

# 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,

***"I'm aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice... urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present... I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard."***

When I saw the above quote by abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison from his first edition of *The Liberator*, January 1, 1831, I was totally inspired. His writings ultimately led to the freedom of many. His conviction caused Sue and me to double the efforts we are now putting into writing **"Hebraic Foundations to Native American Ministry."** Our slogan is "Restoring the Kinship Community That Jesus Desires for Native People." The more we write, the more compelling our love for the people grows.

I was on the phone a few days ago with Dillard Griffith, one of our Board members, a retired doctor, and now a Nebraska cattle rancher. He described my writing in farm talk: "It's like when one of my cows has an abscess. I put a sharp knife in and let the puss

out." As a man whose nickname was "the enema" when I counseled church leaders for so many years, I thought "Griff's" words were right on.

A few days ago Sue, Matt, and I sat and discussed a passage that God had been impressing upon me for some time: *"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others"* (2Tim. 2:2). We are encountering Native people who truly care for the future freedom of their people, a freedom only Jesus can give through the trust called for in the Hebraic foundations. These are courageous folks, focused in their intercession and in their efforts on behalf of their people.

***"Words are things; and a small drop of ink, falling like dew upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think."*** Lord Byron

Just before Sue and I departed for Israel in 1993, my mother wrote me what proved to be a prophetic letter. She told me that when we returned from Israel she wanted us to move in with her and write. This we did, and our time with her became the beginning of what we continue to do. Writing is something

the Holy Spirit has empowered us in love to do. Our burden as we write on behalf of the Native people is twofold:

1. To hand to them what we've written, unencumbered by any Anglo-Greek (Hellenist) cultural entrapments.

2. To write *"Hebraic Foundations to Native American Ministry"* so that the people can have something to discuss and apply to their lives. As they discuss these truths, we believe they will come to realize how spiritually advanced they are in the Hebraic perspective of covenant-keeping, generational interconnectedness, and God's view of creation.

Do you know that there is no word for *religion* among the Navajo? *All of life* is spiritual, just as our Hebraic forefathers understood. I keep being drawn to a passage in Malachi, *"Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name. 'They will be mine,' says the LORD Almighty, 'in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again*

Equipping the Church to Go Back for its Future

see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not" (Mal. 3:16-18).<sup>2</sup>

We hope that the mission agencies that are active in Native evangelism will also discuss and apply the Hebraic truths. The Greek philosophical spirit has affected their methodology of ministry in key areas:

- After several generations of ministry on the reservations, there is negligible turnover of responsibility by Anglo missionaries to the Native people.
- *Charity* is the primary means of helping the people. Yet, the early Church did *business* as part of the economic responsibility for the people. Before the Greek philosophers entered the church, there was no problem with making money; the *love* of money was condemned. The early Church followers of Jesus, even rabbis like Paul, all had jobs.

Consider how God affirmed His covenant with the Israelites: *"But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today"* (Deu. 8:18).

Charity that offers no hope of change and no purpose and meaning destroys men. Sadly, church organizations that have worked in conjunction with the Bureau of Indian Affairs have done a great

injustice to Native men, hindering them from providing for their families through work. Farming families lost their lands through government treaties that promised to "take care of them" in exchange for their land. Most of these treaties were broken; the Native peoples lost their means of livelihood and were shipped off to arid, infertile reservations.

The Hebraic faith communities of the future will concern themselves with the economic well-being of the families as the early Church once did. Charity is not God's only way to help, particularly if dignity can be gained through job training and life skills that help to keep that job.

***"Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard"***

- Do you talk *with*, or *at*, people?
- Does your faith community *minister at* people?

The reason these questions are so important is because we are an efficient, impersonal society. Even "church services" are as impersonal as sitting in a movie theater. Take the Sunday morning sermon. What happened to the rabbinical give-and-take interaction Jesus used? Instead, one person stands behind a podium to pass along Bible information. The entire event is devoid of relational responsibility among the people. Ask yourself about your own congregational gathering:

- Is the whole teaching emphasis on *content dissemination*?

