



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,

These past few weeks the Lord has been inspiring us with revelation about the Hebraic Restoration: When the men of today who are still lacking years of wisdom and maturity become qualified in God's sight to serve as elders in His faith communities, *they will reflect Jesus by confronting injustice.*

The Lord impressed upon Sue and me to write a series of newsletters about the issue of *justice*. We hope to show that in order to fulfill God's purposes, we must confront the injustices we see—to bring light into darkness.

When I read the Bible for the first time, I had been in the Navy for 8 years. I remember thinking, *"Jesus Christ must have written Navy regulations."* During my 10 years in the Navy I witnessed the Bible being *lived out* more than in any church system of which I've ever been a part.

As the truth of the Restoration has gone out, I marvel at how many retired military personnel find it easy to embrace. I hadn't realized until the Lord began revealing it to us that the military personnel regulations were established to promote justice and to swiftly deal with injustice. Justice undergirded the atmosphere of camaraderie and cooperation needed to fight effectively. We belonged to and felt part of other people in ways I'd never witnessed during my 11 years of counseling church leaders.

## JAG — Justice Simulation

Sue, Matt, and I are avid watchers of JAG reruns. JAG is a weekly TV show about the Navy's Judge Advocate General's Office. Even though Matt has never been in the military, he is able to glean many biblical concepts through "simulation." A Hebraic principle of effective learning supports that if you can't use direct experience, then simulation is your next choice. Many of Jesus's parables are simulations through story telling. The hearer is left to ponder, *"What would I do in the same situation?"*

Matt and I are able to discuss the Bible, JAG, and life experiences so that he can take Christ into his workplace. In essence, Matt is God's instrument for bringing about justice where he works. Kind of a different reason for showing up for work, isn't it?! I believe that the Hebraic restoration may have its greatest influence in the marketplace rather than in any church system. The marketplace, like the military, requires you to be "for real" if you are going to represent Jesus.

## More "Court" Justice

The Lord has been flooding my mind with examples of how justice has become so much a part of my life. The first anecdote He reminded me of took place during my last Navy assignment aboard a helicopter aircraft carrier where I was in charge of divisions which launched, recovered, and refueled

aircraft. During my time off I enjoyed playing pickup basketball. A group of 'regulars' showed up, and each time we picked sides, the black players didn't want any white guys on their team. That's how it went for several weeks, and became known as "chocolate and vanilla" basketball.

Each of the black players was talented and could beat any one of the white players one-on-one. Yet, as a *team* they never won a game against us. Jackson guarded me each time we played. He worked in the fuels division and had me in size by 40 pounds and 4 inches. I liked him a lot and there was mutual respect between us — I didn't elbow him and he didn't trip me. I wanted to meet his parents some day and compliment them on the wonderful son they had raised.

One day Jackson came into my office to get some papers signed. As he stood in front of my desk I looked up and asked, "Jackson, aren't you tired of us white guys beating you every time we play?" With a deep sigh he answered, "Yes sir, it just kills me. But I can't figure out how you do it."

"Jackson, you black guys don't care for each other. You never pass the ball until you're forced to. We have three guys guarding the man with the ball and you still hate to pass it to the open man. You enjoy the individual limelight, but you *don't care* for each other."

Now, Jackson's size and demeanor demanded respect

***"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"*** (Micah 6:8)

from everyone. About 30 minutes<sup>2</sup> after he left my office he returned with all of the black players. “Sir, would you mind telling these brothers what you told me?”

During the next few weeks things on the court changed quickly—“vanilla” never won another game. More important, “vanilla” and “chocolate” dissolved. I found myself playing with Jackson instead of opposite him. Several months later our ship won the fleet basketball championship. The guys were grateful for the conversation we’d had in my office that day. They won because of the selfless regard they had toward each other. They acted justly.

### Repentance Produces Justice

Many people think of “justice” in its judicial sense—something pertaining to the courts. God defines justice first and foremost as the righteous and equitable way one person treats another.

As you know from our teachings, *repentance* is the beginning of our salvation pilgrimage. For too long people have viewed penitent people through the Greek *pietistic* lens—a pedestal for the holy few. Some people regarded Mother Theresa this way. Not so! Sue and I know people who have worked with her. She, like many others who live repentantly, extended justice to the underprivileged through humane care and fulfilled Paul’s words: “*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done...*” (2 Cor. 7:10,11).

Justice is founded on a Divine presupposition: “*So God created*

*man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*” (Gen. 1:27). The *image of God* carries an inherent dignity within mankind that far surpasses animal life. It also brings a responsibility to uphold the dignity of others because they **are** made in His image. Therefore, it is the responsibility of God’s children to bring about justice for those who can’t obtain it themselves.

Because of this dignity, Jesus insists that our treatment of others be no less than the way we ourselves wish to be treated: “*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets*” (Matt. 7:12). Everything in God’s commands and the words of the prophets is summed up in our just treatment of others.

These words from the Book of Hebrews often go unnoticed by our pleasure-bent society: “*Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering*” (Heb. 13:3). Doesn’t this passage emphasize our *interpersonal responsibility* to care for others even in their most dire need? Why? Because they are *made in God’s image*.

### Injustice in the Home:

#### *A House Without Peace*

About 10 years ago I came across an exhaustive study on men and women and the issue of justice. The study found that men have a significantly greater disposition toward justice than women do. Women tend to weigh a situation by whether it is *fair*. Let me state: *Justice and fairness are not synonymous*.

*Justice* is doing the right thing regardless of the consequences. *Fairness* evaluates the benefit or

pain an action will cause, but doesn’t take into consideration whether it is truly *right*. Thus, people seeking fairness may use any means in order to achieve a desired outcome.

In homes in which the father is passive in regard to justice and the mother controls or manipulates, the children are likely to seek a path of fairness in life. Pleasure and personal gratification will be the filter by which all pursuits are measured, and a tit-for-tat response will be their expectation. If the family is religious, they may seek out churches that teach (erroneously) that God promises His people only happiness. The path of justice will be appraised as too costly—only the “narrow-minded” follow it. Fairness feeds on the ego of a man. It is always concerned with, “How will this benefit me?”, or worries, “What will people think?”

When I meet a couple for the first time, I like to determine as soon as possible if the man is just. *A just man has a home filled with peace*. One of the early signs that a home lacks justice is when a wife starts defining her husband’s character or behavior negatively to me while the man is standing right there. Oh, I don’t blame *her*; he could be a man and speak up for himself! But if I befriended this type of man, it would most likely prove a shallow relationship. From past experience I know that Sue would begin to lose respect for me. And her respect isn’t worth forfeiting for anyone!

When Paul writes that “*the wife must respect her husband*” (Eph. 5:33b), this command pivots on the husband being a man of justice. Think about it: When you meet a just man, you don’t have to agree with him, but you



find yourself *respecting* him. A<sup>3</sup> recounts David's yearning for man of justice can articulate his position without resorting to intimidation, manipulation or persuasion. To *seek what is right* is his sole motivation.

#### Caution:

Many men's ministries that have sprung up in the past few years have created a phenomenon of "Christian male groupies." They go to the big conferences—buy the cups, hats, and T-shirts—they can talk-the-talk, but can't walk-the-walk. Too many uphold little or no justice at home, which is why they enjoy interacting with men *apart from their wives*. The pushiness of their wives embarrasses them in front of other men.

Do you **really** want to know a man? Face him in front of his wife in his own home! Don't entrust your friendship with a man until you meet his wife. A wise recommendation: "Judge a man by his wife's eyes." If he is a man who is *loving and just*, you'll see it in the peaceful delight of his wife's face. The wife of a just man trusts God to make any needed changes in him without manipulative interference.

*"Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other"* (Psa. 85:10).

If I were to describe my relationship with men who cherish justice, it would be found in the above verse. A specialness develops in the relationship, much like that of David and Jonathan. Just like them, each man of justice knows the cost he has had to pay to exercise justice. It is similar to the feeling backpackers have when they meet others miles into the mountains on a strenuous trail.

