

BIBLE EXPLORATIONS

Mar 1995

Volume 9, No. 2

...to know the love of Christ
which passeth knowledge
that ye might be filled with
all the fulness of God. Eph 3:19

Tell No Man

"For many shall come in My Name, saying, 'I am Christ;' and shall deceive many." (Mt 24:5)

CHRIST - "This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew 'Mashiah'. Christos has the same meaning, from chrio, to anoint. Hence, the noun is used of and for the Messiah, and in the gospels should always be translated 'Messiah', as well as in the Acts, and sometimes in the later books of the New Testament." (Quoted from Companion Bible Appendix 98 IX)

"He (Andrew) first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, 'We have found the Messiah' or Messiah (which is being interpreted, the Christ)." (Jn 1:41)

Why didn't the Lord encourage His disciples to preach loud and clear, "We have found the Messiah"? Many Jews had been awaiting His coming and what better news could they have heard? Moses told them to look for a greater prophet than he. (Deut. 18:15) David spoke of the Lord as King. (Ps 24:10) Zechariah looked for the King-priest. (Ze 6:12-13) In Matthew 12:42 we read that He, the Lord Jesus Christ, is a greater King than King Solomon. In 12:6 He is a greater priest than the one in the Temple. (Heb 5:6) In 12:40-41 He is a greater prophet than Jonah.

The Lord asked His disciples (Matt 16:15) whom they thought He was and Peter stated confidently, **"Thou art the Christ"**, (Messiah). Then notice that the Lord's reply in verse

20 was to **"tell no man"**. This event took place near the end of His ministry when He was preparing His followers to expect His soon demise. Mark confirms this in 8:27-30.

Soon after this, three of His disciples were on the mountain where the transfiguration occurred. He admonished Peter, James, and John to **"tell the vision to no man"** until He had risen from the dead. (Mt 17:9)

The demons knew Him and were charged NOT to reveal who He was. (Mk 1:34)

The lepers received mercy of the Lord when He healed them. (Mt 8:4) They were asked to **"tell no man"** except the priest. (Le 14:1) The law concerning lepers had to be obeyed **"for a testimony unto them"** (the priests).

We find a like event mentioned in Mark 1:44 but here the cleansed leper published it much. We can easily understand his disobedience, as being cleansed from such a malady would be most difficult to keep to oneself. Yet the result of his disobedience hindered the Lord's ministry in that city. People had to go out into the desert to find the Lord. Could it be that the authorities did not like the commotion of crowds?

Now we see one reason why the Lord did not want it published that He was the Messiah. The crowds, the noise, and all else hindered His work. (Lk 5:12-15)

He healed the deaf and the dumb, Mark 7:35,36, and the blind, Mark 8:22-26, and asked them to **tell no**

man, but His fame increased more and more.

How did Andrew, John 1:41, know that Jesus was the Messiah? He believed the teaching of John the Baptist. (Jn 1:19-27) But later John, when put into prison, had doubts about the One Whom he had introduced to be the Messiah. He sent some of his disciples to the Lord for confirmation. The Lord didn't say, "Go tell John that I am the Messiah". Rather, He told John to consider His works. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. (Lk 7:22) Who else could do these things? (Jn 10:25; 9:33)

But more than that. If Israel had repented, He would have gone on and healed the whole nation. (Isa 35:5,6; 29:18,19; Ex 15:26; 23:25; Deut 7:15; Ps 103:3) If the whole nation had been healed, the **"times of refreshing"**, Acts 3:19, could have been ushered in after His resurrection was accomplished. The "new nation" yet to come will be in good health during the millennial reign of their Messiah.

So, another reason He did not want it preached that He was the Messiah was that He wanted the people to get the eyes of their understanding opened to see that He was fulfilling prophecy concerning Himself. He wanted them to have faith in the Scriptures, that they are truly God's Word. He wanted the people to connect His works with Old

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Divine Summons #4

Summons to Individuals:

Moses

Out from among the great multitude of Israelites, children of God, captives in Egypt, God summoned one man, Moses, to lead His People out to freedom. We know that Moses said to himself, "**Why me?**" as so many have said today when they learn they are called out from among other children of God and entrusted with the truth of the mystery.