- Can anyone even *ask questions*?
- Is there opportunity for discussion for *application purposes*?
- Is time allowed for people to search out other Scriptures to *share* how they might apply?

This may sound overly simplified, but *talking with people* involves discussion. The give and take of listening and asking questions is as important to a relationship as mother's milk is to a newborn. Through discussion we grow closer to each other and more collectively committed to the same truths.

In the course of writing six books, Sue and I had to do a lot of discussion to apply these truths to our own lives before we could commend them to others. How else could "Erma Bombeck and C.S. Lewis" co-author? In the discussion process we were changed, becoming equally committed to what our Lord had shown us in Israel.

The lack of discussion has led to a pattern of *activity-oriented* ministry by the Anglo-Christian community, an approach that requires little responsibility for relationship with each other or for the people being ministered to.

An example: A youth group from California decides to paint a church on a reservation in New Mexico. Remember, they are going to the rez to complete a *planned activity*, not to establish loving relationships with the people. Fulfilling their "Christian duty", the young people go to the reservation and complete the project. They may even have planned into their trip a stop at the Grand Canyon. So

when the project is done, off<sup>3</sup> they go to see the 'big hole' with the personal satisfaction of a job well done.

They believe the Native people must be very happy, too. But the truth of the matter is, the Native people cherish *relationships*. They'd rather have people come because they care for them personally and not just to do a good deed.

I am particularly sensitive to this because for over 20 years I have been invited to many churches to preach. The service ends, and the treasurer hands me an honorarium in an envelope. Yet how few times anyone has cared enough for Sue and me as people to invite us to eat with them and establish a relationship with them. 20+ years...

That is the crux of the matter: Most Americans of western Euro-pean descent appreciate activities over relationships. Most other cultures, including the Native American, desire *relationship*. Ministries to Natives often compensate for Christian guilt but are not having the effect they imagine. Why does Ray Comfort, noted international evangelist, state that 80-90% of all "born again" people around the world leave Christ after responding to a crusade altar call? Why does one noted *activity-based* Christian campus ministry find fewer than 5% of the people once active in their ministry still following Jesus 5 years later?

***"For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends"***

(2 Cor. 10:18).

Are you in a faith community that commends itself for its activities? Are relationships the focal point for contacts, or are activities? Are there recognizable differences between an activity-based vs. relationship-based community? Yes, dramatic ones!

#### **Activity-based Christianity**

- Delights in what *we do* for God.
- Christ-like character development optional.
- Leaves a finished project but no lasting relational commitment.

#### **Relationship-based Christianity**

- Delights in revealing the love of God; to be 'Jesus-in-the-flesh'.
- Christ-like character development sought in the process.
- Leaves ongoing relationships that continue beyond the project.

***"Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth"***

(Gen. 11:4).

Two decades ago I was Financial Controller of a major Christian college. Although the school found it very difficult to raise support for its operational budget, they found that people readily supported new construction projects. If donors could see an edifice which they had helped build, they'd give gladly. Even more people gave if the college put their name on a brick or on a pew plaque!

Following my time at the college, I served at a retreat center for over 10 years. I lived in the "bowels" of Christianity as a counselor to church leaders. You become well aware of the *towers of Babel* being constructed throughout this country in His name by leaders seeking to out-run one another in the "nickels and noses" race. Christians who question this goal are often forced out and "branded." We've met them.

Many individuals and faith communities have unintentionally supported ministries to Native people that are more like "towers" to the people who run them than benefits to the Native people. What names on bricks and pews did to prompt donations to the college, brochures with pictures of needy Native kids are doing today.

Some red flags should go up!!!

Ministries on the rez with a preponderance of Anglo leadership should be questioned. So should those that have been there for a generation or more and failed to produce Native leaders.

Ministries which have bypassed elder authority have given Native youth an implicit message to ignore the wisdom and leadership of their elders. They fail to give the deference and respect once given to elders. This is the same *lack of deference* other children in this country have for their parents, a sad legacy to pass along.

