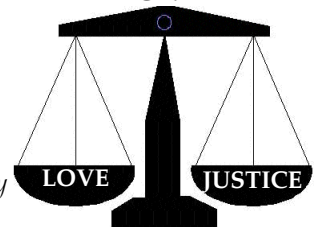


Yeshua MISHPACHAH

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.

UPHOLDING HUMAN
DIGNITY



Matt. 25:31-46

Are You Suffering From the Woes?

Dear Friends,

I was waiting on the Lord for the topic of this month's newsletter when the phone started ringing. For three days straight I began receiving calls, all with the same theme: the *painful consequences of disobedience* to a direct set of "marching orders" from our Lord. The consequences that these dear, desperate brothers are undergoing can be encapsulated in the familiar biblical term, "woe."

Israelite Woes, Church Woes— Has Anything Changed?

The sorrowful condition of the Israelites prompted the prophet Isaiah to address the woeful reality of their miserable state before God. Twenty-one times the prophet intones phrases that begin, "Woe to..." In the fifth chapter alone he declares 6 woes, some of which were repeated by Jesus because the moral and religious condition were equally grievous.

These woes bear a brief examination because you'll probably recognize how prevalent these are today among churchgoers as well as pagans.

Isa. 5:8-11 "Woe to..." those who are prosperous only to benefit their own egos and personal gratification. Jesus bemoans this sorrowful state in Luke 6:24.

Isa. 5:11-15 "Woe to..." the self-indulgent drinkers (and gluttons and sports-aholics and TV addicts and computer fiends and fornicators) who, to the prophet's dismay, "pay no attention to *how the Lord works* and never look at what *His hands have made*." Their idolatry has

separated them from intimacy with Him, as also condemned by Jesus in Luke 6:25.

The third woe (Isa. 5:18,19) is meted out to those who rationalize their pet sins, unaware of the danger that their "little thread" transgressions are to their walk with Jesus. As the apostle James warns, these can all too easily be birthed into "cart-rope" iniquity that leads to death.

Isaiah again reveals the woe of those who call evil good and turn that which is good into evil. Notice that he's warning the chosen ones of God, not pagans! The same warning of excused sin pertains to those in congregations who are sure that God's grace will cover all their willful disobedience, and so "blaspheme His Name among the nations."

The prophet continues his woes recitation with number five (v.21), the folly of those who consider themselves wise from the world's standards but know God not at all.

Finally, the sixth "Woe to...": those who deny justice to the righteous, and despise God's Word by ignoring it or casting it as culturally entrapped by ancient Middle Eastern "oppressive patterns."

The woes were not voiced as curses but as a trumpet call of warning that dire consequences follow denial of our Lord and His commands. We'll follow Isaiah's (and Jesus's!) format to awaken those who are sleeping in the Light.

Elephant Woes

As I listened to the woes of a man this morning on the phone I

was reminded of a humorous song from the sixties. The lyrics portray a man complaining that every day he was being trampled by an elephant. Initially, you feel sorry for the pachydermally challenged victim.

As the song progresses, however, you find out that the elephant walks down the street every day at the same time, and every day this man *steps out in front of it!* By the song's end you want to shout, "If you stayed off the street, you wouldn't get trampled!"

Common Christian Woes

Does this song seem foolish? Sadly, this story is being repeated time and again by so many Christians who fail to make the connection between their "woes" and their violations of God's Word. God uses the word "woe" to imply that something very painful is coming if you don't repent and turn from your disobedient ways.

Our Father proclaims woe in advance as a warning for His people to repent and change. His warning of woe is a *loving way* to let you know about a terrible consequence. Think of a "woe warning" as suitable for any situation in which you have no doubt about where the action that people are taking will ultimately lead. For instance, a "woe" can be as simple as a warning to a child: "If you touch that hot stove, you'll burn your finger." (In other words, "Woe to you if you touch that stove!")

Let's look at a number of life situations in which Christians are

Preparing the Family of Jesus for the Dark Days to Come

with a promise — **that it may go well with you** and that you may enjoy long life on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3).

