



Believers Newsletter

for the endtime...

In the first publication with the new newsletter layout we inadvertently cut out a section of Adrian Gray's article -The Man With the Tattoo – and those crucial sentences are the key element to the article!

We apologise and ask that this full version replace the shortened one in this May's newsletter.

The Newsletter Team

The Man With The Tattoo

On this same visit to Israel, my wife and I had a sobering experience. We were heading north to the border with Lebanon and stopped at Zachov Yacob – a city on the foothills of Mount Carmel. Mary had met a woman some years ago who was a friend of the people we were staying with in Zur Hadassah and she invited us for a coffee. We had a GPS in the car to guide us around as Israel is a difficult place to identify locations and we got to her home relatively easily. We knocked on the door and an old man introduced himself at the door as this woman's husband. He was a retired Jewish Paediatric Surgeon and his wife was a retired nurse.

After an hour or so of a broken English conversation this man was expressing very radical political and religious views. They were views diametrically different to mine, but I held my peace. He believed in giving the Golan Heights back to Syria and giving the West Bank to the Palestinians. He didn't believe in God and under normal circumstances his views would have stirred me up to say something. But it became apparent that something had happened to this man to make him a radical. He was so radical that – as we found out – his wife was a Moslem Arab, although she didn't have Arab features. This marriage to an Arab was in itself a rarity in Israel and put him in precarious social position, but it wasn't that which made his personality so extreme.

As the conversation unfolded during the morning he started uttering some words in broken English that had a ring of familiarity to me. Then he rolled up the sleeve on his left arm and on it was engraved the letter B with about 6 or 7 numbers after it. He said 'Auschwitz, Auschwitz, I was in Auschwitz'. Then the penny dropped as to why he was like he was.

He had seen his mother murdered, his sister

murdered as well as thousands of others slaughtered at the hands of the Nazi SS in that notorious death camp in Poland. As a 13 year old boy he was waiting his turn to go to the gas chamber when the allies liberated them in 1945. To think that a 13 year old boy's mind had been stamped with images of death that few on this earth today have ever endured. No wonder he was radical and set in his ways. He viewed life through a narrow channel of understanding that was no fault of his own. He hasn't had the privilege of hearing the gospel as we know it and I can only pray that he will hear it some day when the gentile age is over and the message goes to the Jews. He gave me a book of his experiences in the death camp, but it is written in Hebrew. I will take it to some Jews who live near my home to interpret it for me.

What was most amazing to me about this man was his unique attitude to other people. After WW2 he trained to be a surgeon and what became his one and only bosom buddy was an ex-Nazi German Air force officer. Could you imagine what it must have taken for a man to come to a place to love an enemy that represented the destruction of his family. Some of this Jewish man's associates won't get in a German car, buy German products or speak to a German after what they did to them. But he could bury the past and get on with life. He had in his life what so many Christians don't have. Forgiveness.

The moral of the story is this. The next time you see a man or woman with a tattoo, just remember there may be a lot of history wrapped up in it. Ask them how it got there and you may view life differently. You may be able to widen their channel of understanding or even learn something from them.

Brother Adrian Gray
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