***"Restoring the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children"***

How many of you would financially support a Native min-

istry whose goal and purpose is<sup>4</sup> *Native leadership*.

to "restore the hearts of the fathers to the children"? What kind of brochure could a ministry with this goal put out that would emotionally touch the hearts of people to give—a drunken Native man who has lost all his dignity? Most people would think his life is already wasted. But how many Christians would feel responsible for how this man has ended up?

Our Lakota friend, Norma Blacksmith, wanted to honor the Lakotas who had fought in Vietnam. Only two showed up at the town ceremony so she went to the bars and found many more vets. These men who had served their country had been robbed of all dignity back on the rez. As Norma honored them publicly, these men were moved that someone would care. As for Norma, well, the church leaders were angry at her for including "drunks" in their program.

If we *really* want to help the Native people, we need to begin with the older people, not their children. We need at least the three generational view our Hebraic forefather's had: "*Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children*" (Pro. 17:6). We need to see our involvement with the elders and men of each reservation today as the precursor for their grandchildren to live in dignity.

Well-prepared Native followers of Jesus need to take over the positions of responsibility that missionaries have held over them. It is time to face the facts: *generations* of youth ministry have still left the same *void of*

Let's begin now to restore the positions of *fathers and elders* on the reservation:

- to give them dignity and purpose by developing faith communities on the rez that will provide non-charitable self-support.
- to show the fathers and elders the biblical basis for the spiritual development of the children they have brought into this world.

***"God will use the Native people to share the Restoration message during the 'dark days' both in this country and around the world"***

As we traveled to different reservations during June, we became keenly aware of how prophetic many Native people are. Many of you know that the Lord told Sue and me that this message is being shared in advance of the "dark days" that are coming upon this country. I was amazed to know that many Native people have already been told by our Lord that they will "lead this nation out of the dark days to come!"

I sense that the dark days will come on this country before the grandchildren of today become grandparents. Helping the Native people today is a greater investment in the future of *all* grandchildren than any financial savings we can leave. The more Native people who are able to carry this light into the dark days, the more merciful our Lord can be to all our offspring.

## **The Loving Heart to Forgive**

We have seen the amazing willingness of so many Native people to forgive the whites for all of the broken treaties and atrocities. Sue and I have shared with them that the broken treaties they received from the US government are the religious fruit of the Greek-influenced Christianity that already represented a broken covenant with God. Remember, it was the church that promoted anti-Semitism, hid the Bible in Latin for 1100 years, and murdered Jews and Christians for not submitting to doctrinal lies.

As the Native people are beginning to understand the Greek influence on the church, they are able to see the basis for the attempts of government and church-related organizations to dominate them and destroy their culture.

Remember WW II and Dec. 7th, 1941, "The Day of Infamy?" You only have to do a short review of Native history to learn for yourself about the numerous "days of infamy" and massacres that were wrought on the Native people out of greed and racist bigotry and fear. As much as the Holocaust in Europe is a horrible remembrance for Jewish people, so the numerous 'Holocausts' against the Native people have left unhealed wounds.

## **Won't You Please Join Us?**

Please take the time to discuss this letter with whomever you can. Restoration Ministries is only one part of a huge, God-ordained plan to bring healing to this land. Please ask our Lord if what I am writing is true. I ask

you to join us in healing the Native people by restoring dignity to their elders, by restoring fathers back to their families, and by helping as many Native people as possible be prepared to share the truths of the Hebraic Restoration.

Praise the Lord for the strength and desire to love and serve Him as we love and serve His people!

*Mike & Sue Dorigio*

P.S. As you spend time in the Hebrew Bible, you'll recognize similarities between the worldviews of the Native peoples and our Hebraic forefathers. The importance to both of their land, covenants, family and tribal loyalty, and seeing all of life as "spiritual" is no coincidence. Both have much to offer to all followers of Jesus in living out a walk of obedient trust.

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## **Restoration Ministries International**

Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz

