

# SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

John  
5:39



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

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## THE MYSTERY OF THE LETTER “L” UNVEILS THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

By: Todd Baker

I have just returned from the 37th Gospel outreach to the Jewish people in Israel. Accompanying me on this outreach from March 14-31, 2016, were Robert Williams, Eric Oler, Robin and Sue Hopper. Ministry in Tiberias was tough. Most Israelis, at first, rejected Yeshua and an offer of a free Hebrew Bible from us containing both Testaments. Eric, Sue and I witnessed to an Israeli lady. Her name was Liet. She initially accepted a Hebrew Study Bible from us. But she hesitated and called over a friend to ask her about the Bible. Liet's friend told her not to accept it because it contained the New Testament in it—never mind the fact God promised to give the House of Israel the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31. I had just started writing her name in the Bible. I wrote the letter “L” for Liet. Disappointed, we left but not without telling her she was rejecting eternal life. I dolefully commented that the Bible has a marked name in it. So I tried to tear out the blank page with the written letter on it. But strangely I could not do it after several strong attempts.

Sue Hopper said, “Perhaps we will next meet someone else who will accept a copy of the Scriptures whose name begins with an “L.” Skeptical, I answered, “What are the chances of that.” But quite remarkably that is what exactly happened next. Eric, Robert, and Robin prayed for an open door of ministry for Sue and I as we went into a woman's



clothing store where we met a receptive Israeli who heard our Gospel witness and allowed us to go through some of the Messianic prophecies in the Tenach that Yeshua fulfilled in the New Testament. She accepted the Bible from us that I had already written the letter “L” in. I asked the lady her name to write in the blank page of the Bible. She told us her name was Liem! Amazed at this, I did not have to scratch out the “L” and I knew why. So I completed the name by writing the rest of her name after writing the “L” earlier. Now I also knew why I could not mysteriously tear the blank page out—it was so Liem could receive the Bible with her name on it with a personal message from us on its blank page.

The Lord knew this in advance and ordained circumstances to bring this to pass. The odds of meeting two Israelis in a row whose first name began with an “L” was no coincidence in a universe where the Lord “predestines all things after the counsel of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11). Truly our steps were ordered by the Lord on this day of sharing the Gospel with the Jewish people in Tiberias (Psalm 37:23).

### 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 16 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, is a Fellow of the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism & Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, and is currently a Doctor of Ministry candidate at Liberty University. 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. ✝



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.



# A Promise Kept

By: Robin (Aviel) Hopper



About a year ago, I encountered Jennifer. She owns the gift shop in the Dan Panorama Hotel in Eilat. We spoke at some length and discovered she made Aliyah some years ago from all places Scotland.

I offered Jennifer a complete Hebrew Bible and she was interested but had difficulty reading Hebrew. She asked if I had a Bible in English and I had to reply that I did not and the only other book I had was also in Hebrew. The book was "Isaiah 53 Explained" She accepted the book after reading the jacket slowly and said she could have her young son read it to her and translate what she had difficulty understanding. I told her I would have an English Bible for her the next time I saw her.



Robin & Jennifer

Our next trip to Eilat, Jennifer was not at the shop; she was on holiday and was not available and we had a missed opportunity in the fall.

At Chanukah 2015, Dr. Todd Baker was in Eilat and at the Dan Panorama. As the L-rd moved Todd to engage Jennifer in conversation, He once again offered her a Bible in Hebrew and she told him about my offer and that I had stated the next time I was in Eilat I would have a Bible for her in English.

When Todd returned he told me of his conversation with Jennifer and his telling me of his encounter reminded me of my promise to her. Much to my embarrassment I had let my promise slip through my memory.

As we prepared for the 37th Outreach, I made sure I had a Bible for Jennifer. I acquired a Tree of Life Messianic Jewish Bible for her. The Bible is a good resource with great cross-reference and a section on Messianic Prophecy foretold in the Tanakh, and Prophecy fulfilled in the Brit Chadashah. It does have all the weekly Torah Readings. I felt this would be a translation that would speak to her in a way no other translation would and I packed it with care knowing it was going to the person G-d had chosen and that His word was going to speak to her in a way I could not.

Eilat was the first stop on the second half of our outreach. We had been going non-stop for eleven days and when we left Jerusalem, we headed out on a four-and-a-half hour drive to Eilat. We had said our goodbyes to Robert Williams and Eric Oler in Jerusalem as they were headed back to the states... they were

going to be missed as they played such a pivotal role in the first half of this outreach. So we headed out knowing the L-rd had much more for us to do before our return.

