

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.

TOPIC: Wholeheartedness Toward God — A Life of Adaptation

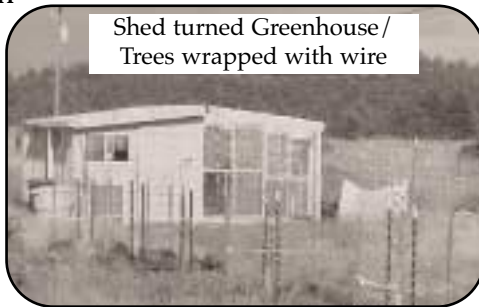
Dear Brothers,

A few weeks ago, after nearly 3 months of life on the high prairie, I was sitting on our back porch looking over the work our Lord has enabled us to complete. We'd made many changes to the property based on recommendations from the "locals." I was drawn to the plant life springing up that must survive some of the harshest conditions found in this country. As I pondered my surroundings, the Holy Spirit began to reveal to me, "Life here requires *adaptation* to not only survive but also to *reproduce*. That's the way it is for those who would follow Jesus."

Seek Advice From Those Who Have Gone Before

When you move out onto the high prairie, the locals watch to see if you're wise or foolish. No, this isn't like living on the moon, but there *are* constraints to living here. Unless you seek wisdom, you can blunder badly. As is our custom, we asked our Father to guide us in wisdom. He brought to us two key men. Don Mellen, a high prairie resident for many years, lives a few acres down the road. He's an expert on plants, trees in particular. Don introduced us to Dave Gallinger, another neighbor who is a building contractor. These two men, along with Ken at the general store/post office, have been invaluable resources in helping us make wise decisions. Some prairie adaptations we've made:

- Sue loves to garden, but between the local elk and deer and late frosts, you can't raise anything unprotected. Along with our friends Griff and Reva who visited us this spring, I ripped off the south half of an old shed and put in plexiglas. Sue's greenhouse is now brimming with produce!
- I love fruit trees but you can't do that here. Frost hits when they're in bloom and the elk and deer eat what survives. Instead, I planted aspen, maple, and evergreens. At the counsel of the locals I wrapped them in wire fencing to protect the tender saplings from antler rubbing.
- Water is a premium here on the prairie. A used 1,000 gallon tank behind our barn catches rainwater for the greenhouse. Under our front deck is a 5,000 gallon cistern to hold rainwater from new gutters to flush the toilets—more experienced counsel!



Shed turned Greenhouse/
Trees wrapped with wire



Water tank



Inground cistern

Dear Sisters in Jesus,

When Mike and Matt and I moved up onto the prairie we realized quickly how different the demands were on our very existence compared to the comforts of city apartment life! Depending on a very inefficient wood stove tucked into one corner when you have no supply of wood stacked away gives new meaning to "Be prepared!" Since we knew with numerous confirmations from praying friends who heard from our Father that this indeed was a place to settle in, we eagerly humbled ourselves to learn all we could from the human resources he surrounded us with.

How do you feel about *your* neighborhood? Are you opportunistic for our Lord's purposes? I know a dear woman who can't wait for the day her family can move, yet when we visited her and met some of the neighbors, I remarked, "What a fertile area for the Word of Life to be lived out!" Have you lived in the same area for years and years, yet other than a smile and a wave, know next to nothing of the hurts and joys of the people around your home? Have you missed wonderful opportunities to BE the Church of our Lord because you were so busy DOING church elsewhere?

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"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders: Make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone"

(Col. 4:5,6).

We only get into Flagstaff once a week, since it's 20 miles away (unless we need an emergency run to Home Depot, which I admit has happened more than once!). But I've found that despite the hurry to get every single errand done before the frozen food thaws, our Father usually seems to have a divine appointment set somewhere for me to

Preparing the Family of Jesus for the Dark Days to Come

These measures, along with burning wood and installing dark shingles on our roof, are lifestyle lessons specifically suited to this area. *Adaptation* has enabled us to both survive and reproduce in a new environment. The Holy Spirit pointed out to me these particular lessons to encourage you to consider how vital adaptation is to following Jesus.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isa. 55:8,9).