As I disciple younger men I sometimes take them to 1 Chronicles 11 and the list of David's men of valor. The chapter

recounts David's yearning for water from the well at Bethlehem: *"So the Three broke through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well near the gate of Bethlehem and carried it back to David. But he refused to drink it; instead, he poured it out before the Lord. 'God forbid that I should do this!' he said. 'Should I drink the blood of these men who went at the risk of their lives?' Because they risked their lives to bring it back, David would not drink it. Such were the exploits of the three mighty men"* (vs. 18,19). Then I ask, "Why did David pour out the water?" Think about it...

To be a truly just man, you must be dead to yourself. Jesus speaks of a just person when He says, *"For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it"* (Mark 8:35).

Jesus was already dead to Himself in order to fulfill His Father's will. In this light He confronted the injustice of the religious establishment. They were making God's people *"twice the sons of hell."* Injustice always needs to be confronted.

#### **Our Just Heritage**

Kindness is special form of justice. Some personal examples might prompt ideas for you to make the concept of justice a reality in your own family. While Sue and I were at the retreat center, we accepted people regardless of whether they could pay. During some memorable retreats inner-city churches brought a number of destitute people. One church from Providence couldn't tell us exactly how many would be coming because they were still locating them under the bridges and in alleys. I asked Sue recently, "At the retreat center you always

spent more on food for the underprivileged than for those who could pay. Why was that?" Sue responded, "I learned from my mother that we who have much should share with those who have less. If this is our only opportunity to bless these people, then let's do it right!" I am proudly married to a Proverbs 31 woman!! She *"speaks up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute"* (v.8).

A few years back my Mom and her brother were discussing an event that took place with their father. My grandfather was a farmer and some of the nearby farmers were black. When my grandmother died in 1932, they had the wake at home. The black families helped in many ways. When the priest came to the house for the wake, he told my grandfather, "I don't want those black people coming to the funeral." As soon as I heard this I blurted, "My grandfather took them to the funeral himself and probably had them sit in the front pew with him!"

My uncle responded, "You've heard this story before!" No, I hadn't, but I knew in my heart the right thing to do. My grandfather faced excommunication in order to do what was right. He knew that the love between his wife and the people who loved her was greater than any church regulations.

In high school I worked for a wonderful Jewish man, Henry Abuza.

He had two daughters but no sons, and I filled a niche in his life. He was a profoundly just man and taught me many ethical lessons. I fondly remember one of his daughters asking me, "Mike, when you sin, are you fearful of punishment, or sad that you hurt your relationship with God?" I told her that I feared punishment. She responded, "When you feel

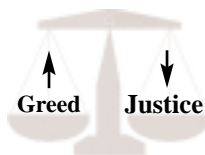


the pain your sin brings to your relationship with God, then you will know Him.” Years later, after reading the Bible and putting my trust in Jesus, her words took on great meaning.

At the first opportunity I took my son to meet Henry Abuza. I wanted to honor a man who had influenced my life so much. Is there anyone from *your* past you should contact to bless for their impact on your life?

### Justice In Christendom

When I left the Navy I took a position as the Controller of a small Christian college.



After a few days on the job, I reviewed the salary structure with my payroll clerk. I could see her increasing pain as we reviewed the enormous injustice: 150 people on payroll, but *five* whose salaries comprised over 20% of the payroll budget. Also evident was *favoritism* in the salaries—knowing the right people got you higher pay. I pointed out this inequity to my boss, who happened to be one of the five (and whose boss was also one of the five). I got nowhere.

A few days later the Chairman of the Board of Trustees invited me to lunch. He asked about my satisfaction with my job, and I responded that I was about to submit my resignation. I told him that I felt like a German guard at the gas chamber telling the people they were going to take a shower.

He was a man of justice, and within a day or two he hired a Christian payroll consultant to develop a just pay scale. Needless to say, I made some enemies. Most accounts of people who stand for justice, whether in or out of the Bible, warn that you will bless some and be hated by others. By the way, I didn't resign.

