

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John
5:39



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

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THE GOD OF SECOND CHANCES, AND MANY MORE!

This ministry has just completed our 33rd Gospel outreach to Israel. Joining me on this outreach were veteran team members Eric Oler, Robin and Sue Hopper.



Mission Team: Eric Oler, Todd Baker, Sue and Robin Hopper

While ministering in Nazareth, we met an young Israeli man by the name of Adam. He was an Israeli tour guide. He was wide open to a Gospel witness about Yeshua the Messiah. Adam said that as a tour guide in Israel, he often leads Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land and needed to learn more about Yeshua in the New Testament! Adam then commented, "You know Yeshua lived most of His life here in Nazareth." Responding that I of course knew this, I informed Adam that our ministry regularly distributes both the Tenach and Brit Hadashah together in Hebrew bound in one volume to both Jews and Arabs in the Land. Hearing this, Adam's face



lit up like a Hanukah Menorah with his excited exclamation, "I need to have one then." He agreed with me when I said that every Jewish person needs to know and read about Yeshua in the Jewish Bible because Moses and the Prophets speak

about Him from the beginning to the end of the Bible (Luke 24:27). Adam also assented to the fact he needed to learn and understand the connection of Messianic prophecy established between the two great Testaments of the Bible and the historic way Yeshua established beyond all doubt He alone is the One and only true Messiah of Israel by fulfilling all the Messianic prophecies relative to His first coming. I joyfully gave Adam a brand new Hebrew Bible so this open and receptive young Israeli can meet Yeshua the Messiah in the living pages of God's Word.

A stupendous miracle of God's providential sovereignty took place in the southern city of Eilat when this ministry ministered there on this 33rd Gospel outreach. Remember the Jews require

a sign as Paul said to get their attention to hear the Gospel (1 Corinthians 1:22). So with that said, I went for an early dinner to one of my favorite restaurants here. But to my chagrin it went out of business. Disappointed, I went to a second restaurant; they were not open until later in the evening. So I went to a third restaurant and no one was in front. I went back to the kitchen and they said they did not open until six and it was four in the afternoon. So then I found a fourth restaurant and it was open. The waiter came out and he looked familiar to me. He was surprised at my appearance. He pointed to my Star of David and Cross necklace and reminded me we had met before. All of a sudden I knew who he was. His name was Joseph. On the fall 2014 Gospel outreach, Robin Hopper and I gave Joseph an extensive witness for the Gospel of Yeshua from fulfilled Messianic prophecy; and both of us pleaded with Joseph to receive the Scriptures. But he adamantly refused—though he was nice about it.

Robin and I ran into him in an electronics store across town. His attitude now was 180 degrees different. I boldly told him not to curry the Lord's displeasure by rejecting the Scriptures and the New Testament again. He said, "No, no, I will take them now. This is a sign from God!" Joseph then pointed his finger to the sky to indicate this miracle of divine appointment! He then enthusiastically high

fived me and accepted the Scriptures with the New Testament in it as I proceeded to tell him how, from the Scriptures, the death and resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah saves us from sin and death! What a marvelous example of God's divine guidance and providential sovereignty here, folks. God loved this young man so much He wanted to make sure this end-time ministry returned to him again, against all odds, to give him the Good News of Yeshua the Messiah! Indeed this proves God is the God of second chances and many more! Needless to say, I was floored and awed by what the Lord had fantastically done in arranging this planned meeting by His guiding hand! I was moved to tears later on when reflecting on what happened with Joseph. God was obviously not through with reaching this young Jewish man with the Gospel. Rather than giving up on him after Joseph rejected the Gospel in the Fall of 2014, the God of the seconds chances and many more sent this ministry back again in such a way to give Joseph a sign of the power of God's supernatural guidance that he was convinced not to reject this second offer born out of God's providential and sovereign manner of bringing this ministry back into Joseph's path again that was beyond any human control! ✠✠✠



by
Todd Baker



Special thanks go out to Zola Levitt Ministries / To The Jew First Ministry for their ongoing funding contributions, helping to make these mission trips to Israel possible. Also, special thanks to Andy Ball of The Bible Society of Israel for supplying us with Hebrew Bibles.

Showing the Love and Compassion of Christ Without Compromise To the Sin of Homosexuality

by Nancy Baker

As the sin of homosexuality becomes more and more accepted in post-Christian America and in some large quarters of apostate Christendom, the real Church of Jesus Christ must not ignore that homosexuals need the Gospel. But we must make sure we present it with Christ's love and compassion for the homosexual sinner without rancor and bitterness. My mother's prescription on how Christians can do this with Christ's compassion without compromise to the Word of God in the article below is the first practical step in doing this--Todd.

It's time to step back and take a calm view of just one of the politically correct issues—the gay lifestyle from a Christian perspective. Never mind the ranting and the name-calling that goes on to some degree on all sides.

Firstly, Christ came for sinners. The saints and righteous did not need the majority of His attention, but those who had chosen a dark path or who had no belief in God were His targets. He called murderers, thieves, the sexually immoral, the egoists, the angry and the defiant, the social outcasts, the hypocrites, the scam artists, the highest, corrupt rulers and politicians—all sinners no matter how far gone they were. He came to them during His lifetime and still comes to them now.

How could He possibly do that? Our human minds have a hard time coming to terms with that. The answer is really rather simple—Jesus was and is able to separate the man or woman from their most grievous sins. He rejects the sin, but loves the person. He reaches out to the human spirit and heart. It is a constant endeavor on His part.

Looking at the homosexual lifestyle, it is the same story. We, as Christians, believe in the sanctity of human love, commitment, bonding, faithfulness and coming together in sexual oneness as man and woman in marriage open to a family of children. We don't believe in sexual cohabitation among heterosexuals, nor do we believe in that lifestyle among homosexuals.

We live in a free society where we all can express our beliefs.

This does not mean expressions of hate for others, threats, violence or in- your-face confrontations. This writer expressly is offended by all who continually try to shove their opinions down others' throats by threatening tactics, by bias in straight news reporting and other actions that border on extortion

tactics. This is unacceptable behavior. We are guaranteed the freedom of religion and free speech in the Constitution of the United States of America.

What do you think would happened if a group of Christians lobbied every producer in television to put the “Christian point of view” in all the shows they were producing? Yet this is the very thing that is happening by “special gay advocates”. These same types of advocates are busy pressuring schools to promote the homosexual lifestyle while forbidding the mention of God and religion.

Most Christians are especially weary of the angry accusations and loss of control in expressing or discussing issues of differences; and, yes, a few retaliate in the same hostile way they are approached. Whatever side that disrespectful conduct comes from is wrong.

So are we capable of fixing the frailties of the human race? Do we have the solution and the power of final judgment? Absolutely not, that is God's job; and as much as we would like to assume that task, we can't. Let our Creator tend to His business. Jesus did leave us a legacy of action—love the sinner and reject the sin. In a civil yet firm stand, you have the right to defend the very firm foundation of Christianity by presenting and preserving our faith and morality. As Christ showed us, there is great power in prayer for all and even for those who view us as their enemy. Just as Christ did on the cross by granting forgiveness to one criminal who turned from evil and came into God's hands at the last minute—we, too, must persevere in searching out those who can only find true happiness in the state of grace and union with Jesus. Let us reach out to those in spiritual pain without rancor, anger or hardness of heart. Christ drew us the road map—all we have to do is follow it no matter the rebuffs or rejections. “Blessed are the pure of heart for they will see God.” †

Join our group on Facebook and start or join a discussion!



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 or call 866-910-0444.

Search the Scriptures

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The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

(Matthew 20:1-16)

Part 2



¹"For the Kingdom of heaven is like to a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. ²And when he agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard. ³And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went their way. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here all day idle?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no man has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you shall receive.' ⁸So when evening had come, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers, and give them their wages, beginning from the last to the first.' ⁹And when those came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. ¹⁰But when the first came, they had supposed they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. ¹¹And when they had received it, they murmured against the Goodman of the house, ¹²saying, 'These last have labored but one hour; and you have made them equal to us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.' ¹³But he answered one of them, and said, 'Friend, I do you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a penny? ¹⁴Take what is yours, and go your way. I will give to the last, even as I gave to you. ¹⁵Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good?' ¹⁶So the last shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."

There are several common interpretations ascribed to the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, but space does not permit us here to expound on all of them. We will, however, briefly analyze the most commonly taught interpretation before giving the true meaning of the parable.

Many Bible commentators propose an ethnological theme to the parable. They say the "first" called to the Lord's vineyard represent the Jews who were entitled to work first by virtue of the covenant made with the Householder. The "last" called into the vineyard represent the Gentiles who are called also to assist the householder. When the Jews noticed this, they became offended and visibly upset at the uncircumcised Gentiles being given equal access with the same privileged treatment bestowed by God. As a result, the "first" balked after a day's completion of labor demanding superior treatment from God. The Lord reverses the order of esteem giving the Gentiles first ranking in the kingdom until the Jews come to the realization that one is favored by grace, and not nationality, circumcision, or the tedious observance of the Mosaic Law. Many Bible students who advocate this interpretation maintain the parable is therefore prophetic, forewarning that during the present age the Jews, who were originally first, are now placed last, while the Gentiles, who were last, are now placed first in the kingdom of God.