We arrived in Eilat late in the afternoon and we were tired - well to tell you, we were exhausted from the drive. In a few short hours, it would be Shabbat so I did not expect the gift shop to be open. But, as luck would have it, as we headed to our room, I noticed that it was in fact open. I ran in and saw Jennifer and said hi. She recognized me and I told her I would be right back as I had something for her and she said not to rush as she would be here for another couple hours.

After getting to our room and unpacking and freshening up I retrieved the Bible from one of the bags and headed down to see Jennifer. When I saw her, she was glad to see me and we caught up with each other. All the time I was holding the Tree of Life Bible and it was itching to get into her hands. When I gave Jennifer the Tree of Life Messianic Bible, she could hardly believe I was giving her such a lovely gift. As we talked, she related to me that it had not worked out so well with her young son reading and translating "Isaiah 53 Explained" as there were other things he wanted to do, like hang with his friends. I was a bit disappointed to hear this, but little did I know G-d had another plan in store for Jennifer.

The next day was Shabbat and we spent time ministering on the beach and other areas where those that were not observant gathered and at the same time we took a Sabbath rest ourselves.

We had wonderful ministry Sunday, and Sunday evening I was looking for something in my suitcase when I ran across an English "Isaiah 53 Explained." I do not remember packing it but there it was, all 164 pages.

I met with Jennifer one more time before we headed to Tel Aviv. I walked into the shop and said "Jennifer, I found something for you and could not leave without giving it to you." I handed her Mitch Glaser's book "Isaiah 53 Explained" in English, so now she could also read that as things did not happen with the Hebrew copy as she had hoped.

It is amazing how things work out when you keep a promise. Not only did she receive her own copy of the Tree of Life Bible, the L-rd G-d Almighty gave her a copy of Isaiah 53 Explained.

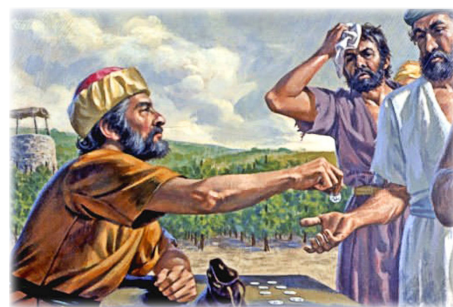
This Ministry with Jennifer was one of the most rewarding of the 37th Outreach to Israel and I am looking forward to watering the seed when we are once again in Eilat.



# The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

(Matthew 20:1-16)

Part 7



*"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. And when he agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here all day idle?' They 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.' So 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.' And when those came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they had supposed they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the Goodman of the house, saying, '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'? But he answered one of them, and said, 'Friend, I do you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a penny? Take what is yours, and go your way. I will give to the last, even as I gave to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is your eye evil, because I am good?' So the last will shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.*

*"And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here all day idle?' They 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' (Verses 3-7).*

The Jews of Jesus' day measured a workday from the commencement of sunrise to sunset. The Hebrew workday thus lasted from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. The "first hour" corresponds to our 7 a.m. The "third hour" with our 9 a.m., the "sixth hour" with our noon, the "ninth hour" with our 3 p.m., the "eleventh hour" right before sunset at approximately 5 p.m. in the evening ending with the twelfth hour at 6 p.m. The day of labor in this parable is divided into four segments of which an equal part of the day's wages might be earned in any part of them. What is the practical significance of the householder's hiring at all hours of the day? Ah, beloved, does it not speak of the heavenly Householder's indefatigable, unceasing, and tender loving provision for His own blood-bought redeemed servants at varied times of the day, years, and centuries from the "dawn" of time until the dusky end of the world? For indeed each day of existence has been personally wrought by the Author of all life wherein His physical and spiritual works are in the progressive course of glorious completion. Thus, the Christian steward in the Lord's vineyard, should seize the advantage of making the most of every hour of the day for the glorification of Christ and the furtherance of the Gospel of life knowing well that, **"This is the day which the Lord has made"** (Psalm 8:24).

