

Yeshua

MISHPACHAH

A NEWSLETTER TO THE FAMILY OF JESUS FROM RESTORATION MINISTRIES

The Hebraic family is not simply an individual or private matter. Rather, it is an institution in which the whole community has a stake. Thus, the Hebrew word "mishpachah," meaning family, not only refers to parents and children, but to the whole extended family worldwide in the body of "Yeshua"—our Jesus.

Dear Friends,

Greetings and blessings in this new year! As the year begins, the Apostle Paul's words seem to be ringing in my ears: **"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil"** (Eph. 5:15,16).

One of the threads of our letters over the years [first letter, from the retreat center, was 2/83!] has been the importance of **being repentant** and **seeking wisdom**. As I prayed concerning this letter, I sensed the Lord directing, "Teach them about the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins." I prayed about this for a few days without mentioning it to Sue. Upon returning from a women's prayer time, she told me that the leader had eagerly shared insights about the ten virgins. I got excited! You know how your Spirit leaps when God is confirming something for you!

What Type of Virgin Are You?

Here is the passage from Matt. 25:1-13:

"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil

with them.

The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps.

The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps.

The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

"'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

"Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

"But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'

"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour."

Whew! There's a lot to highlight in this passage, but I want to focus on what you might consider for your own life from this day forward.

First of all, the context of these words spoken by Jesus

was His discourse to His disciples following their marvel at the beauty of the Jerusalem temple. Throughout chapter 24 Jesus spoke repeatedly in parable references about the time of the end in order to use everyday situations to penetrate their innermost beings, just like a video stays in your mind a lot longer than a sermon does! He emphasized **vigilance** and **obedience** to His commands as we anticipate His return.

To Live in the Kingdom: Repentance and the Power of the Holy Spirit Required!

Then He brings up the **kingdom of heaven**, pointing out that at that time of His unexpected arrival, **preparedness** will be required. Note that the wise as well as the foolish virgins are represented in the kingdom. All of them had **functioning lamps**, which require oil and a wick in order to operate. **Yet, the wise were prepared with extra oil**. Perhaps their experience in walking with their Lord had given them wisdom in His ways. The foolish, however, had only their initial oil—perhaps only that which they had when they first encountered Jesus, but no other experience to realize how much a **daily empowerment of the Holy Spirit** is needed in order to fulfill the Lord's purposes. They were unprepared for the "long

Equipping the Church to Go Back for its Future

haul” of waiting for His return and ² *of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will **not grow weary and lose heart***” (Heb 12:2,3).

Let’s stop here for a moment. Search your own heart.

- Are you relying only on your *initial* encounter with the Lord to suffice as you “walk” with Him today?
- Are you participating in religious activities on an empty oil lamp—no Spirit?
- Are you seeking the Holy Spirit’s power to carry you along in loving obedience to the Lord’s purposes?
- Or, are you going about your own business feeling pretty satisfied that you’re not hurting anyone, therefore you’re a “good Christian”?

Get Some Oil!

Up to this point, the only indication we see that differentiates the wise virgins from the foolish is that the wise were toting extra oil. That extra effort to obtain the oil may have appeared foolish to the unwise—“Why bother with that preparation? You’re doing too much to get ready. He’ll be back soon.”

But the wise were familiar enough with the Bridegroom’s ways to know that **perseverance** and **preparation** are key elements of following Him. They KNEW Him and wanted more than anything to please Him when He came.

But note: They ALL fell asleep because the Bridegroom was a long time coming. We all will become weary in our walk. We haven’t lost our trust, but the physical/emotional/spiritual cost of plowing through each day does take its toll. By the Spirit’s power we can **“Fix [our] eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter**

*of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will **not grow weary and lose heart***” (Heb 12:2,3).

But then the **cry rings out**: “He’s coming! Come out to **meet Him!**” ALL of them heard the message! Remember, these ladies had *all* been exposed to the gospel of the “kingdom of heaven.” Like most churchgoers in America, they *had heard* the requirements of meeting the Bridegroom, since the wise as well as the foolish brought their lamps with them. **But only one group put in the extra effort.**

Don’t Build On The Sand

For years prophetic voices have cried out for people to repent—to turn from their own foolish/wicked ways and turn to God in trusting-obedience. And for centuries the response has been the same: those with *prepared hearts* of humble repentance have responded, and those who would not yield their self-determination and/or lust for the world have turned deaf ears to the truth. Or they have responded with *good intentions* to answer His call to turn from sin and run to meet Him, as did the foolish virgins, but discovered that they were **unprepared** for the endurance and obedience that a loving trust in Jesus requires.

We know that when we put our trust in Jesus we receive the Holy Spirit (see John 7:38,39). But that alone doesn’t mean you will *live* by the Spirit. If “trimming the wick” is analogous to repen-

tance, then getting more oil is the continuous filling of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit’s presence in a person’s life will yield evidence of His indwelling. We are told that as we pray He helps us: *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express”* (Rom. 8:26).

Consider the following example of the Spirit’s operation: *“The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” And again, “When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing”* (Acts 8:29,39). What we see in Philip’s life, in Paul’s, and in others in the Bible is normative. Because of our foolishness these activities of the Spirit seem strange. Not for long!

Many churchgoers live in bondage because they fail to refill their oil. They erroneously have been taught that following Jesus meant they’d be rewarded with health, steady income, and compliant children.

But **freedom** comes from the work and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit:

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2Cor 3:17,18).

The apostle Peter reiterates that undergoing grief in all kinds of trials **proves whether your faith is genuine** or just a self-

centered search for comfort (see³ 1 Peter 1:6,7). Only the Holy Spirit can enable each of us to walk as Jesus did. To those who have the Spirit, this suffering is the sign of our relationship with our Father and our obedience to His Son:

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself continues to testify with our spirit that we are God’s children.

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:15-18).

Back to our virgins. At the warning call they all trimmed their lamps, but the foolish discovered their need. They *wanted to comply* but were unable! So they turned to the others for replenishment. Out of their wisdom, though, the prepared ladies sent them to the sellers of oil which they could obtain *for a price*.

Once again:

What Type of Virgin Are You?

Let’s look at this. Have you ever tried in your own strength to be a “good person”—to live a godly life but finding no peace or comfort or strength while pushing along?

•In other words, have you lived *without* the anointing oil of the Holy Spirit and tried *on your own* to meet the demands of God from His Word? What happened?

•Have you avoided suffering or even mockery for your faith and wondered why you’re experiencing no intimacy with the Father?

•Have you read a million spiritual books and listened to every teaching tape you could get your hands on, yet STILL found no assurance of His presence and power to fulfill His purposes for your life?

That’s what the foolish virgins were doing: asking fellow virgins for some of their anointing rather than fleeing to the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit—Jesus! The wise virgins understood Who the source of the oil was, and the price *each* person must pay to receive the oil.

Do you see, Jesus only baptizes “dead” people in order to resurrect them to a new life!

In order to “buy” oil, the virgins—and we—need to forfeit our lives to our Bridegroom. He gave His life for us, and living in His Kingdom and the intimacy of His presence costs us our life as well. That’s why He is LORD and we are His bondslaves as well as His family.

•Are you leaning on others in His Kingdom to save your marriage, rescue your children, or lead you into peace?

Think about our friend Wayne Jacobsen’s definition of genuine Body life: **True fellowship** is one follower of Jesus relishing his trust in Jesus with another follower. **True ministry** is one believer helping a faltering one to *trust Jesus more*. The focus is always on our **Lord**, not on the instrument He uses!

To the wise: Don’t let yourself become the intermediary between our Father and *any other person!* Learn from the wise virgins!

Today, If You Hear His Voice

The Scriptures are very pointed. They repeat time and again that NOW is the appointed hour to get the oil before you need it. Prepare yourself! If **today** you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts! Do not think that living in the Spirit’s power is optional.

BE READY for the Bridegroom’s return! The foolish virgins thought they could follow their own rules, figuring the Bridegroom would take them in no matter what. To their eternal dismay and horror, they discovered too late that was a lie.

The key to walking with Jesus our Bridegroom is BEING KNOWN by Him. We know that *“...it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come”* (2Cor. 5:5). Therefore, the evidence of being KNOWN by our Lord is a Spirit-led life: *“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”* (Gal. 5:25).

To those who by His Spirit are set on experiencing intimate fellowship with our Father through Jesus, **keeping watch** is not a burdensome obligation but a loving warning to walk daily in His presence by seeking His will and His power.

Mike & Sue Dorigiewicz

1 Peter 1:3-9