

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John  
5:39



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

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As Todd and I journeyed through the L-rd's land, we felt His direction every step of the way. A small fender bender on the way from Tel Aviv to Netanya was annoying, but He found a way to make it rewarding. If not for this incident, we would not have encountered Mollie, whom I'm sure Todd will tell you about. I, however, want to point out a couple of occurrences where we feel people were led to us; of course by His direction.



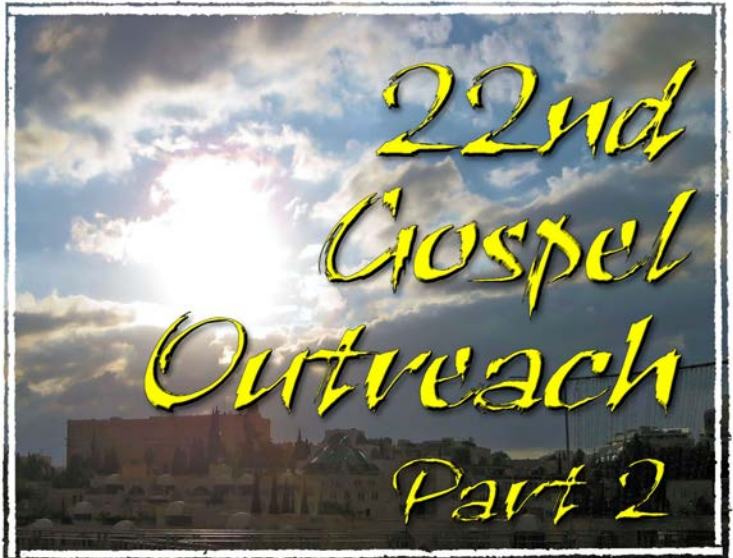
by  
Harvey Zion

First there was Michael, a young man on a crowded Tiberias street, who picked us out of a throng to ask how to get to the bus station. Then, noticing Todd's Messianic necklace excitedly exclaimed "You're Believers". We were also enthused by this. After these exchanges he inquired if we happened to have a Bible for he had given his to a homeless person who had recently come to faith in Messiah. Now who else on that busy avenue and in that mob scene could he have contacted who would have had what he needed? Todd immediately presented him with one. Our L-rd is amazing!



*This young man was in need of a Bible because he had given his to a homeless person - he asked the right guy!*

A day or two later we headed to Mount Hermon to interact with the IDF and thank them for their much needed service. On this occasion only a few were visibly on duty, though I'm sure there were more. The ones we did encounter weren't able to converse with us. They surprisingly didn't speak English. Well on this quiet afternoon near the mountain top, we did see a group of bicycle riders. There were about 25-30 of them seated at some benches having lunch. We were also surprised to see maybe 8-10 tandem bikes among their vehicles. We thought that because of the steepness and length of the climb, they used these to assist each other. This



was true, but the main reason was that the riders in the second seat were sight impaired or blind. The drivers in the front seat led the way and the others helped on their trek. What a wonderful organization. They are Israel Guide Dogs. They are based in Tel Aviv and have many great programs to help those who need this assistance. The web site, if you are interested in or want to donate, is [www.israelguidedog.org](http://www.israelguidedog.org).



*Israel Guide Dogs out for a bike ride.*

We did talk with Olga, one of their leaders and the mother of two teenagers and naturally explained about our mission. She accepted a complete Bible from us enthusiastically. Here is an instance where we all benefitted because of His unfailing guidance as Romans 8:28 says He works all things together for those who love Him. He is amazing! I said that already, but I can't help it. It gets better and better. ☆✠☆

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.

# Homosexuality: Modernism and the Bible



by Aaron Levitt

In secular society today, homosexuality is tolerated, where not fully accepted. It is constantly reputed to be a legitimate lifestyle—a natural, biological outgrowth of instincts with which homosexuals are said to be born. Many homosexuals claim they are just being who they are by engaging in this biblically-condemned lifestyle. But attempts to say that “God made me this way” ring hollow in light of Scripture’s clear and consistent take on homosexuality (Lev 18:22, 20:13, “*detestable*”; 1 Cor 6:9-10, “*wrongdoers*”; 1 Tim 1:8-11, “*contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the gospel*”).

These attempts at justifying homosexual culture and practices are nothing more than modern applications of what British philosopher G. E. Moore dubbed the “naturalistic fallacy”. By this, he explained he meant instances in which someone attempts to declare an ethical truth based wholly in terms of natural properties. For instance, a person might exclaim with conviction, “Well of course you would do that, and you should—it’s only natural!” But then again, so is sinning (Rom 5:12; 7:19-20).

