

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,

When you hear the word "Redemption", what comes to mind? Jesus our Redeemer's sacrifice on the cross and our deliverance from sin? Most of us think of redemption from its eternal perspective—salvation and eternity in heaven. As important as these are, scripturally there is much more to redemption with great demands on our lives.

Did you know that the obedient remnant of our Hebraic forefathers saw themselves as God's agents of redemption? And today, to live redemptively is the sum and substance of lives that are being transformed by the Spirit into truths of the Hebraic Restoration.

The Hebraic Restoration: Living Redemptively

Until recently, I had considered the Hebraic Restoration to be a message of mending and healing relationships that had been torn. But after we sent out the last Mishpachah Yeshua, the Spirit gave me a word: "Redemptive. The way of the Hebraic Restoration is to live redemptively." As soon as I mentioned this to Sue, she said, "You have to get this into the next newsletter!"

Training For Redemption:

A Pilgrimage in the Desert

I trust this letter will be an encouragement to you as you strive to live for Jesus by learning and applying Restoration truths to your life. I do know that every *person and couple* must go through a time of what appears to be "isolation" as our Lord transforms you. But let me assure you, it is not isolation but Jesus's desert time with you.

An increasing number of you are realizing that the desert is our Lord's place of establishing a more intimate relationship with you. For those of you who are married, *it is a time for Jesus and you and your spouse to concentrate on each other*. This is quite often the hardest part for most people, especially husbands. It isn't until after you finish your time in the desert that you realize how far you had been from Him and from each other with all your busyness.

God did this same thing to Israel when they had drifted away from Him: "*Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her... 'In that day,' declares the LORD, 'you will call me "my husband"; you will no longer call me "my master" (Hosea 2:14-16).*

This is happening today! Your "Husband" is preparing you as His "bride." What does a hus-

band want most from his wife? That she would desire him above all others. Our Lord does this by bringing you into a "desert" where you both can concentrate on each other. Unlike the many Christians who misperceive the Lord's intent when they moan, "I'm in a desert," this is a special time.

Your sin nature will whisper words like "isolated" and "lonely" to get you to go back and hide in the crowds. It is at this time that you need encouragement from those who know the beauty of the desert and the wonderful fruit from time spent at the Oasis.

The next time someone tells you that they're in a desert, rejoice with them and say, "Great! Are you concentrating on the One Who's wooing you?"

[To you who are living out the Hebraic truths, we have established an online email family Sue calls, "His Lambs Online." You can email me if you would like to know more.]

Consider this: Your Husband is the Author of redemption and Fulfiller of redemption, and He is preparing you as a bride to join Him in fulfilling His work of redemption.

Jesus's Death Proves That He Sees People As Redeemable

Assure yourself of this: NO ONE IS BEYOND BEING

REDEEMED. Several years ago² which we can see examples in a friend rebuked me about my doubts that someone I cared about would ever trust in Jesus. He said, "You see that person like a mountain. But God is bigger than any mountain." After repenting of my doubts, that person put their trust in Jesus two months later. Are *you* a barrier to someone's redemption through your doubt? Turn away from doubt to trustingly interceding, and keep on bearing witness to them of what our Lord is doing in your life.

Biblical facets of redemption:

- Deliverance from sin.
- Paying off a debt.
- Restoring what is lost.
- Fulfilling a pledge.
- Obtaining the release for, or restoring, as from captivity.
- Improving the human condition by money, endeavor, devotion, or sacrifice.

To be redemptive flows from our relationship with our Lord. It is a natural part of being joined to the Vine. The characteristic attitudes of those the Lord uses are a *willingness to serve*, *courage to act*, and a *desire to glorify our Father*.

Our Lord begins early in the Scriptures to lay out His plan to redeem mankind. In Genesis He presents the first of over 300 prophetic passages pertaining to the coming Redeemer: "*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel*" (Gen. 3:15). This process unfolds until the death and resurrection of our Lord. But there is another aspect to redemption in

the lives of His people:

Noah

The Lord recruited Noah to be an agent of redemption. If He hadn't, all creation would have been destroyed. Can you imagine being asked to build an ark, gather animals, and face humiliation the whole time you're obeying God? Yes, *humiliation!* For all the years he was alive, Noah's family was much larger than the eight who entered the ark with him. As with most families when you are recruited to be God's agent for redemption, Noah's probably ridiculed him. Remember, even Jesus's family didn't "shine on" to Him at first. But when the eight entered the ark, the day of reckoning came: "*...Then the Lord shut him in*" (Gen. 7:16).