The gracious householder's hourly search for the workers all the day long beautifully typifies the current accessibility God grants to any and every one of the saved who desire

to give full effort and energy to the work of Christian ministry, undoubtedly resulting in great rewards now and in the life to come. Realizing the harvest of the vineyard was greater than expected, the householder hired a new group of workers at the third, sixth, and ninth hours. Yet seeing this was not sufficient enough, **"for the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few"** (Luke 10:2), the householder went out again at the eleventh hour to hire even more workers for the grape harvest. To this end, we must hear and follow the advice of our Lord given in Matthew 9:38. **"Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."** In the rather extraordinary activity of verses 3-7, we see that the Almighty deigns to use man to assist Him in fulfilling and completing His divine plan. God voluntarily deems it useful to work through the agency of man for the execution of His eternal objectives. However, before being used, the men were first beckoned and called by the householder. The case is no different with the Christian servant. He is first and foremost called of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:6) quickened, saved, and drawn by the Holy Spirit and empowered and sealed thereof to do the work of the ministry. It is God, not man, who first searches and finds His "chosen" workers according to the election of grace to loyally serve Him. **"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him"** (2Chronicles 16:9).

Rest assured, untiring laborer of the Lord's vineyard, your unfailing and continuous work will never be overlooked by the heavenly Householder, nor will absence of reward be found wanting. Therefore, my dear fellow minister, do not be disheartened if you are not receiving the due recognition or reward from your fellow peers or congregation for your many contributions to the body of Christ. Realize that just as God supervises your labors, so He will honor and compensate them handsomely in proportion to the work accomplished—seeing that **His "eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men; to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" and that "the righteous good shall be repaid"** (Jeremiah 31:2; Proverbs 13:21). We are told from the outset of the parable that the householder set out before sunrise to choose workers. There is no second, minute, nor hour of the day that God is not working on our behalf, **"Whose goings forth have been of old, even from everlasting"** (Micah 5:2). The main task of the householder before the beginning of the day consisted of acquiring workers for the vineyard. Before going forth, his predetermined plan was fixed and unalterable in thought, word, deed, and act until accomplished. God's plan for the Church was predetermined and fixed by the eternal decrees of God from the very beginning of all eternity. The eternal God predestined the formulation and completion of the Church decreed and revealed through

(Continued on page 4)

the Holy Word and brought her forth in the fullness of time ***“to the intent that now to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”*** (Ephesians 3:10-11). Staggering thought this is!

There is a common characteristic shared by all the laborers hired at different hours of the day. All of them were found standing “idle” in the marketplace. The word “idle” in the Greek text of Matthew 20:3 is *argos* (αργος); it means inactive, unfruitful, or barren. Notice, it was in the marketplace the men were found standing idle. The spiritual frugality of unregenerate man in the secular world is identically the same. Witness the dissipating energies of billions obsessed with the business world, the wasted affections of the passionate, the pietistic practices of various false, ineffectual religions, the hedonistic indulgences of self destructive partyers, and the vain conceits of the scientific and philosophical as they systematically construct a whole universe, whose existence they stupidly suppose is devoid of God, and founded on evolutionary animalism centered on the ascending creature at the dreadful expense of negating the existence of a living, transcendent Creator. The world is indeed like the rambunctious marketplace, the chief aim being personal advance at the expense of exploiting, expending, and eliminating others for the gain of the “almighty dollar.” Yet, in all this, the transitory reward of monetary wealth in all of its deceptive glory is powerless to satisfy. It is grossly insufficient to save and bring one nearer to God. ***“He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loves abundance with increase. This is also vanity”*** (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

The love of money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10); it is also the primary root of the sinner’s permanent hindrance in finding God, thus insuring his own eternal punishment for the penalty of his iniquity in treasuring up wealth. ***“Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord. They will not satisfy their souls, neither fill their stomachs because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity”*** (Ezekiel 7:19). The shocking, unanswerable truth invariably remains: ***“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul”*** (Matthew 16:26)? The Christian servant is called to be a laborer for Christ, not a loiterer of the Church or the world. There has been nothing more detrimental and deteriorating in the Church than spiritual lethargy with moral apathy following. There yet awaits corrective judgment for Christians who are nothing more than pew-warmers, instead of aggressive witnesses for Christ, especially on those chair reclining religionists of mega ministries who live lavishly by the cunning craftiness and religious gimmickries cleverly used to appropriate superfluous funds from the unsuspecting, gullible masses. ***“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, who also eat the flesh of My people, and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the cauldron”*** (Amos 6:1; Micah 3:3).