God preserved Moses' life and saw that he was trained and educated for his task. In looking back, many of us can see times that God preserved our lives, and how unknown to us our learning and experiences were in preparing us for the service to which He has called us.

When the time came for Moses to begin God's work, God got his attention. It was not uncommon in the desert to see a bush set on fire by summer lightning, but to see a bush burn without being consumed, was a startling sight. With that, God got Moses' attention.

In the same way God gets our attention today. By setting before us some startling truth which we have not heard before, He awakens us from Christian complacency.

Moses moved near to investigate the phenomenon which he saw and could not understand. There God spoke to him. In like manner, when we move near to God and seek to understand the truth in things brought to our attention, God speaks to us. Through His written Word He reveals to us His secrets and the unsearchable riches of Christ. He gives us understanding of His purpose in Christ made "**before the founda-**

tion of the world". (Eph 1:4-10)

To Moses, at the bush, the Lord revealed Himself and His plan for delivering His People from Egypt. He told Moses, "**I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My People the Children of Israel, out of Egypt**". (Ex 3;10)

God gave Moses His words to speak and the helper he needed. He promised His presence when He said, "**I will be with thee**". (Ex 3:12) He gave Moses supernatural power with which to accomplish the task set before him. God warned Moses of opposition to His purpose, but Moses was assured of victory for God had foretold Israel's deliverance about four hundred years before. (Ge 15:13,14)

We are reminded of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. There we find that God, the Father, has revealed His will and purpose for heavenly places to us who hear His present summons. He has assured us, too, of His constant presence, for Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. We are told that, as Pharaoh opposed Moses, so spiritual powers will besiege us. (Eph 6:11,12) However we, like Moses, should not fret, for God's purpose in the ages to come is certain. God has spoken of His victory through Christ. It is history foretold by the Apostle Paul. (Eph 1:20-23)

Moses heard the divine summons to him. He had a choice then. He could ignore God's call and continue in the comfort and pleasures of Pharaoh's household or he could answer God's summons and accept the work to which he was called. He could rationalize that when he became Egypt's ruler, he could free his People with-

out opposition, or he could take on the seemingly impossible task, believing God would deliver Israel as He said He would to Abraham.

Moses considered his choices and what the end of each would be. He realized that Egypt's rewards were only temporary, while God's rewards are eternal. Moses chose to take on the task to which God called him. He made a commitment to that burden of responsibility; "**... he endured as seeing Him Who is invisible**." Heb 11:23-27)

The Apostle Paul repeatedly reminded young Timothy of the heavy responsibility of receiving and teaching God's present purpose. He cautioned Timothy about guarding that truth with which he had been entrusted. (1 Ti 6:20; 2 Ti 1:13,14) Like Moses, Timothy had a choice. He could take up the work begun by Paul or he could turn away from the truth, unwilling to bear that burden.

Like Moses, Timothy, and all whom God has summoned to service, we too have a choice. We may love this present world, either religious or secular, and turn away from the truth He reveals to us; or, we may count all things worthless compared to the excellency of the latest knowledge of Christ. His Headship over a family made up of believers out of all nations, together with principalities and powers, whose homeland has nothing to do with earth, but is above all heavens, is the mystery we are called to guard and make known. If we love Him, we, like Moses and Timothy, will be faithful to our divine summons.

J. Heltzinger

Tongue Of The Prophets

TONGUE OF THE PROPHETS
By Robert St. John

Tongue of the Prophets is a biography of a Jewish scholar, Eliezar Ben Yehuda, who revived the Hebrew language as a vehicle for the common man and for a bond which would unite the new nation of Israel.

By 1858, when Ben Yehuda was born in Lithuania, Hebrew had become the language of the Holy Books. It was used only by rabbis or for reading the Torah and prayers. Jews spoke the languages of the countries to which they were scattered, or else Yiddish, a mixture of Hebrew and the language at hand.

