.

It is obvious that Israel expected no serious life threatening violence. They inferred from similar past events that they would be able to intercept, take control of the craft, inspect, and deliver any humanitarian aid via those other well established routes. They were also not unreasonable in suspecting that weapons or money may be stashed aboard the vessel, intended for delivery to Hamas. There is an extensive track record in that regard. That is the reason for the blockade. Now that being the circumstance, the commandos circled in helicopters, saw a crowd on the top deck of the vessel, assumed they were protester types, not thugs or street fighters, and descended via ropes from the helos. They were immediately set upon by a crowd of around 30 armed fighters. They continued to descend, one at a time, and things got ugly quickly. A melee ensued. The videos tell the tale. The commandos were under



instructions to use paintball guns to disperse the crowd, this based on the false assumption that the passengers were all non-fighting protester types. The commandos used the paintball guns to no avail. They were being attacked with knives, pipes, and one commando is thrown onto a lower deck. The men had good reason to believe their lives were in danger. They asked for and received permission to use pistols they were carrying which were to be used only last resort in the face of life-

threatening action. They fired at legs to disperse the attackers; either before or after, the fighters fired back. Details are sketchy. Commandos made their way to the bridge, and took control of the vessel, arrested those aboard, took them ashore and began processing either for release or for trial.

Now, in terms of learning lessons from the incident, there are several that come to mind: Given that the 30 or so people on the top deck showed hostile intent as the first commandos descended, what would have been the best way to board the vessel? It looks to have been a mistake to continue to try to rappel one at a time, into the melee.

An option that comes to my mind would be softening of resistance by use of various methods that are less than lethal, but effective:

Low tech: flash bang, liberal use of stun grenades or tear gas; High tech, if available: LRAD or other disabling acoustics like the Active Denial System (generates an intense sensation of heat). Another option seems to be that the Naval vessels could have allowed the "flotilla" to proceed, and even dock, but essentially lay siege to it at that point, letting nothing off the vessel and nothing on. Optional to this approach, let no person off the vessel without a search and 'background check'. Once again, if resistance is met, use non-lethal means to subdue. Another option: while still out at sea, disable the vessel without sinking leaving it immobile on open water. Initiate siege. Wait 'em out.

Would any of these options have short-circuited the intended goal of creating a PR nightmare for Israel? Perhaps. Should Israel have anticipated such shenanigans? Yes. Absolutely! Prepare for the worst, hope for the best. Is Israel morally blameworthy for this turn of events? No. The onus must be squarely placed upon those that intentionally set about causing the use of lethal force. Was there a better way to deal with the "flotilla"? Once again, perhaps, but in the realm of military operations, and especially, in the realm of moral asymmetry, the law of unintended consequences looms large. I can imagine some bad consequences of each of the options I've listed above. ☆

Weapons Found on the Flotilla Ship Mavi Marmara Used b..



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Now that we have begun full-time to reach Israel with the Gospel, we need your support more than ever. Having been to the Holy Land more than 15 times, I can assure you that Israelis deeply hunger and thirst for the Word of God and appreciate the believers in America who support ministries devoted to bringing the Word of God to the Jews.

In light of the Last Days' realities, we appeal to you. We ask for and appreciate any support you can give us during

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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, Texas. He was a chaplain at Medical City Hospital for fifteen years. 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. †

Spring 2010 Israel Outreach *Continued from page 1*

utterly self-defeating and self refuting. Another reason Shlomi said he could not believe in God was because of an accident that occurred when he was in the IDF. During combat, a bomb went off in his face. He lost his hearing and sight in one eye. He showed me his hearing aids in each ear. I gently countered by pointing out that the fact he survived something of this magnitude was a miracle and proof of God's miraculous intervention from a circumstance that normally spells certain death.

The conversation concluded with my appeal to Israel in Bible prophecy and how God accurately foretold Israel's history including their present day restoration and regathering to their God-given ancient homeland. Shlomi then exclaimed to me, as his defense mechanism waned in the course of my witness to him, "I am open about this." Praise the Lord Jesus! Shlomi was open to what Ruach Hakodesh (Hebrew for Holy Spirit) was revealing to him. Shlomi ended up accepting a copy of the complete Jewish Bible. He told me that he was now open to the possibility for God's existence based on the stimulating conversation we had! I pray the Lord will lead Shlomi to experience and come to personally know that God does exist and is fully revealed in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua of Nazareth. †☆☆

Todd will be speaking at Lakeview Christian Church in Mannford, Oklahoma, during both the morning and evening services on August 29, 2010. Come join him if you are in the area!

If you would like to have Todd as a guest speaker at your church or function, visit our website:
www.brit-hadashah.org
or contact him at:
Todd@brit-hadashah.org
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Matthew 13.... Continued from page 3

taught them about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. In Matthew 13:16-17 the Lord did acknowledge the disciples' understanding of Him and what He taught: ***"But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them."***

The disciples' affirmative reply to the Lord's question in verse 51 caused Him to speak the eighth mystery of the kingdom—the parable of the scribe and the householder. Before one intends to probe this last mystery, he must, as did the disciples, have a basic biblical understanding of who Jesus Christ is and what He taught. This parable is addressed to the well qualified and initiated disciple of the Lord. Jesus begins this brief parable with the word, ***"Therefore"***—stating in the affirmative that His hand-picked disciples did in fact receive and understand His parabolic teaching about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in its varied forms as pictured by the eight parables of Matthew thirteen. This eighth mystery parable speaks of the genuine ministers of Christ as the scribes of the kingdom of heaven. At the start of this parable Jesus describes

His pastoral ministers as scribes instructed and taught of God about the kingdom of heaven. The Greek word used for "scribe" is *gramma*. From this we got our English word, "grammar." The Hebrew word for scribe is *sopherim* or *caphar*. The word in the Hebrew rendering has three meanings connected with the verb *saphar*—from the root of *sopherim*. These three primary meanings are descriptive of the scribe's ministerial office, which no doubt closely parallels the proper functioning of a Christian minister in the area of preaching and expounding on the Word of God—this includes the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

The three characteristics of the scribe's ministry are as follows: (1) they were assigned to write and copy the Scriptures verbatim; (2) they were to set the Scriptures in correct order and arrangement; (3) they were to count each individual letter, and carefully peruse over the manuscript to make sure that it was copied in exact duplication, word for word after the original text. The scribe was responsible for understanding the Scriptures grammatically before he could interpret them. The same holds true today. Unless the minister of Christ understands the Scriptures from a grammatical viewpoint, he will not understand them interpretatively. †