The unbelieving world, however, in its spiritually dormant state, awaits the severer judgment of a penal nature. With all the technological advances made in medicine, industry, science, transportation, and a host of other crucial fields, man still remains indolently lost and unconcerned about the sin problem. In fact none of mankind’s societal advances have never, or will ever morally recreate him in the scriptural and pneumatological way of spiritual rebirth, but only serves, if used incorrectly, to benumb him from realizing his lost condition. The common, unsaved man sincerely believes the quantum leap in knowledge over the last few decades

will somehow save him; we do not deny the obvious advantages gained by technological advancement. We affirm it is beneficial, but only to a very limited degree, although it is not good enough, for Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He only is able to save to the uttermost. Modern civilization, in its various activities is profitless and spiritually idle by the fact that God is not served, nor reverentially considered, or deeply loved in matters of industrious activity. For this cause God would have us busy for Him rather than actively idle in the world. He is sore displeased at the world for their habitual laziness. ***“I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease”*** (Zechariah 1:15). Therefore we see the men in the marketplace consist of both lazy Christians and idle worldlings who desperately needed the recruitment of God to work in His Church-vineyard.

In the householder’s censure of, ***“Why do you stand here all day idle”***, Christ makes it plainly evident that Christians are not called out of ungodly heathendom into the kingdom of God merely to remain passive, inconsequential spectators in the life and death struggle for human souls, but rather to be active participants in winning the lost for Christ. Standing idle consists of standing outside of the will of God, squandering His precious time on unessential trivialities. The diligent servant of Christ should take care to redeem the time allotted to him, ***“for the days are evil”*** (Ephesians 5:16). He is not to be slothful in business, but ***“fervent in spirit, serving the Lord”*** (Romans 12:11). Before moving on to the latter part of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, we notice a conspicuous difference between the laborers called at the close of the day and those called at the beginning of it. The laborers hired at the beginning of the day first bargained with the householder. The laborers that were hired at the first of the day are classic representatives of prospective Christian ministers, who are first concerned with the rate of salary, material benefits and prestige the ministry will bring before considering an affirmative response to fully engage in the Lord’s vineyard. To such, the Gospel serves as a good bargain, a means by which popularity and personal enrichment is achieved. The covetous-minded minister first must be assured that if he invests all of his talents to the cause of Christ, he will be properly compensated in return. We fear, and for just cause, that in this late day and hour, the ulterior motives of serving in the ministry for many so called “men of God” is absolutely pecuniary in nature. They are tragically preoccupied with what they will get for serving Christ, and not what they should give in His most blessed service.

The laborers hired during the closing hours of the day truly represent an attitude the servant of the Lord must possess; and we shall do well to be like them, dear brethren. When God calls on us to serve Him, our correct response, like these honorable laborers, must be one of meekness exhibited by an attitude well reflected in Genesis 32:10 where the Patriarch Jacob humbly declared, ***“I am not worthy of the least of all Your mercies, and of all the truth which You have showed to Your servant.”*** This godly confession well personifies the lowly servant of Christ, and sets a proper precedence in serving His majesty with a sincere, God fearing disposition. We must awesomely realize, and prayerfully consider, the great privilege bestowed on us in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and finally leaving the matter of payment to Him alone, ***“knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord”*** (Colossians 3:24). †

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## The Importance of Israel to the Church

In this day, it is essential for Christians to be educated about our Jewish roots and God's plan for Israel as it directly impacts the future of all Believers. To have Todd speak to your church, organization, or Sunday School class about this and other important topics affecting Christians today, please contact Dr. Todd Baker at **866-910-0444** or by email at **[Todd@brit-hadashah.org](mailto:Todd@brit-hadashah.org)**, or go to our website for a link.

The following are just a few of the topics that Todd teaches on:

**Eye on Israel** - volatile current events in the Holy Land and its relevance to prophecy;

**Israel and Prophecy** - the importance of knowing and understanding the relationship of Israel to the Church;

**Israel's Right to the Land** - where and what is Palestine, and do Arabs have claims to the land?;

**Seven Reasons the Gospel must go to the Jews** - is Jewish evangelism Biblical, and why is it so largely ignored?;

**Messengers of Messiah to Israel** - based on Dr. Baker's book that testifies to what God is doing in the hearts of the Israelis, both Jew and Arab;

**The Dead Sea Scrolls** - exploring the authenticity and reliability of Scripture.

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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 Todd by e-mail at:

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### Look for Audio Lessons on our Website Available for Download!

*There are lessons recorded from Shalom, Shalom teachings, as well as Todd's weekly Bible Study - Studying the Scriptures. Some topics include the book of Isaiah, Defending the Faith, Daniel's Seventy Weeks of Years, and the Shroud of Turin.*



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Come learn about the Jewish roots of Christianity, enjoy great teachings from the Bible by Dr. Todd Baker, and join in loving fellowship with the Shalom, Shalom Congregation.

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