Abraham

Since the day He restored Jerusalem back to the Jewish people in 1967, our Lord has been restoring a life of trusting-obedience that mirrors our Hebraic forefather, Abraham. As with Abraham (see Gen. 12), each of you has been called and has accepted the conditions of God's covenant. Like our father Abraham we must each embrace a life prepared to be God's redemptive agents. For instance, in Gen. 14 we see Abraham risking his own life to rescue Lot, who had been taken captive. In Gen. 18, we see Abraham interceding with God before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Moses

"*The Lord said [to Moses], 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their*

slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt" (Exo. 3:7,10). Being an agent of redemption is not always easy. Just read what Moses went through in Exodus.

Our Lord's encouragement to Moses is fortifying for you as you live out your covenant union with our Lord redemptively, "*I AM Who I AM...I AM has sent you*" (v. 3:14).

David

When all of Israel's armies were intimidated by Goliath, God raised up a shepherd boy who was more concerned with the honor of God than with his own life: "*[David speaking] You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied*" (1Sam. 17:45).

Some of you today are God's "Davids" raised up at this time to stand up against oppression and intimidation. Such courage and determination are desperately needed in your workplace, faith community, and family.

Yes, David killed Goliath and freed the Israelites from intimidation. But did you know that there were four other giants?

1. Ishbi-Benob: killed by David's nephew Abishai
2. Saph: killed by David's servant Sibbechai
3. Lahmi: killed by David's servant Elhanan
4. The Six-Fingered Giant: killed by David's intimate friend Jonathan.

Are You Called To Be

A Giant Killer?

For some of you, your life of redemption requires you to face the intimidators who oppress God's people. I have mentioned in a previous letter the call God gave to me before Sue and I went to Israel to receive the message of the Hebraic Restoration: *"Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord*" (Jer. 1:17,19).

I thought we were going to Israel just to visit our friends, the Schlossbergs, but God was forewarning me that He had other plans. Those of you whom God has used to face oppressors or hidden sin in your faith communities have shared the same tale with me: "I thought I was just going to do such-and-such, but this is what I encountered." It's the "but" that starts making everything very sticky. Many years ago I took jobs in the areas of finance and personnel at two Christian institutions only to walk into (and expose) embezzlement and misappropriation of funds among the senior administration. It isn't a pleasant experience when there is a web of intrigue hiding the sin.

"Share this message."

Our Lord's command for us

³in Israel was to "Share this message." We were glad to do this! But the opposition to it from clergy has been incredible. I don't write much about the intimidation from clergy I have received as we share this message. Following a meeting with an internationally known clergyman, I commented, "I felt like a fire hydrant trying to avoid a dog." As our friend Joe said to us on the phone last night, "You're a threat to them. The message you share is a 'budget buster.'"

Permit me to translate: Since Jesus ascended into heaven, we in Christ are under the priesthood of Melchizedek—that is, Jesus is our only Priest (Hebrews 7). The clergy system is dependent on a perverted understanding of the Levitical priesthood. One clergyman even admitted this to Sue and me. The perversion of the Levitical priesthood today permits clergy to be the CEO, standing between God and man.

I have heard phrases from men who teach this perversion, "The pastor is God's 'set man'"; "The pastor hears from God on behalf of the congregation"; "The pastor is God's representative to His people." Note that these comments are *not* from Roman Catholics referring to the papal system!

Clergy today see themselves as developers and maintainers of well-run religious systems. The pastor directs—you do. All he needs is your tithe and your time for him to keep it running.

If you want to test this, ask our Lord what He wants you to do with your time and money. You will find Him directing you to help people in need and His

causes on earth. None of your funds will be used to keep people in positions of power and control.

As the Hebraic Restoration goes forth around the world, I believe we are living in a period similar to the years following the ascension of Jesus in 30 AD and the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. It was a time of frustration for those who embraced the Messiah as the One Who fulfilled the redemptive prophecies of the Hebrew Bible but who still met with the Jewish people who were blinded to the truth and trying to keep the old system running. God had to finally destroy the Temple to pull the foundation of the system out from under them.

In a short while He will do the same thing to the Levitical basis of the current clergy system. The epidemic of divorce among clergy is His early warning sign. [See *Pastoring by Elders*.]

You are responsible to the Priest Who is in the order of Melchizedek: Find out where Jesus is working and join Him there!

A word of encouragement to you giant killers:

We have received numerous letters and phone calls from those of you who shared these truths with leaders in your faith communities, expecting that they would eagerly embrace them. As a result you've found yourself shunned, often with your spouse and children upset by the ostracism. It can be the most painful form of avoidance you have ever experienced. It is often kept up until you are forced to leave. Then false accusations follow you so that none of your close

friends who remain in the congregation want to hear your side of the story. (See Pro. 18:17.) You may not believe this, but our Lord was using you redemptively to stand up against the Goliaths who oppose the Hebraic Restoration.