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard in no way exclaims or infers this hypothetical meaning. The parable was spoken by Jesus to answer the question about Christian service and reward. It makes no explicit reference to the categorical positioning of Jew over Gentile and later, Gentile over Jew in the kingdom of heaven. Several passages from the Holy Scriptures clearly disprove this mode of interpretation. For instance in Romans 1:16, an epistle arguably addressed to the Gentile church at Rome, Paul writes the Gospel is to be proclaimed to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For it is the power of God to salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Gentile).

The call of Christian discipleship has already been received in the past, by both Jews and Gentiles, and has continued throughout the church age. The Gospel invitation is universal. The divine call is not exclusively reserved for a large number of Gentiles in preference over the Jews. "But to them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24). Notice the order of the text here: the Jews, first, before the Gentiles. God appeals to both classes in their respective desires. To the Jews first—who require a supernatural sign, Christ is made to them the manifested power of God, and to the Gentiles, who demand credible wisdom, Christ is made

the supreme wisdom of God. In both cases, God is making available His Son for their salvation, not marking any respect between their two races.

The Church of Jesus Christ is composed of one body united under one Head. All races including Jews and Gentiles are equal in the rights, privileges, and benefits of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. "God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation He that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts 10:34). There is no racial classification of "first" and "last" in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Jew and Gentile are co-equal heirs in Christ. Both are partakers of the riches of His grace. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek (Gentile), for the same Lord over all is rich to all that call upon Him" (Romans 10:12). Likewise with the perspective of this parable, the first and the last both receive a penny for a day's labor. The persistent question arises of whom then are the first put last and the last placed first? The first are those who are pompous and proud in the kingdom of heaven. They claim the deserved right to be first place, yet God shall humble them by positioning them last. The last are the unassuming saints who are exalted in due time by the hand of the Lord. "For whoever exalts himself shall be abased, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11). Ultimately,

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UPDATE FROM OUR 33RD OUTREACH TO ISRAEL



By Sue Hopper

Often when the To The Jew First team flies from JFK to Tel Aviv, a divine appointment with a seatmate develops. On this El Al jet, I was seated next to a friendly Israeli woman. Dalit and I quickly became involved in conversation concerning our families, careers, and travel plans.

Dalit was born in Jerusalem but now resides in a suburb of Tel Aviv where she works in the medical field with burn patients. Her work also involves research and testing new medicines to help repair scarred and damaged skin. She loves what she does.

Dalit's husband works in New York City and would like to move the family there. But Dalit loves Israel and does not want to move their two sons, who are in their late teens and early 20s. So, she travels to New York regularly to see her husband.

When Dalit realized that her book was in her carry-on in the overhead compartment, I offered to let her get out to retrieve it, but she didn't want to go to the trouble. I offered one of my books



that I thought she might enjoy. It's just as well she wasn't interested because I realized that the book was also in the overhead compartment. But, I did have a prophecy pamphlet to let her read. I unfolded The Promised Messiah* to show Dalit that it listed 17 prophecies from the Old Testament (Tanakh) with their fulfillment by Yeshua in the New Testament (B'rit Hadashah). This interested Dalit, especially because the pamphlet was printed in both Hebrew and English. She gladly took the Gospel tract to read.

While the TTJF team waited for our luggage, Dalit found us to say goodbye. I introduced her to the team members: my husband Robin, Eric Oler, and Todd Baker, who took our picture. I hope I meet Dalit again to see how the Holy Spirit has watered the seed that I planted. Meanwhile, we will pray

for Dalit and her family that she, and by extension they, recognize the identity of their Messiah Yeshua/Jesus.

The next morning after reading Romans 9:5 and praying, we checked out of the hotel and drove to a mall in Natanya. The mall was very crowded as many Israelis had the day off because of the election. At the Fox clothing store, I met a cashier, Dana, and although she was very busy I explained to her that my husband I were here with our Rabbi from Dallas, Texas, and that I had a gift for her. Dana gladly took a Complete Hebrew Bible from me. Also at this mall I met Freda at the Gaya Cosmetic shop who accepted an Isaiah 53 Explained book from us.

On our way to Tiberias we stopped for lunch at a mall in Nazareth. There I found a candy shop and asked for Cigal as Todd and I had in the fall given her a complete Hebrew Bible. She was not there, but I was able to minister to Neti who also accepted a Complete Hebrew study Bible from us.

Checking into the hotel in Tiberias, Robin and I met a Bedouin man, Kessem, who helped us with the coffee maker and safe in our room and who also accepted a complete Hebrew study Bible. At first he refused because he is not Jewish. But, I explained to Kessem that he did not need to be Jewish to read the Hebrew Scriptures. He thanked us and was happy because he does read Hebrew.

Wednesday the 18th of March we started the day by reading Romans 10 and the outreach team praying together.