People sometimes ask how I know what to write in these newsletters. Often the Holy Spirit quickens a topic that is on His heart. Our last three letters on the anti-Christ spirit and Queen of Heaven were the result of His prompting. Yet even though the Lord wanted them written, they exacted a tremendous emotional toll on Sue and me. The principalities knew that their inroads into Christianity were being exposed. During times like these we’re keenly and gratefully aware of the prayers being lifted up on our behalf!

Principalities can exercise power to “schluck” you through coordinated attacks like a demonic wolf pack to hinder your willingness to be obedient in the future. Do you ever feel as if you just need to get alone and cry? I do. All hell broke loose getting out our last letter on the Queen. I faced tremendous despair. We’ve come to realize that our Father permits opposition so that we’ll depend on Him more and more... The prayers of others enable us to stand the test. Think about Paul’s frequent pleas for prayer to help him stand in holy boldness!

Without knowing about each other’s prayer, both Sue and I were crying out to our Father for some word of encouragement. In a few days our dear friends Griff and Reva called and read to us a *rhema* from Numbers 25 that applied to Sue and me. As a result of Phinehas’ obedience, the Lord told Moses: *“Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him.”* As soon as Sue and I heard the words *“covenant of peace”* our spirits soared with joy! It was after we hung up the phone that we found out that we’d both been praying for a word of encouragement. God is good!

“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21).

The Bible is the written record passed down to us of God’s divine purposes and of men and women just like us who faced choices. Concerning the Hebrew Bible, the Newer Testament notes, *“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us...”* (1Cor. 10:11,12).

Consider the wholehearted choice Joshua made: *“But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord”* (Jos. 24:15). Would your family and others close to you use the term “wholehearted” to describe your Christian life?

[SISTERS] exercise the salt of His Spirit. It may not be earthshaking, but if I listen to His voice carefully and don’t get carried away with the task details, I can relish the absolute fun of bringing His light into someone’s life. A case in point: I happened to be in our doctor’s office twice this past week (a very unusual occurrence for me). The first time, I was in the waiting room while Mike was having a test done.

A gentleman in obvious pain was seated near me. As I initiated a conversation with him, it came up that we had something in common: we were both born in Connecticut. Not a big deal except that that little connection seemed to be a door cracked open for me to bring Jesus into the picture. His pain was from a car accident two years ago in which he’d badly injured his neck. I mentioned to him that I knew that our Lord has the power to heal, and that the doctor was a follower of Jesus. So I suggested to him, “Why don’t you ask the doctor to pray with you for healing? He’s a man who trusts God!” The fellow looked a bit startled at that as he responded to the receptionist’s call. Whether or not he followed through was not my responsibility, but a small seed of my trust in Jesus the Healer was put out onto the soil of his heart that might not otherwise have been cast forth. It cost nothing but brought immense joy to my heart to have let our conversation be seasoned with the salt of His goodness!

The next opportunity to be in season with His Word, as Paul encouraged his protege in 1 Tim. 4:2, occurred the very next day, same place, different result: Being of “a certain age” I felt it prudent to have a bone density test done to determine if I need to alter my diet or whatever in order to be as fit as possible for whatever He calls us to do.

As the technician (a representative from a supplement company) tested my heel bone, we chatted. I inserted some comments about our Lord to see if he’d pick up on it. He did. We had the most wonderfully refreshing and stimulating conversation about various experiences with Native American communities (he’d lived in Alaska for 27 years and had often interacted with Native peoples). As we discussed the need for dignity to be restored particularly among the tribal men, his spirit resonated. When I mentioned the website, he scrambled for paper to write down the address! Again, His Spirit filled me with joy at the opportunity to not only identify with the Lord of Life but to also enjoy the give-and-take fellowship of giving Him praise with another follower of Jesus!

Back in the “prairie ‘hood” we’ve found that not many are part of a local Body, but many are fascinated with what our Father is calling us to share in the Hebraic Restoration! One neighbor recently had surgery and gladly accepted from us a loaf of home-

To Live Wholeheartedly We Must ADAPT

To follow Jesus we must adapt our goals and motives to an entirely new way of living. His Word, through the enlightenment and empowerment of His Spirit, enables us to make changes. Remember, God never accepts us just as we are. Our hearts must be willing to recognize our awful burden of sin and to turn from it to the only One Who brings forgiveness and cleansing.