Ben Yehuda first heard Hebrew spoken outside of religion when he was a boy. A rabbi read to him from a copy of Robinson Caruso which had been translated into Hebrew. It was kept hidden from religious leaders who thought the holy language would be defamed by common use.

Hearing that story, in Hebrew words for ordinary things, kindled a spark in Ben Yehuda which would flame and consume his life. He would almost singlehandedly recover Hebrew as a secular language. He would spend his life getting Jews to speak their language. It is that language which is spoken in Israel today.

It was in Europe, in the 1870's, that Ben Yehuda met a group of young Zionists who sought a homeland for their people, so that Israel could be a nation once more. Ben Yehuda was convinced that even if they had a land, without a language of their own, the nation would not survive.

Perhaps the author describes his book best when he said, "It is the

story of a faithful fanatic who had two great love affairs, made enemies of his best friends, went to prison for his beliefs, was always on the verge of death from tuberculosis, yet fathered 11 children, gathered the material for a 16-volume dictionary unlike any philological work ever conceived, authored plays, a geography, and two of the most urgent appeals to his own people, and died while working on the word for "soul".

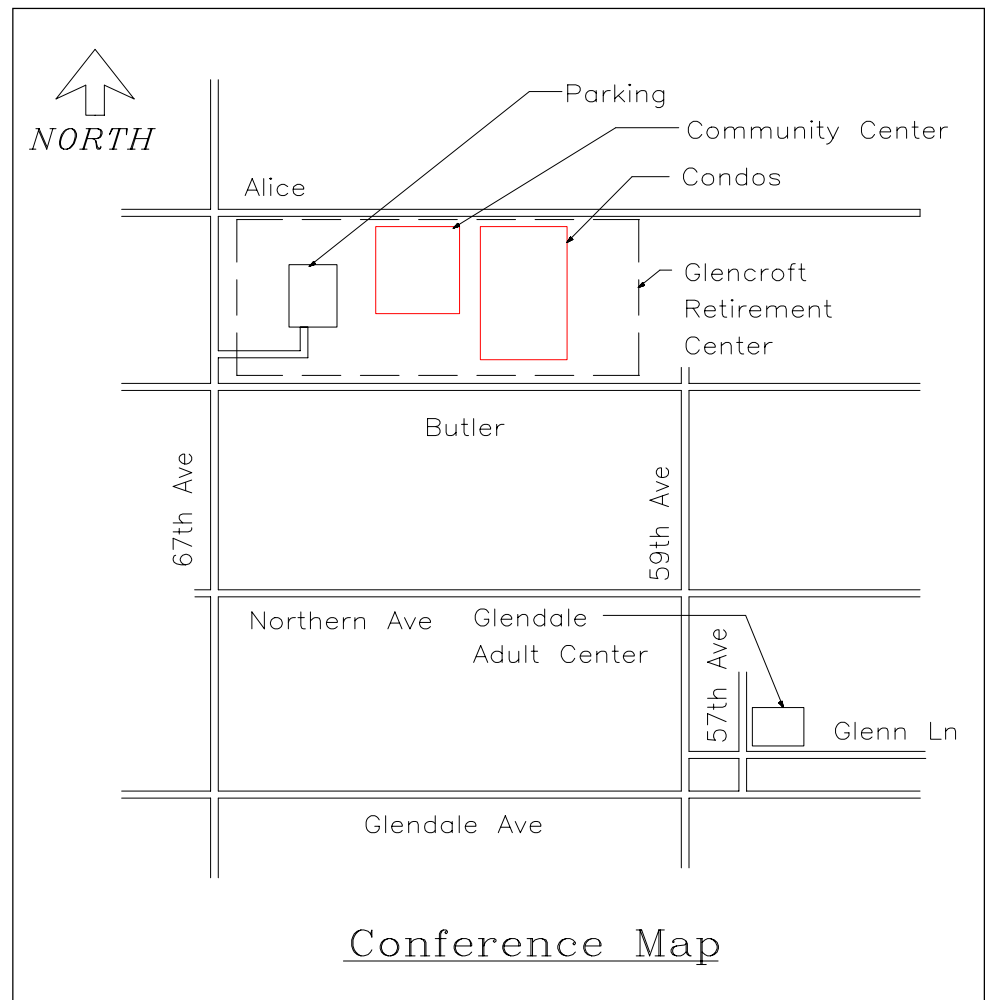
However, the author does not mention what Bible students will appreciate most about Ben Yehuda's story. It is how one man could overcome incredible obstacles to give God's people their language once again. It is the timing, that Ben Yehuda's life and work should come just when Israel would need a national language. Surely