Let us set aside, for the sake of argument, the dubious claim that a person can be born with a certain type of sexual need. (And this need is said to be present *at or before birth*—not exactly the most sexually-aware time in a person’s life!) Some humans are

born with serious disfigurements, and/or any number of painful and debilitating diseases, both neurological and physical. Unlike sexual behaviors, which develop after years of *nurture* as well as inborn *nature*, many disfigurements and diseases are undeniably present at or before birth. Do we then praise such problems because they are natural? No. In those cases, we realize that those natural occurrences are not the way things should be.

Also, consider the criminal element. In discussing such, one might hear the modern sentiment, “Who are we to judge them? Isn’t what is right behavior for you not necessarily what is right for someone else?” So, again, who can say anything against criminals on naturalistic grounds? After all, criminals are “being true to themselves,” and they are “just doing what is right for them.”

Some non-believers love doing this. They delight in showcasing high-profile “mistakes” that God has supposedly made—“assuming He exists,” they often quickly add. Thus, we see attempts to “correct” these “mistakes” through abortions, sex changes, transvestitism, and homosexual lifestyles, to name just a few. And, of course, if secular society can show that God has made mistakes, then it’s easy to then make the argument that we might as well abandon His teachings altogether. And that is the real goal of the secularists.

We also hear many arguments against “self-repression.” It was recently extolled to me this way: “Repressing yourself is an ugly thing and there is no logical reason to do that to yourself in this day and age.” Sensing a possible exception to that absolute statement, I responded: “What if you’re a Christian? What if you want to put up a ‘Merry Christmas’ sign, or a Nativity scene on your own property but in public view? What if you want to pray in school? What if you firmly believe that abortion is murder, and you want to talk women out of it in order to save innocent lives? Should you repress yourself then?”

The reply: “You can put whatever you want on private property as long as it meets community standards for inoffensiveness and does not violate any law (e.g. some states may restrict hate

speech).” I responded, “In other words, no, I can’t put up a ‘Merry Christmas’ sign or a Nativity scene, because people will complain that they feel hated because of it, and I’ll likely be ordered by the state to take it down.” To my abortion question, the reply was: “If you want to assault people on the street in order to talk them out of abortion you might have some legal trouble in your future.” I replied, “Exactly. The attitude is, ‘Let the babies die, who cares?’”

Killing is bad—but, in this day and age, it is not considered to be quite as bad as *offending*. And even the strict ban on the latter is only selectively enforced, usually depending upon who is offending or being offended, and what kinds of ideas are involved. Interestingly, one word which the New Testament uses to characterize the Gospel message is the Greek word “skandalon”, which means a stumbling block—in this instance, an impediment to our understanding and acceptance of the Gospel, due to the disturbing aspect of the message: we have sinned, we are sinners, we are hell bound, and we need a Savior. So, we see that the Gospel offends by its very nature. Therefore, it is interesting that Satan would be working in the world to bring the concept of offensiveness—the very thing which conveying the Gospel produces—into ever sharper disfavor with mankind. It’s all about trying to ban the Gospel, so that fewer and fewer will receive Salvation.

But, back to the naturalistic fallacy, the belief that everything natural is good. Our neo-pagan society goes even beyond the acceptance of certain “natural” traits, to the point of expressing pride in some of them. Being homosexual isn’t just accepted; it is *praised*. One example of this is, of course, “Gay Pride parades”, in which a trait whose own proponents say is completely biological and inborn is, for some reason, extolled as both a virtue and an accomplishment. But by that logic, we could consider highly public declarations of “white pride” to be legitimate. Also, like many homosexuals affirm, racial braggarts could proudly say—and with far better evidence as to the following statement—“I was born this way!” But,

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## Search the Scriptures

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# The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

(Matthew 18:23-35)

## Part 3



<sup>23</sup>“Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. <sup>24</sup>And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. <sup>25</sup>But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. <sup>26</sup>The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ <sup>27</sup>Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ <sup>29</sup>So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ <sup>30</sup>And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. <sup>32</sup>Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘you wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And his master was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him. <sup>35</sup>So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

“**A**nd when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.”  
(Verse 24)

Here in verse 24, our Savior intends to point to the enormous debt the servant owed his lord. The servant owed a tremendously huge sum of ten thousand talents. The talent or *talanton* (τάλαντον) in the Greek was in the New Testament period the measurement or weight of money according to Roman currency. It was called the Roman Attic talent—and was in common circulation in the land of Israel during the time of Christ. The talent was primarily used to measure precious metals such as gold, silver, platinum and so forth. For instance, one talent of gold is roughly equal to \$28,280 (American) in gold currency, but ten thousand talents, a much greater sum, is equivalent to \$282,800,000 (American) in gold currency! These figures are but crude estimates at best. Nonetheless, it illustrates well the gargantuan debt the borrower was required to pay his lender.

