

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

A Quarterly Newsletter of B'rit Hadashah Ministries

John
5:39



Volume 17, Number 3

Fall 2018

Amazing!!

Praise God for the completion of this ministry's 44th Gospel outreach in Israel during March of 2018. This was the second outreach to have a perfect reception! In other words, every Israeli we shared the Gospel with either received a complete Hebrew Bible and or Messianic Gospel tracts. Evangelist August Rosado and I achieved a perfect reception among twenty-eight consecutive Israelis without one single rejection. The last time this ministry had an outreach without any rejections was the 30th Gospel outreach in 2014. I never thought this could happen once, let alone twice! As we draw closer to the return of Messiah, Israel will become front and center in God's prophetic program. The Holy Spirit is presently preparing the Jewish people there, more and more, to be open to the fact Yeshua is Messiah who came and is soon coming again. This is how I explain why the Jewish people are increasingly becoming more and more open to the Gospel.

Our last day on this outreach was in Jerusalem where August and I witnessed to Ilan and Shir about God's prophetic plan for Israel and the fool-proof identification of who the Messiah is from the Scriptures. Both Israelis were thrilled to each receive a beautiful Hebrew Study Bible to further learn this. At the Malcha shopping mall, August and I met Juliette in an apothecary shop. She was very open to learn of the prophetic plan God revealed and ordained for the Jewish people from the Exodus to the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah to Israel. Juliette was quite awed to see this from some of the amazing Messianic prophecies in the Tenach (Old Testament) that Yeshua fulfilled in the

have been on, I have met a whole new set of Israelis who have never heard the case for Yeshua being the Jewish Messiah of Israel proven from the Hebrew Bible.

Reaching the Jewish people in Israel has become the great omission in the Great Commission! God's Word says the Jewish people are to be the first people to hear the Gospel and believe upon Yeshua the Messiah for salvation (Romans 1:16). But you can change this by supporting us so that we can go to them with the saving love and Gospel of Jesus the Messiah. On October 14, August Rosado and I will be back in Israel sharing the Gospel once again with the Chosen People. Please, while there is very little time, consider giving any donation large or small for our 45th Gospel outreach. To donate online, you can go to the following secure web link on our ministry web site: <https://www.brit-hadashah.org/wp/donate/>. You can also donate by mail to:

Brit Hadashah Ministries
P.O. Box 796127
Dallas, Texas 75379-6127

Brit Hadashah Ministries is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit ministry, so your donation is tax deductible in the United States. Now is the accepted time, today is the day and year for the Gospel of salvation to be preached in Israel (2 Corinthians 6:2). Partner with us in this exciting End-Time effort.

Your servant in Messiah Jesus,

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. ✡



August, Ilan & Todd

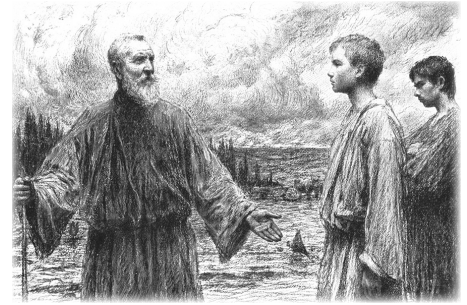
the Gospel. But she was shocked to learn from us that August and I did not receive one single rejection about proclaiming the Gospel of Yeshua and giving out Hebrew Bibles along with Messianic Gospel tracts. Oriyah told us this was, "amazing" and a "miracle." Ariel was the last Israeli person on this trip to receive our presentation that Yeshua is the Messiah from the Jewish Scriptures. He too accepted a Hebrew Bible with Messianic Gospel tracts. This 44th Gospel outreach scored and pitched a perfect game, 28-0, without one single rejection from the Jewish people we shared the Gospel with for eight straight days! But we urgently need your help now to return to Israel this October 2018 for what will be this ministry's 45th Gospel outreach. The time is short with so much left to do in the Holy Land. Every outreach I

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.

The Parable of the Two Sons

(Matthew 21: 28-32)

Part 3



“But What Do you think? A Certain man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he repented and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father. They said to Him, ‘The first.’” Jesus said to them, Truly, I say to you that the tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not repent afterward and believe him.”

We find in reading verse 29, that instead of rightly obeying the father, the first son openly refuses to follow his father’s reasonable demand. His brash, ill mannered reaction against the revealed will of the father is briefly summed up in three words of negation, “I will not”. Beneath these rancorous words of unashamed rebellion is expressed the blatant disobedience of the human heart in defiant conflict with the revealed will of God. The first son’s unfilial reply is evil and originated from the overflowing spring of the sinful heart. The discourteous answer of the first son was but a small example of the superabundant evil present within the heart of man—**“for every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually”** (Genesis 6:5). In the historical setting of Christ’s day, the first son pictures the publicans, harlots and the profligates—the rejects of first century Israeli society; people who offered no excuse for disobeying God and did so with flagrant disregard. These sorts pointedly speak of the gross sinner, the reckless profligate, and the godless unbeliever; in short, all those considered moral “outcasts”—the dregs of society. On a universal scale, the first son no doubt typifies the natural aversion of the human heart toward God in the pre-converted, unregenerate state “without God in the world,” “dead in trespasses and sins” replete with all manner of evil, being filled with unrighteousness, fornication, adultery, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, and the horrific list could go indefinitely on.

The actions of the first son accurately portray the reaction of sinners toward God when confronted by Him. The first

son aptly personifies the nature of sin and ungodliness. The nature of the first son’s character is seen by his outright disregard of the father’s request. He intentionally disobeyed the father’s command to work and smugly goes his own way. The essence of all sin is rebellious self-will, and the willful disobedience to God and His law. The Bible also defines sin in like manner. **“Whoever commits sin transgresses also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law”** (1John 3:4). To transgress God’s law consists of breaking and exceeding the boundaries of it, by which the person is governed thereby. The first and greatest commandment is to love God with one’s whole being (Matthew 22:37-38). If this were the greatest commandment, then conversely speaking, the greatest sin would be the conscious violation of it. This is exactly the plightful condition of sinful men, morally guilty of committing the greatest sin by virtue of contumaciously breaking the greatest commandment as written in Deuteronomy 6:5: **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all you might.”** The first son simply voiced his disrespectful and unloving concern toward the father when he hatefully replied, **“I will not.”** These words of negation express an utter denial of the father’s commanding presence from a blinded heart void of reverential submission and respectful acknowledgement of authority.

This in reality is nothing more than rank atheism! Atheism is a prime ingredient of sin; it is the literal negation of God. The attempt to extirpate Him out of all existence by the godless sinner and banish Him from the minds of men **“even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge”** (Romans 1:29). The sinner has no regard for God in his mind for, “God is not in all his thoughts” (Psalm 10:4). Sinners characteristically hold

the Almighty in profane contempt. **“There is no fear of God before their eyes”** (Romans 3:18), and rush headlong into eternal damnation. When the first son impudently brushed aside the father’s command to work, he chose the anarchic path of ungodly living that leads to eternal destruction. **“There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”** (Proverbs 14:12). Therefore, sin as seen in the first son, is out and out high treason against the sovereignty of God. This too is the depraved state of fallen man. **“An evil man seeks only rebellion”** (Proverbs 17:11). It was in this unspiritual state that the first son vituperatively detested his father’s will and did not subjugate himself to the paternal command. He proceeded to run his own life, to be his own lord and king according to the selfish dictates of his insolent heart. Ever since the fall of man this has been the deluded aspiration of man. He desires to be his own god repudiating the one true God, and like Pharaoh of old, daily exclaims in his pompous heart, **“Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice”** (Exodus 5:2).

It is no wonder then that man eagerly follows after the great lie that ensnared the father and mother of the human race. Disclaiming allegiance to God, the sinner is all too anxious to embrace the ancient, but recycled lie of the old serpent, the devil—**“You shall be as gods”** (Genesis 3:3-5). Extremely awful is the sinful heart in its ferocious antagonistic hatred of God. The Bible does not hesitate to reveal the wretched depths of the corrupt human heart and the terrible devilties the sinner habitually resorts to in fending off God from his life. The insubordinate conduct of the first son toward his loving father is a precise illustration of the carnal mind at enmity against God. Enmity simple defined, is an overpowering emotion,

an intense, irrepressible feeling of bitter anger; it is the inveterate hatred a person expresses toward a particular object held in firm disapproval. The Greek usage of the word enmity is *ἐκθα*, from the Greek adjective *ecthos*. The word means, hatred, hateful, and is the opposite of agape love. Carnal man in his fallen and natural condition hates God and the ineffable holiness of His being. Though this hatred may not be forthrightly expressed, it is, nevertheless, still fully resident within his heart. Enmity is the insidious power that propels man against God. This enmity is best witnessed in man's habitual disownment of the divine law. ***"Because the carnal man is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"*** (Romans 8:7).