We walked to the Big Mall where Todd and Eric had very open and productive ministry. It was not as easy for Robin and me at this mall. I did meet a very friendly woman at a kiosk who very kindly listened to my witness but still was not ready to receive scripture study materials connecting the Tenach (OT) to the B'rit Hadashah (NT). I also tried at a bookshop but was rejected. But there was a very open door near the bookshop at a toy store. There I shopped for a few birthday gifts for our Grandchildren and when I checked out discovered that the storekeeper, Galit, was not only interested in my testimony of Yeshua being the Jewish Messiah but also was very happy to receive the complete Hebrew study Bible. I wrote a message in the Bible I gave to Galit from us to encourage her and make the Scripture personal to her.

After wonderful ministry to Jewish and Ethiopian Jewish IDF officers and



one Druid at Har Hermon IDF base and ski lodge, we drove up to Jerusalem reading the Psalms

(Continued on page 6)

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שלום

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Having been to the Holy Land over 30 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,

your prayers, your words and your financial support as the Lord leads your heart.

Please consider becoming a monthly partner. As you can read for yourself in the newsletter articles, these worthwhile donations are directly impacting individual lives in Israel.

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Thank you for your support.

Parable of the Laborers... Continued from page 3

God will place the proud last and the humble first when "the time of the restitution of all things" commences in the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

At the outset of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, Jesus uses another similitude of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is likened to a householder or landowner inquiring after prospective employees to work in his vineyard. One may wonder what exactly is the kingdom of heaven here. The kingdom of heaven, as we understand it, is the intermediate period between the first and second comings of Jesus Christ. The locality of the church age lies in between these two comings of Messiah. The parable is a concise portrayal of the common problems with the quality and quantity of reward in the Christian ministry during the present dispensation of grace. The parable concludes with the resolve God undertakes to correct these problems found in the diverse ministries of the church. There are four outstanding characters mentioned in the parable necessary to define: (1) the householder (2) the laborers (3) the vineyard and (4) the marketplace. All four symbols will be carefully considered so that a comprehensive meaning maybe obtained.

The first distinguishable character presented to us is the householder. His identity is not at all difficult to unveil. The householder is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. The

Lord "that keeps Israel," revealed Himself as the vinedresser or householder of Israel in the Old Testament economy (see Isaiah 5:1-2). God the eternal Son revealed God the eternal Father as the husbandman of the Church in the New Testament economy. Jesus says of God, "My father is the husbandman" (John 15:1). The Bible makes it quite clear that the identity of the householder is none other than "the Creator of the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 40:28) who employs spiritual laborers in His beloved vineyard. The definition of "householder" conveys four basic meanings. First, the householder is chiefly concerned with the affairs of his own house. He enlists and pays all those who are under his blessed employment. Our heavenly Father maintains constant care and faithful upkeep of His Spirit begotten household, the Church. The householder of the parable provided sufficient employment for those idle in the marketplace and amply supplied their need at the end of the day. The husbandman in close liaison with the hired workers is an intimate picture of Christ the Master Householder providing nutritious care for the household of faith. All of creation is entirely dependent upon its Creator. God, the unfailing Householder, maintains the upkeep and care of yearning creation. "These wait for You, that You may give them their food in due season. What You give them they gather in. You open Your hand, they are filled with good" (Psalm 104:27-28). †

About the Author



Todd Baker

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 15 years. Todd holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biblical studies, a Master of Theology Degree from Dallas Theological Seminary, a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Apologetics from Trinity Seminary under the auspices of Liverpool University at Liverpool, England, and is a Fellow of the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism & Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. 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 many Gospel outreaches to Israel. †

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of Ascent. On Thursday at the Lion of Jerusalem Antiquities shop, we visited with Jonathan and gave him a number of



personalized Complete Hebrew study Bibles for new members of his congregation. We had sweet fellowship with Jonathan, his Pastor, and two Messianic couples who were visiting his shop for the first time.



Sue with Michal

We crossed the street to the Dead Sea Products Shop where we have had ministry in the past. The owner came out and continued a previous discussion that she had with Todd. As she visited with Todd, I was able to share with her coworker, Michal, and give her an Isaiah 53 Explained book in Hebrew.

Another stop we made was at a Jerusalem cigar shop. In the fall, Todd and I had conversed with an attorney there who was a good friend of the shop keepers and had given him a complete Hebrew study Bible. This time I reminded the shop keeper, Hagar, of our previous discussion with her friend at the shop. She took a complete Hebrew Bible from me this time and I let Todd and Eric minister to her explaining the importance the prophecies of the Tenach and the fulfillment in the B'rit Hadashah as I prayed with Robin for them outside the shop. Team work!

There were others we ministered to in Jerusalem on Shabbat the next day. While in Jerusalem, my husband received word that his elderly mother had fallen and was not responsive. Todd and Eric continued on but had to drive Robin and me to the airport to fly home early. Our time in the Land was productive nevertheless, and though Robin's mother passed into the arms of our Lord before we arrived home, kind friends held vigil in her last hours.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the To the Jew First Outreach! ✨