This one violation of God’s Word has caused more woes than anything else Sue and I have witnessed. We grieve to see so many bitterness-ridden young people with so much going wrong in their lives. Countless people’s woe is a result of unresolved bitterness toward one or both of their parents.

I encourage you young people to not evaluate your parents until you are *in your 50’s* and you still have *your first marriage*. Only then will you realize the depth of this saying: “Every parent tries to do the best they can with what they have going for themselves.” During your 50’s and beyond you’ll look back and discover that this was your story as well.

Woe to Clergy

The religious leaders of Jesus’ day had greatly abused their position and privileges. They needed a sound confrontation to awaken their comatose consciences. In Matthew 23:13-29, for example, Jesus forcefully issues “reality checks” of woe a number of times. His accusations are a heads-up to these hypocritical leaders that they aren’t living what they teach. Further, they’re adding burdens to God’s laws that no one can bear. By going beyond the pure obedient trust of Scripture by piling on cumbersome traditions, they’re misrepresenting the “easy yoke and light burden” of our Lord’s way of righteousness.

Grievously, Protestant clergy are near the top in divorce. This epidemic of broken covenants reflects the “woeful” consequence of several unbiblical choices:

1. When you place ministry above your family responsibilities, you make an idol out of your work.
2. Many clergy we’ve talked with hold unresolved bitterness against their own earthly fathers. The Hellenistic “pastorate” is attractive because it brings the long-sought recognition they perceive

their fathers never gave them.

3. As with those who sat in the seat of Moses (Matt. 23:2), people who minister for their own fulfillment teach Bible knowledge without living out what they teach. Nor do they confront others about sin in their lives. The most frequent reason given is a hefty church mortgage to pay off. Warm bodies that prefer entertaining anecdotes to convicting sermons won’t pay the bills if they’re confronted about their fruitlessness and self-gratification.

Can you perceive the woe upon the clergy who are running here to Colorado Springs, the “Protestant Papacy”? So many are coming here to be declared apostles over cities and regions of this country by men who have no authority from God to do this. Think back to the destruction caused by the “Shepherding Movement” of the 70’s and 80’s. Flocking to Colorado Springs to receive an “apostolic mantle” recycles the old failed movement.

Those who come to get “anointed” will rise above any accountability to the men in their faith community, a situation that also mirrored the Shepherding Movement. Both scenarios reflect *Nicolaitanism*, that is, conquering the people by supplanting their personal relationship with God. Jesus denounced this in Rev. 2:6,15.

Assorted Other Woes

Woe to you who *know* what God wants you to do but procrastinate. “Delayed obedience is disobedience.”

Woe to you who cherish religious form over intimacy with our Lord. Woe to you who have more love for people than you do for our Lord. *“Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me”* (Matt. 10:37,38).

Woe to you murderers. “Who, *me??*” Yes, if your tongue is your weapon that destroys. *“But I tell you*

that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell” (Matt. 5:22).

Woe to you adulterers. You may have had no affairs but what about your media habits? Do they put your spouse in an unfavorable light by comparison? *“But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart”* (Matt. 5:28).

Woe to you who put your trust in the stock market or your bank account. *“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment”* (1 Tim. 6:17).

Are You In Woe?

A child who ignores the warning of woe to avoid the hot stove will get burned. Hopefully he’ll correct the problem by pulling his finger off its surface. If you find yourself having woe, then you need to stop violating God’s Word. Repent of your sin, purposing to leave it behind you, humbly asking Him for His forgiveness and help.

Biblical woe comes about as a result of a *habitual pattern of disobedience*. You didn’t just “cross the line”, you’ve been *living outside* the line of His Word for some time. It’s going to take prayer and application of God’s Word through His Spirit to find out how He would have you live so you can receive the blessing that accompanies your obedience.

When you receive phone calls of woe, or when you encounter people who are experiencing woe, help them discern their violation of God’s commands so they can repent. Your pity for their woe helps no one. Instead, help them find the path of God’s blessing!

Desiring a life of blessing for each of you, *Mike & Sue*