The king, as we noticed earlier, is in fact the Lord God Almighty, “The King of kings,” whereas the servant is indicative of all accountable humans under the equitable administration of a just and holy God. The servant was brought to the stinging realization, by the divine compulsion of the king, the vast debt he grossly accumulated in his overdrawn account. The analogy of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly evident. The reckoned servant, no doubt, personifies all of fallen mankind under the accursed and destitute state of sin in severe debt to the holy, righteous God. When exactly did man fall into heavy debt? After the catastrophic fall in the Garden of Eden, the descendants of Adam became indebted to God by virtue of Adam’s transgression, which had a deadly, domino effect in its destructive repercussions. “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).

Adam was the primogenitor of all mankind. He was the singular representative. When Adam sinned, he sinned not alone, but for all who would come after him. His disobedience to God involved the whole human race. When Adam sinned all of humanity sinned in his place. “**For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners**” (Romans 5:19). When tested of God, Adam failed to meet and comply with God’s demands of obedience. He became deep in debt. God required absolute obedience, but man disobeyed miserably, thus owing a vast moral debt of obedience to the Perfect One. God then instituted the Law as a means for showing us the colossal debt we owe: “**For by the law is the knowledge of sin**” (Romans 3:20); and the remedy paying it: “**Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith**” (Galatians 3:24). The human race has repeatedly failed to render payment by complete obedience to the law of God. The Scriptures, secular history, and the writer’s and readers’ personal life abundantly testify such. “**For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us and as for our iniquities we know them**” (Isaiah 59:12). Because of man’s continual inability to pay the debt, his innate passion for sin, and his flagrant disobedience, God could not reckon with man according to obedience. He was left with one other alternative; and that was to reckon with man according to his disobedience—each according to his innumerable sins committed one after another. “**The Lord shall count when He writes up the people: add iniquity unto their iniquity**” (Psalm 87:6; 69:27).

This is the tragic audit of every unregenerate sinner without Christ. The servant of our parable is very typical of the sinner who in his carnal security and hardness of heart would have increased his massive sum to an even much greater extent if gone unstopped.

*Continued on page 4*

The servant had no intention of coming to his creditor king unless the king had not first ordered him before his presence. Sin, in and of itself, is an ongoing debt—10,000 talents—just like the song in the Christmas movie *Scrooge* accurately describes: “The sins of man are huge, a never-ending symphony of villainy and infamy, duplicity, deceit, and subterfuge.” How much more is our ongoing sin than the tremendous sum of 10,000 talents? Man has incurred this unpayable debt upon himself and continues augmenting this vast debt of sin in ever increasing accumulation. The sinner is busy treasuring up wrath for himself against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Romans 2:5). Without the lucrative payment of Calvary, mankind could never hope to cancel out and rectify and pay in full the immense debt he owes his blessed Maker. Apart from salvation in Jesus Christ, man is an incorrigible sinner beyond repair indiscriminately committing one sin after another. **“That which is crooked, cannot be made straight; and that which is lacking cannot be numbered”** (Ecclesiastes 1:15). The great debt of our parable is indeed the abominable, unremitting sins of God-hating mankind perpetually committed against a loving God. Sin is a great sum of 10,000 talents in that it is infinite in scope! **“Is not your wickedness great, and your iniquity infinite?”** (Job 22:5). Ten thousand talents is an extremely

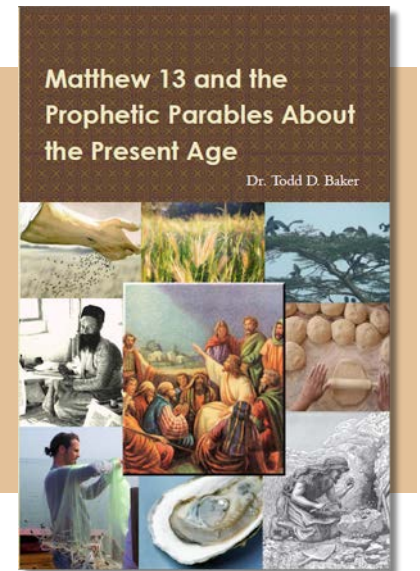
modest sum in proportion to the infinitude of sin. The undeserved mercy of God, no doubt, prevents the full disclosure of our sins, exacting much less than we deserve. **“Know therefore that God exacts of you less than your iniquity deserves”** (Job 11:6). Sin is represented in this parable as a great sum of 10,000 talents. The full extent of sin is far more numerous than we can possibly imagine, far more than the number of hairs on our heads (Psalm 40:12). Sin shows itself in multifarious forms through hate, lust, murder, envy, strife, conceit, gossip, blasphemy, unbelief, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lying, stealing, cursing, bitterness, perversion, divorce, child abuse, alcoholism, drug abuse, abortion, and a host of innumerable others.

