

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,

A few days after we mailed our letter, we received David Wilkerson's latest book, ***America's Last Call: On the Brink of Financial Holocaust***. It took about 2 days for our whole family to read it. Brothers and sisters, something none of us wants is coming. David does a wonderful job showing from the Scriptures God's chastisement on nations that sin as readily as Americans do. Ponder these excerpts:

"God is going to act quickly to devastate the American economy—not only as judgment upon the sins of this nation, but for another reason as well...God's greater purpose in breaking down the American money machine is to *deliver his redeemed children* from the contagious spirit of *materialism and worldly-mindedness* now engulfing our nation....If you want to know and hear God's voice in the days ahead, be ready to have him speak of *cleansing* before he speaks of *direction*."

"In war, to be forewarned is to be forearmed. In faith, to be forewarned is to *repentant*."

Let's consider the type of people we must become. The Bible amply deals with times like the ones facing us and gives

explicit guidance for God's people.

Peter wrote about the days preceding God's judgment: ***"Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him"*** (2 Pet. 3:11-14).

How is Peter warning us to prepare ourselves? To live our lives free from the bondage of worldly entanglement, and wholly available for His use! In other words, we must "*make every effort*" to heed the Spirit's conviction of sin and turn from it to obedience.

I wish I could tell you that I've arrived at consistently doing what our Lord commands. Actually, I find myself repenting more than I ever have. How often do I voice to my heavenly

Father, "Please help me!" That He pours out His loving mercy and compassion on me even with my ability to stumble and sin is a marvelous miracle! Reread the Psalms of David for encouragement in this area!

Paul's words are becoming more real me everyday:

"For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want" (Gal. 5:17). Paul understands our struggle all too well:

"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

(Rom. 7:18,19,21,24,25).

The closer our Father draws me to Himself, the more I despise myself for being able to

Equipping the Church to Go Back for its Future

sin against Someone who loves² me so unconditionally. I know some of you who have contacted us know what I mean. What war rages inside as we try to live obediently in Him!!! But He still commands us to “make every effort” so that we may be found “at peace with him.” Out of our love for Him, can we do any less? And doesn’t all of this struggle show us so vividly how much **we need Him?**

The apostle John faced the same evil around him, and he warned:

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

As I ponder 1 John, I get some of the greatest encouragement and some of the deepest conviction. John affirms our position in the Lord: “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called **children of God!** And that is what we are!” (3:1). And two verses later he tell us, “Everyone who has this hope in him **purifies himself**, just as he is pure” (3:3). God both loves us and enables us to live in accordance with His commands. John understood this clearly.

John summarizes the confidence we have in Jesus as we trust Him and obey His commands:

“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us” (1 John 3:21-24).

John, who shared such friendship with our Lord, understood that religious practices, Bible knowledge, and running after the latest Christian hoopla mattered little. Only one evidence sets us apart from the world, an evidence which guarantees our inheritance in His Kingdom and empowers us to live a life pleasing to Him: living each day led by the Holy Spirit: “We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit” (1 John 4:13). Paul reiterates this: “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25).

There are two parts to our walk with Jesus. One is the easy part—receiving the blessing of fullness He gives us because we trust Him. The second part is our responsibility and privilege: obediently *sacrificing our own will and ways* as we die to ourselves to serve Him. When Jesus blessed the people with miracles, many followed Him. But when He told them the cost of following Him, “**Many of his disciples turned back and no**

longer followed him. ‘You do not want to leave too, do you?’ Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life**’” (John 6:66-68).

Many who are attempting to live obediently in our Lord today see this same pattern of choice. Far more *want His blessing* than are willing to *pay the cost*. God is clarifying the difference between the “blessing seekers” and the “cost payers” before the day in which our Lord will judge this nation. *No one* will be able to say to Him, “I didn’t know what you really wanted.” Jesus sent John the Baptist before Him to prepare the way, preaching “Repent and bear fruit befitting your repentance.” Today, the same preparation is being heralded. Please be listening!

For decades Christian conferences that have focused on *benefiting yourself* have grown in numbers around the country: “If you come to *our* conference, *signs and wonders will follow!*” or, “Come let so-and-so pray for you and you will be changed!” The Lord foretold these days when He said:

“At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time. So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is [perhaps in Florida],’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is [maybe in Canada],’ do not believe it” (Matt. 24:23-26).