Facing intimidation in the workplace and family

We are hearing from those of you studying the Bible so that you can stand for our Lord in the workplace and face the ever-increasing greed and resultant oppression in corporate America. Others of you have learned to confront the domination and control in your families—freeing yourselves and your relatives from the bondage of intimidation.

Becoming the REDEEMER'S Redeemers

Anytime someone cries out to our Lord, He redeems them by recruiting a deliverer. *“When they cried out to the Lord, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel... Again the Israelites cried out to the Lord, and he gave them a deliverer—Ehud”* (Judges 3:9,15). Often, as with Sue and me, they are the most unlikely candidates. We would never have chosen us to do what we are doing! Are *you* prepared in spirit and attitude to respond “Here I am Lord” when He recruits you?

Remember this:

*You can't **go** anywhere and **do** anything for the Lord Jesus unless your ready to go **anywhere** and do **anything** for the Lord Jesus.*

Know this: If you are studying and applying the truths of the

Hebraic Restoration, then He is preparing you. Let me personalize a passage for you:

“Therefore, if [you are] in Christ, [you are] a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled [you] to himself through Christ and gave [you, yes, you!] the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to [you] the message of reconciliation. [You] are therefore Christ's ambassador, as though God were making his appeal through [you]” (2 Cor. 5:17-20).

Only the I AM could both ask and empower you to do this: To entrust each of you with the commission to be His ambassadors of redemption—reconciling His beloved man-kind to Himself. Consider the tremendous responsibility given to you as He makes His appeal to an estranged world through you. By the way, how are you doing in this responsibility? We have some hints for you later in this letter.

Isaiah 58—God's Short List for Living Redemptively

When the Israelites had gotten caught up in their man-made religious lifestyles, our Lord sent Isaiah to tell them that He wanted them to live redemptively, not religiously. His words are for us today: *“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide*

the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?...

“If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday” (Isa. 58:6-10).

The Lord is requiring us to be His agents of redemption in the lives of others. If you are already living this way, I can tell something about yourself. You find yourself despising your sin nature. You want to obey and yet your sin nature fights against your obedience. When you give in and sin, it hurts all the more because of Whom you love and how much you want to represent His love to others. When you try to talk to others who live religiously but not obediently, they can't understand you. They are *oblivious* to your pain as your spirit fights against your sin nature. Often, they wonder why you even get involved.

How You Can Live Redemptively

1. Deliverance from Sin

Yes, the Lord has already accomplished the atonement for our sins, but keep in mind that everyone does not know what He has accomplished on their behalf unless you tell them. *“How, then, can they call on the one they have not trusted in? And how can they trust in the one of whom they have not*

heard? And how can they hear without someone telling them?" (Rom. 10:14; see also Matt. 28:19,20).

It's time for all of us who claim to follow Jesus to get serious about what is on His heart: How many acquaintances do you have who are condemned to hell because they've not turned from their sin toward Jesus's forgiveness? One study found that one-in-four people in the US would repent and put their trust in the Messiah if someone would ask them. If this study is reliable, then one-in-four people you know would repent and put their trust in Jesus if you asked them.

Please make a list of those people you encounter each week. How have you shared what the Lord has done for them? [If you have trouble bringing up spiritual conversations we have a handout entitled *Harvesting* that describes how to talk about spiritual matters with unbelievers you know. It is a free download from our website: <earlychurch.org>].

1a. "If your brother sins..."

Are you redemptive in the lives of your *believing* acquaintances? Do you help them remain reconciled to their Father? "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently..." (Gal. 6:1); "Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (James 5:20). Would you let a baby sit in the middle of the road in heavy traffic? Then why would you let a brother or sister stay unrepentant and out of fellowship with their Father?

2. Interceding for Others

Because of the overwhelming desire for ease and comfort in this culture, the followers of Jesus often fail to understand that the problems He hands us are to bring us *closer to and more dependent on Him*. Once we understand His ways, the importance of prayer increases. Prayer knits the people of God together. Scripture shows the need for intercession *by others* in our lives and a willingness to intercede *for others*. Our forefathers understood this combination.

"Pray [for me] that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there" (Rom. 15:31).

"And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains" (Col. 4:3).

"With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith"..."Brothers, pray for us" (1Thess. 1:11; 5:25).

"I pray [for you] also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18). How often our Lord has awakened Sue at 3AM to intercede for a particular person in distress! Will you be ready to respond to His call wherever it might come?

3. Meeting the Needs of Others

"He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy...He who

oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God" (Pro. 14:21,31).

"Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy...She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy" (Pro. 31: 9,20).

"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mat. 25:4).

It really doesn't take very much to show kindness and concern for others. Just ask our Lord to create the opportunities for you. Then be ready to be His agent of redemption when He shows you that opportunity. When we picked up the car we recently purchased, Sue spent the waiting time sharing with one of the sales people, ultimately praying with the person in the showroom! I was busy with the manager, taking him through p. 37 of *Demolishing Strong-holds*. Be alert for those nudges from the Spirit!

3a. Caring for widows

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (Jam. 1:27).

"If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need" (1Tim. 5:16).

As we have cared for my widowed mother these past 10 months, I have been amazed by the number of schemes by both phone and mail aimed at intimi-

dating her to give money. Can this be happening to an older person you know?

4. Forgiving Others

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Mat. 6:14).

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (Col. 3:13,14).

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Eph. 4:32).

Your unforgiveness puts the other person into a spiritual dungeon, and as a result God puts you into a dungeon of separated fellowship. Your forgiveness is the key for freeing both you and the one who has offended you.

Keep this pattern in mind when you are hurt by other people:

1. Did the person do it with malicious intent or did he/ she hurt you unintentionally? The vast majority of hurt feelings are caused by unintentional acts. (That person may even be unaware that an offense has occurred!)
2. If they are unaware and haven't asked your forgiveness, can you just forgive them in your heart and walk away from it?
3. If you won't be able to let go of it, then you need to go to the person or forever shut your mouth. If you don't do this, you'll tell others what happened, causing you to sin by slander.

4. If you tell others, you will have to ask both their forgiveness and the one against whom you've held the bitterness for the slander you shared.

4a. Reconciling the estranged

It is impossible to go through life and not meet two people who have previously cared for each other but are now imprisoned by estrangement: *“I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life”* (Phil. 4:2,3). You may be called to be the agent of redemptive intervention. This is part of the body-life of God's people.

You will also encounter people who have never gotten over sibling envy and jealousy. Even later in life, you can often recognize them by their reaction when God is blessing someone and these people cannot fully rejoice in our Lord's kindness:

“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’” (Luke 15:28-30).

When intervening in either of the above situations, the people involved may not be aware of the

ramifications of what they are doing to other people. Consider Euodia and Syntyche: Even Paul, who is far away, has heard about their problem. Don't you think it is effecting others in the faith community?

And think about the older brother: How do you think the younger brother who had realized at last the depravity of his life, and the rest of the household who were rejoicing with the father for his return, would feel if the older brother's jealousy was not confronted?

[*Growing Relationships Through Confrontation* can be very helpful in training you how to avoid being estranged and how to intervene.]

6. Correcting your children

No one is born with an obedient Christ-like character. These must be instilled by parents. Correcting our child(ren) so that they will not grow up with an impudent attitude is a parent's redemptive responsibility. [Please see the Aug./ Sept. 1999 *Mishpachah Yeshua* for more about impudence.] God did not write for nothing the following passages (along with a host of others):

“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him” (Pro.22:15).

“Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death” (Pro. 23:13,14). Wise and loving parents know each child's bent and the proper discipline for each.

7. Your Tithe

I ask you to scripturally consider what we wrote about earlier: There is now only *one Priest* in the order of Mel-chizedek: *“Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them”* (Heb. 7:24,25).

For those of you who think “bigness” is of God, He is *not* behind the big name/big edifice programs of today’s “Church Growth” movement. Why do I say this? Because with all of the millions upon millions of dollars being poured into buildings that are really “temples” for man, the Church in the US has not grown through salvations since 1977 when this movement began.

The early Church was a living room movement of people who represented the redemptive character of their Lord by their caring concern for others. Funds were not poured into edifices but into the care that met each other’s needs. [See Acts 2:42-47; 1Cor. 16:1-4.]

8. Your Time

Time is a precious commodity. We all have the same amount each day: *“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is”* (Eph. 5:15-17). To use our time wisely we must develop such a God-consciousness that we look for opportunities to be redemptive and ask the Lord for wisdom to deal with them effectively.

9. Join our Lord in Restoring the Jewish People to Israel.

We have written about God’s gathering of the Jewish people back to Israel and His command for the Gentiles to help them in their return. This has nothing to do with supporting the Israeli government or becoming anti-Arab. Our God is not against humans. [Please see Chapter 13 of *Restoring the Early Church* or visit our website for more on prophetic promises being fulfilled to the Jewish people.]

If you are willing to press on and embrace the Lord as He prepares you, be blessed:

“Peace to each of you, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love” (Eph. 6:23,24).

Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz
2 Chron. 7:14

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by Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz

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