The insubordinate words of the first son, no doubt, underscore the terrible truth of the aforementioned Scripture. When the unsaved sinner becomes suddenly aware what God's law demands—a holy renunciation of the corrupt passions, he is quick to show hatred and detests this holy threat to the immediate gratification of his fleshly desires. He knows all too well God will not countenance the immodest indulgence of his ungodly lusts. And this is precisely why, like the first son, the erring sinner resents and opposes God with the utmost, obstinate defiance. What God forbids in His Word, the sinner pleasurable wallows in; and what God commands from His Word, the sinner instantly rebuffs with a verbal and literal act of denunciation culminating in the natural response, ***"I will not."*** The daring sinner cares nothing for the Word of the Lord, ***"they refuse to walk in His law"*** (Psalm 78:10). The mental inclination expressed in the lives of unregenerate men toward the thrice-holy God is ***"depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Your ways"*** (Job 21:14). Unlike the second son, the first son makes no hypocritical pretension of moral good or religious piety. He knows and freely admits that he is a sinner and is pleased in being so.

We thus borrow a concept previously summarized by Dr. C.I. Scofield concerning the threefold definition of sin and apply it to the words and action of the first son. First, sin is an "act, the violation of, or want

of obedience to the will of God." The first son consciously and actively rejected the expressed commandment of his father. He initially did not obey the words of the father to go work in the vineyard. Secondly, sin "is a state, the absence of righteousness." Prior to his repentance, the first son was disobedient through and through. Thirdly, sin "is a nature"; it is enmity toward God. The first son opposed the request to go and work in the vineyard. Thus we see the first son walking in all three aspects of sin. The second son was no different here. Although he was subtler in his sin by using a religious guise to hide behind, he was equally guilty. Both sons were disobedient. But it is in this seemingly hopeless and irredeemable state of sin that the grace of God is gloriously manifested (when the unrepentant man irresolutely determines to set himself against the call of God), and mysteriously given to people like the first son, whereby he is changed and made compliant to the divine will.

The initial process of this miraculous transformation of the human spirit begins with repentance. The first son sorrowfully remembered the deplorable behavior he showed toward his father earlier in the day. The latter part of verse 29 tells us of the salvific consequences thereof—***"But afterward he repented and went."*** The first son repented of his former conduct, and by way of this repentance, does what the father had previously commanded him to do. After much sobering deliberation, he regretted the scandalous and disrespectful attitude he had expressed toward his father. Having done this, the first son did more than tearfully lament over his wrong doing, nay, he changed his mind completely and did an about face turn from blatant rebellion to humble and submissive obedience to the father's request. The change of heart was undeniably evident when he resolutely went forth to work in the father's vineyard. The son's repentance constituted more than his suffering intense pangs of heart-felt remorse—that was only an element of it. His repentance was proven by duteous action rendered to his father. True repentance will always verify itself; it will bring forth the testifying "fruits" of its inner working. For conversion to Christ is the external evidence of the inward working

of repentance. God commands sinners upon repentance ***"to bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance"*** (Matthew 3:8).

The first son actively demonstrated genuine repentance when turning from evil and doing that which was good in the father's eyes. This is the unmistakable sign of true, godly repentance upon the contrite soul, convicted and quickened by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. Repentance consists of a changed nature bringing forth a new outlook, reformed attitudes, and a powerful change of life in the light of the person's self admitted condemnation as a guilty, law breaking sinner before the presence of holy, just and righteous God. The first son, by our Lord's designation, is the abject sinner—the publicans and harlots, who by the reformatory, awakening process of repentance, is made whole, thus showing true sonship when changing his course from disobedience to prompt obedience to the father's will. He is therefore typical of the redeemed class of sinners that have undergone the cathartic effects of God-given repentance leading one into salvation that produces continual faith and obedience to the heavenly Father's will.