One of the other members of

<sup>4</sup>the Board wrote a book at that time, *“A Turtle on a Fence Post.”* The gist of the book, as I remember, is that if you see a turtle on a fence post, it's obvious that someone placed it there. The application is that each of us is placed in situations in which God wants something remedied according to His Word. If you will open your eyes and represent Jesus, you will see your home, neighborhood, workplace, or school as opportunities to right injustices. In some cases it may be as simple as extending courtesy to another person. In others, you may need to confront situations of oppression, slander and gossip. You may even risk loss of job or even your life.

Each day we face choices in which our Lord is asking us to act justly on His behalf. When we choose to reflect Him, watch what He does!

### The Righteous Seek Justice.

#### The Just Live Righteously.

The simplest form of justice is found in the etiquette we depend on in our relationships. Let me quote from the introduction to our series entitled:

#### Christian Etiquette For God's People

*“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16).

When you see the word “etiquette”, you probably think of things you *have to do* to be socially acceptable. You might suppose “good manners” to be the rules of the game of life — the do's and don't's you have to observe in your daily walk. But for God's people good manners are much more than holding a fork correctly or knowing how to introduce someone.

Good manners also mean kindness and consideration for others, respect for the feelings of other people, a sincere acknowledgement of right and wrong, a genuine awareness of someone you

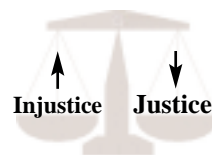
meet on a street, at work, or in school. Good manners mean the *consideration and honor* you grant someone as a person, not because of their position or popularity, but because they are human beings *“made in the image of God.”*

“It is not having bad manners or good manners or any other particular sort of manners, but having the same manner for all human souls.” George Bernard Shaw

Each follower of Jesus is, in reality, a public compliment or public rebuke for Him. Each Christian is Jesus “in the flesh” to everyone they meet.

The rebelliousness and injustice of today's society has in many ways crept into God's people. Studies have shown how little difference exists between Christians and worldly people. *Christian Etiquette For God's People* is a series of lessons on behavior which represents a loving, trust-filled relationship with our Father. In essence, “the world will know we are Christians by seeing our loving enactment.”

*“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”* (Eph. 6:12).



#### Justice for Israel???

After Sue and I returned from Israel I went to my old mentor, Henry Abuza, to share what we had learned. He showed me letters he had been writing to Jewish authorities both in Israel and the US, confronting them about their injustice. He told them it was wrong to use Arab labor to build wonderful dwellings for Jews in Israel while the Arabs continued to live in squalor. In his Jewish way he reminded them of Matthew 7:12 and recommended they build sound apartments for the Israeli Arabs as well. He knew that God backed kindness more than force.

God is bringing the Jewish<sup>5</sup> into their worship team than in people back to Israel as He promised in His Word, and He calls for Gentiles to help them return—but not to take sides. Our Lord knew that Arabs would be there when He brought this about. Isn't it amazing that the biological descendants of Abraham are fighting each other? Don't you think our God is looking for us *spiritual descendants* of Abraham, Gentiles who put their trust in Jesus, to bring about justice between the *biological descendants*?

God wants Israel as well as the US to learn to trust Him and to realize the wonder of that relationship. Both countries need hearts of stone to be excised. Neither a new president nor military might will save either of us; only repentance can stir up justice.

### Justice for the Unborn???

I am “for life”, and the 35+ million babies aborted in this country grieves me. But I am not an “anti-abortionist.” God’s justice calls us to stand “*for something*”, not “*against someone*.” When you stand with Him *for something*, He gives wisdom and power to succeed. *For life* calls us to serve the needy women, bring abstinence materials to classrooms, elect those who will repeal death legislation—but not to pass judgement by hating the wrongdoers.