Sin is the eternal transgression of God’s everlasting law. **“Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is the transgression of the law”** (1 John 3:4). And disobedience to God’s law naturally brings eternal punishment. **“For the wages of sin is death”** (Romans 6:23). Sin is able to damn the individual soul to eternal hell. It is an intentional, active enmity against the compassionate Christ. Sin brings eternal penalization on those who refuse repentance. **“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish”** (Luke 13:5). Man **“is a debtor to do the whole law”** (Galatians 5:3). †

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Todd has a new book available for purchase on our website and soon to be in online stores like Amazon and Barnes & Noble! Buy your copy of *Matthew 13 and the Prophetic Parables About the Present Age* for \$18. (This book will soon be available in **Spanish!**)



**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. †

*Kenny Gee and I are headed back to Israel this March 2012. We need to raise \$6,500 to \$7,000 for this upcoming trip as we seek to expand our stay longer to accomplish more for the Cord in the land of His return among His Chosen People. Without your indispensable support, we cannot carry out this life-saving mission! I would ask you now to open your hearts and minds wide and consider giving generously to help this ministry. Please take the time to send us whatever financial support the Holy Spirit places upon your heart.*  
-Todd

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*Having been to the Holy Land over 20 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. We need your support to help us continue to take the Gospel to the land from whence it came.*

*In light of the Last Days' realities, we appeal to you. We ask for and appreciate any support you can give us during this critical time of need. We need your thoughts,*

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### Homosexuality... Continued from page 2

clearly, such boastful displays would be wrong and silly, because they refer to born, physical identities. Indeed, lavishly-expressed pride in being born a certain way is usually considered sexist, racist, or otherwise bigoted. But we are to accept that this is *not* true in the case of homosexuals' bragging about being, according to them, born a certain way?

Thus, the modern conclusion reached from declaring certain perversions to be natural is that they are both good and unchangeable. This conclusion is not accidental, but is rather the very reason why the behavior is said to be inborn. But that conclusion is wrong on both counts. The Bible not only consistently calls homosexuality wrong, but it also says that God changes hearts toward conforming to His will (Jeremiah 31:33). And the evidence for this is clear in the salvation of millions upon millions of Christians, many of whom, before they were saved, were manifestly very immoral people, boastful and flagrant about it, but who found a totally new nature through Christ (Romans 6:11, 16-18). So, homosexuals have no special grounds whatsoever on this kind of thumbing-of-the-nose to God.

That homosexuals can change is further supported by the personal testimonies of new Christians, among whose repented sins was that of homosexuality. This fundamental change of such a person should be no more surprising than the examples we've heard of lifelong criminals, who, although they had operated on certain natural "instincts" of their sinful, unsaved state (selfish greed, lust, and hatred) their whole lives, they later found genuinely-transformative rebirth through the Messiah. We've heard countless accounts of total life-turnarounds resulting from salvation in Jesus Christ, countless miracles of personality changes in people

from being wantonly sinful to actively resisting sin. Why would homosexuality be an exception? Why would it be the one vice too difficult for omnipotent God to work with and cure?

So, this whole attempt on the part of the homosexual lobby to declare some form of "unchangeable" status for their sexual preferences is just their attempt to put forth the idea that differing sexual preferences somehow denote different races of people, and that, therefore, opposition to what they *do* is one and the same as opposition to who they *are* as human beings. This is deliberately crafted to make it impossible to, as we Christians often summarize a Gospel doctrine, "love the sinner but hate the sin". By personifying the sin—by seeming to "give it a face"—these people attempt to preemptively bar all objections to homosexual behavior.

But the sin *is not* the sinner! If it were so, God would have to destroy all humans, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), and therefore all humans would have themselves become the very garbage that sin is. But, rather, God knew that there was a part of us sinners that needed to die (Romans 6:6; Eph 4:22; Col 3:9), and a part of us that still had genuine value (2 Corinthians 5:17). Like any good ER doctor, God made the distinction between our bodies and the poisons flowing within them, knowing that the latter could be sufficiently isolated and dealt with in order to save the former.

In conclusion, I would simply add that, for homosexuals and heterosexuals alike, Jesus' command is the same about what we should do with our desires which conflict with God's will as expressed in Scripture: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). †



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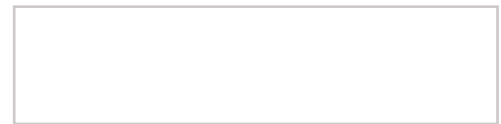
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# 23rd Gospel Outreach to ISRAEL! March 11-27, 2012

**P**lease begin praying with us for our 23rd mission trip to the Holy Land. Todd will be joined once again by Kenny Gee on this outreach, and we ask that you please be praying for them before and during the trip. Here is our Prayer List for Mission trips to use as a guide:



- ✧ 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).