One of the recurring Greek words in the New Testament used for repentance is *metanoeo*, from which the verb *metamelomai* in verse 29 comes from. The meaning of the word is used in the noun and verbal sense more than 30 times. The word simply means to change one's mind for the better; to heartily amend with abhorrence one's past sins (see Matthew 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:15). The first son underwent a dramatic change of mind immediately after he repented of his reprehensible behavior. His repentance solely consisted of this change of mind by which he ceased from his former conduct and set out to enter in and embrace a better conduct of living. He turned from a prodigal life of rebellion and received a peaceful, fruitful reconciled life in obedient labor under the congenial providence of his merciful father. The beautiful teaching of the Lord here is all too obvious to miss, even for the casual Bible reader. The picture is quite clear, and easily applicable for those of us who are self-confessed, repentant sinners who fall under the same category of the first son



CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

(ROMANS 2:29)

To have a circumcised heart is one of the promises God gave in the Old Testament about the salvation reality given through Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. Basically, it means God makes us spiritually alive through spiritual rebirth by faith in Jesus Christ whereby we are now sensitive and obedient to the Lord, whereas before our hearts were hardened and disobedient to Him. Below is an excellent definition from the web site gotquestions.org answering what the circumcision of the heart biblically means:

“The idea of “circumcision of the heart” is found in Romans 2:29. It refers to having a pure heart, separated unto God. Paul writes, “A Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.” These words conclude a sometimes confusing passage of Scripture regarding circumcision and the Christian. Verses 25–29 provide context:

“For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.”

Paul is discussing the role of the Old Testament Law as it relates to Christianity. He argues that Jewish circumcision is only an outward sign of being set apart to God. However, if the heart is sinful, then physical circumcision is of no avail. A circumcised body and a sinful heart are at odds with each other. Rather than focus on external rites, Paul focuses on the condition of the heart. Using circumcision as a metaphor, he says that only the Holy Spirit can purify a heart and set us apart to God. Ultimately, circumcision cannot make a person right with God; the Law is not enough. A person’s heart must change. Paul calls this change “circumcision of the heart.”

This concept was not original with the apostle Paul. As a Jew trained in the Law of Moses, he was certainly aware of this discussion from Deuteronomy 30. There, the Lord used the same metaphor to communicate His desire for a holy people: **“And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live”** (Deuteronomy 30:6). Physical circumcision was a sign of Israel’s covenant with God; circumcision of the heart, therefore, would indicate Israel’s being set apart to love God fully, inside and out.

John the Baptist warned the Pharisees against taking pride in their physical heritage and boasting in their circumcision: **“Do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham”** (Matthew 3:9). True “children of Abraham” are those who follow Abraham’s example of believing God (Genesis 15:6). Physical circumcision does not make one a child of God; faith does. Believers in Jesus Christ can truly say they are children of “Father Abraham.” **“If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”** (Galatians 3:29). God has always wanted more from His people than just external conformity to a set of rules. He always wanted them to possess a heart to love, know and follow Him. That’s why God is not concerned with a circumcision of the flesh. Even in the Old Testament, God’s priority was a spiritual circumcision of the heart: **“Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done”** (Jeremiah 4:4). Both Testaments focus on the need for repentance and inward change in order to be right with God. In Jesus, the Law has been fulfilled (Matthew 5:17). Through Him, a person can be made right with God and receive eternal life (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8–9). As Paul said, true circumcision is a matter of the heart, performed by the Spirit of God.”



Come learn about the Jewish roots of Christianity, enjoy great teaching from the Bible by Dr. Todd Baker, and join in loving fellowship with the Shalom, Shalom Congregation each Friday evening at 7:00pm at Fellowship Bible Church in Dallas, Texas. 9330 N. Central Expy., Room 202

For more information, please visit www.brit-hadashah.org or call (214)356-2583.

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Todd is teaching on a weekly show called "Thy Word is Truth," shown on Now TV, every Thursdays at 3:00 PM (CT). He will be teaching along with Dr. Daniel Woodhead of the Scofield Biblical Institute.

B'rit Hadashah Ministries

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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,

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The \$250 donation fee to the BHM non-denomination Ministries is tax deductible. Dr. Baker is an ordained minister in the Baptist Church, Dallas TX, a biblical scholar and professor. Call today at 214/356-2583 or 214 384-1892 (please leave message if not there). We will send complete information on all the services included. The calendar is filling up!

A Quarterly Newsletter of Brit Hadashah Ministries

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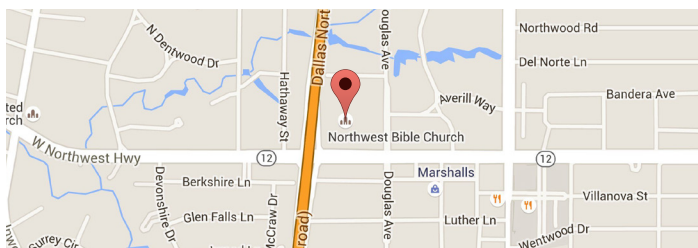
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