### Justice for Minorities???

The same injustice my friend Henry is attempting to correct in Israel is right here in Arizona where Hispanics and Native Americans are dominated by the affluent. Many rich people retire here from all parts of the US; most have no idea how their quest for pleasure rips off the underprivileged. Who will speak up for them...the Church? Some of the biggest congregations with the biggest names are right here in Arizona. Yet, more money goes

remediating injustice in the surrounding community. Why? Who do you think is chosen to be on the Board of these churches—humble laborers, or bankers and realtors? If you could survey the church leadership of this nation, I believe you will find a propensity toward “fairness” and self-interest. After all, the most prosperous have the greatest influence and the most assets to share. But they also may be the most blind to the injustice in their community.

*“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one”*  
(Rom. 3:10-12).

Let me be bold: The above passage was written to the Church in the US. Christian pollster George Barna’s recent survey reports: “In a large scale survey of adults, we asked people to identify the most important goal of their life. NOT A SINGLE PERSON SAID IT WAS TO BE A COMMITTED FOLLOWER OF JESUS...Less than one out of every five born-again adults has any specific and measurable goals related to their personal spiritual development.”

*“Like a muddied spring or a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way to the wicked”* (Pro. 25:26).

We hope in the next few months through our newsletters to help sensitize God’s people to the injustice they face around them each day. Each of these is a chance to reflect Jesus. Our just choices will leave fruit that will last. It is imperative, especially if we claim the name “Christian”, that we do not leave a legacy of unconcern in the face of injustice.

I’d like to leave you with something I saw at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem: *“They came for the Communists, and I didn’t object — For I wasn’t a Communist; They came for the Socialists, and I didn’t object — For I wasn’t a Socialist; They came for the labor leaders, and I didn’t object — For I wasn’t a labor leader; They came for the Jews, and I didn’t object — For I wasn’t a Jew; They came for me — And there was no one left to object.”*

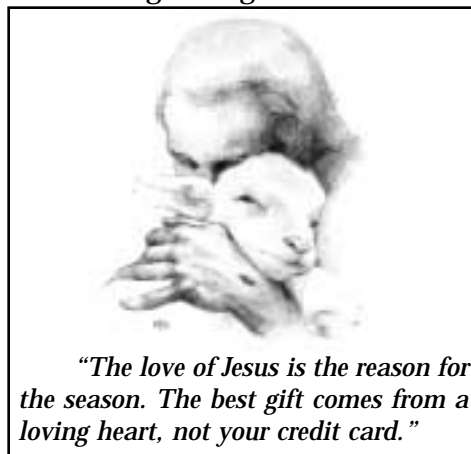
Martin Niemoller, a German Protestant pastor.



***“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”***

I know this letter goes out to many who are struggling as you obey the call of Jesus on your lives. These letters are written for those of you who have forsaken the pleasures of “religion” and are willing to endure the hardship of relationship with our Lord. I join Paul in “[*Encouraging*] each of you with these words: *we will be with the Lord forever!!!*” As the hymn says, “It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!”

In our apartment window we have this greeting:



*“The love of Jesus is the reason for the season. The best gift comes from a loving heart, not your credit card.”*

### A Personal Greeting

Sue and I are very grateful for the kind words of encouragement, the prayers and support we have received this past year. At this time last year we were still caring for my Mom. How quickly following her death in May the Lord brought us to a place in which we see such terrible injustice! It is painful to realize the atrocities that have been done to humans in this country. If we hadn't come to the Southwest I would not have understood so clearly the Hebraic message as it needs to be lived.

This coming year we will be writing our newsletters with many more questions for you to consider in your own faith pilgrimage. We will be glad to post on our website appropriate testimonies of courage, kindness, and confrontation of injustice. We want to see our Father glorified in every way possible.

Let's make 2001 the year in which together we, in the power of our Lord, seek justice for all. Please join us.

Our love,

*Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz*



James & Joyce Skeet w/ sons Malcolm & Martin. [James' painting behind us.]

Matt Kowlsen with Malcolm & Martin



Joyce & Sue in their native dresses made by our Hopi friend Izabell Weedman.



*"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven"*

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