Everywhere we do our work-³**goes on trusting and continues towards righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgment and thus continues toward deliverance.**

A trusting follower of Jesus doesn't have to travel to some place or have some "big name" lay hands on him or her. Abiding trust in Jesus does it all! I've seen demonic deliverances in which the demons became visible. I've met a man raised from the dead and I've been privileged to witness most of the miracles the Bible recounts. In each instance, trust in the Lord Jesus and the authority of His Holy Name are all that are needed.

The immediate trust of those whom Jesus and Paul encountered enabled them to receive the blessing. And the Lord also requires our **daily trust**. Consider the implications of Paul's words if you fail to keep on trusting:

"He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— if you continue trusting, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed" (Col. 1:22,23).

This **continuous trusting** is the issue behind the often-quoted Romans 10:9,10:

"That if you acknowledge publicly with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and trust in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one

him" (1 John 3:21,22).

Paul affirms this same trusting-obedience: *"For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see the **disciplined and resolute firmness** of your trust in Christ. So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, **continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, and confirmed in your trust** as you were taught, so that you **overflow with thanksgiving**"* (Col. 2:5-7).

As you can perceive from the above passages, it is **within you** that the trusting relationship with our Lord exists. It is **not** "out there" somewhere. Our Lord is a God of the heart. He responds to our *trusting-obedience*, that is, our willingness to *pay the cost*. His Spirit empowers us to experience Him, and He blesses through answered prayer.

Give some thought to two of *many* examples of desperate "bless-me" seekers that we've heard of as we've shared the message of restoration.

My friend Gil called recently to discuss a very large church near him in Tennessee that has bused their people many times to the big 'renewal' center in Florida. He mentioned the tragic news of the suicide of a wife and mother of 3 who had been part of the worship team at that church. She was even part of the 'inner circle' of the congregation.

I asked Gil, "How could this happen and *no one knew* she was heading in this direction?" Where were the *intimate load-bearing relationships* that are

Paul saw that the church at Corinth had gotten caught up in spiritual manifestations. They were selfish, arrogant, and entertained sin in their midst. Paul scolded them: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are living a life of trust. Test yourselves. Don't you realize that Christ Jesus is in you— unless, of course, you fail the test? And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test" (2 Cor. 13:5,6).

How would they know that they *haven't* failed the test? One indicator would be that their **prayers were being answered**. John certainly understood the connection of trusting-obedience and answered prayer: *"Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases*

the hallmark of a faith community committed to Jesus? Friends, what message does her death leave for her children? No matter how many "spiritual highs" one goes after, it's the daily, trusting walk with Jesus and the loving one-anothering that matter.

At my request Gil contacted the pastor of that church to ask him how this could happen. All the pastor could say was, "Forgive me."

Just last week I received a call from a man in the mid-west asking if we were going to do a Restoring the Early Church workshop in his area. As we talked I could tell he was deeply disturbed. He shared that his large church for years had been sending the congregation to the big 'renewal' center in Canada. In fact, he and his wife had gone. He acknowledged that there was still something wrong that he couldn't put his finger on. I asked him, "Has your church changed at all in Christlikeness? Has the divorce rate decreased?" He replied, "No, not at all. As a matter of fact, divorce has increased."

Don't get me wrong. I enjoy and cherish corporate times of worship. I'm an avid worshiper. But, as those of you know who've read our books, *our relationship with our Lord is a way of living. We serve Him, not ourselves. He is not somewhere "out there" if He is not first of all right here!*

None of the big-draw, hype-based conferences in the world are going to save you on the day God judges this nation. Only a

daily relationship that displays the *peaceable fruit of righteousness* from the Holy Spirit will matter—and that comes only by turning away from your sin and trusting wholeheartedly on the sacrifice Jesus made for you on the cross!

Maybe you've noticed a certain theme to these past two letters. They are part of a commission that our Lord gave me 21 years ago:

*"Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet **to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning, his blood will be on his own head. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself.***

*But if the watchman sees the sword coming and **does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.***

*'Son of man, I have made you a watchman; so hear the word I speak and **give them warning from me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do***

*not speak out to **dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood.***

*But if you **do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself.***

*Therefore, son of man, say to your countrymen, 'The righteousness of the righteous man **will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to fall when he turns from it. The righteous man, if he sins, will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness.***

Are you a watchman as well? Please pass this warning along. And test yourselves and your families to see if their trust will hold!

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