one can see the hand of God making all things ready for His return to Jerusalem and to the nation He chose for His ministries. Perhaps it can be said of Ben Yehuda as it was of Esther, "... **who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for such a time as this.**" (Est 4:14)

On a personal note, the writer and her husband met with Ben Yehuda's daughter, Dola, in Jerusalem this year. She is 92 years old. Her wit and memory are sharp. She assured us that St. John's account of her father was accurate.

J. Heltzinger

(*Tongue Of The Prophets* is available for \$10.00 from the Arizona Book Outlet, 1150 E. Beverly Ln., Phoenix, AZ, 85002.)



Tell No Man ...cont'd

Testament prophecies, then their faith in Him would be sure.

There were a few people to whom He confessed His identity. He told the woman at the well He was the Messiah. (Jn 4:25,26) This happened at the beginning of His ministry. Many of the Samaritans believed on Him the two days He dwelt there.

After the Lord healed the man of unclean spirits, about two thousand of them, Mark 5:1-20, the Lord told him to go home and publish what was done for him and Who did it. The home of this man was in Decapolis, an area on the east side of the Jordan River. The population was a lot less dense and the Lord spent very little time over there.

He told the Jews, John 10:25, that His works should prove to them He was the Messiah. At that pronouncement they took up stones to stone Him. Perhaps another reason why He said to **tell no man** was to keep the opposition toned down as much and as long as possible.

When the high priest said, "**I adjure Thee by the Living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ (the Messiah) the Son of God**", Matthew 26:63, the Lord had

to answer. To 'adjure' a person was to put him on oath. The Lord's answer was, "**Thou hast said ...**"

We have yet another reason why the Lord asked the many to **tell no man**. In Matthew 24:5, the Lord said that in the end days before His coming, there would be many who would come and say, "I am Christ". Evidently, they will have to announce it themselves. They will not have a forerunner to introduce them. Their works will not be able to be corroborated by the Scriptures as were the Lord's. Will they open the eyes of the blind? "**Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind**" until the Lord Jesus came. (Jn 9:32)

When the Lord came the first time, He had prepared a forerunner to introduce Him. This was the proper and mannerly way to tell the world Who He was. When He comes to Earth the second time, will He have a forerunner to introduce Him? Or will He come and introduce Himself and announce, "I am the Messiah"? Revelation 19:11-16; II Thess 2:8; Isaiah 34:1-8.

P. Schafer

Bible Explorations is a joint effort by a group of believers. Articles submitted are not necessarily the view point of the group collectively. Free to anyone upon request.

Phoenix Bible Conference

(April 7-9th, 1995)

Friday (Glencroft Retirement Center, Basement of Condos, 67th Ave. between Butler and Olive, Glendale, Az.)

7:00pm Workshop

Saturday (Glencroft Retirement Center, Basement of Condos)

9:30am, 10:30am

11:45 Potuck Lunch

1:30pm, 2:30pm

7:00pm Special music time, Bernie Barringer, Colorado

Sunday (Glendale Adult Center, N.E. corner of 57th Ave. and Glenn Dr., 1 block north of Glendale Ave.)

9:30am, 10:30am

Speakers: Dan Haley, Brockport, NY; Clarence Howard, Fresno, CA; Nathan Scharff, Forrest Cottrell; Philip Bagby; Barnabas Bagby.

(See map)

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