Trying to patch belief in Jesus onto the shabby fabric of self-will and sin is like putting a bandaid over a bullet wound. No healing, just an illusion that all is now OK. Even though God loves us, His acceptance of us into a covenant relationship with Him depends on our *repentance*, that is, *turning away from* a way of life which is contrary to His Word and *turning to* Him and His ways. The modern gospel that claims God accepts you without repentance is the gospel of the Queen, not the KING. This “other gospel” that is no good news at all bears only the bitter fruit of a life unchanged by the Spirit.

Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land Moses forewarned them that the ways of Egypt and the ways of living in the Promised Land were not the same:

“The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end. Faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deu. 11:10-13). Permit me to paraphrase the above passage as it applies to us today:

“The way of life on which you are about to embark if you are to follow Jesus is not like the life you once lived. You will no longer pursue your own interests nor rely on your own strength. The Covenant that I establish with you enables you to live in the power of My Spirit. No longer will you depend on your own rationale but on obedience to every Word I reveal. So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul—I will bring about goodness into all areas of your life.”

It's not WHAT He is telling you to do that matters,
but WHO is doing the telling

I found these words coming out of my mouth a few days ago with our friend Gerry, a single man in his 40's. As many of you know, from observation and from personal experience I ascribe to the stages of male development that Robert Hicks in his book *The Masculine Journey* describes based upon the six different Hebrew words used in the Bible for “male”. We wrote about these stages in *Restoring the Early Church*. In order to progress through each of the six stages, a man must adapt or he will find himself unable to move on. Few men make it to the final stage, the *zaken* or biblical elder who pastored the faith communities of the earliest church.

Those men who do make it to biblical elder have somewhere along in their adaptations ceased to concern

[SISTERS] baked bread and two videos that humorously discuss yielding personal rights in obedient trust to our Father. Another opportunity to rejoice in His ways and to thank Jesus for the freedom He's given me to overcome the stifling spirit of rejection!

“Faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul”

(Deut. 11:13).

Jesus repeated this greatest commandment, since the teachings from the Hebrew Scripture as well as from the Newer Testament are as potent today as when they were given. The core idea is the same from both references: our love and service to our Lord are meant to emanate from our HEART and from our SOUL—our mind, will and emotions.

Loving and serving Him entails far more than reading the Bible, praying and participating in congregational gatherings. WHO HE IS to us is demonstrated very clearly with every decision we make, every TV show we watch, every unkind comment or piece of gossip in which we ignore the convicting probe of the Holy Spirit and rationalize His way away.

We are in the midst of a culture that is totally self-absorbed. A poignant letter from a young couple arrived recently in which the dear woman mourned that her faith community had lost sight of God's way—that compromise ruled and shades of gray had weakened fellow believers' resolve to walk in His steps of obedient trust.

The reminder to be wholehearted in loving and serving our Lord needs reiteration! Myriads of sermons and tapes about God have replaced *walking in Him* in a way that shows His way IS different from that of the world! I like the way Peterson expresses this in *The Message*: ***“My counsel for you is simple and straightforward: Just go ahead with what you've been given. You received Christ Jesus the Master; now live Him. You're deeply rooted in Him. You're well-constructed upon Him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you've been taught. School's out; quit studying the subject and start living it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving”*** (Col. 2:6,7, emphasis added).

Father, who can I email or write to today who will be uplifted or challenged or encouraged (instead of me feeling I must read more or listen more or watch more before I'm prepared)? Who can I surprise with joy in my neighborhood (or workplace) by bringing a little something I've made or picked up while at the market? Whose kids can I bring to my house for a game of cards or a simple craft or story so some exhausted mom can take a bath in peace knowing her

themselves with WHAT their Lord is directing them to do. Instead, they've delighted themselves in WHO is commanding them! They've arrived in the stem of the funnel about which we wrote in RTEC. Isn't this what Paul discovered from personal experience? *"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again"* (2 Cor. 5:14,15).

We grieve for Christians who have deluded themselves into self-made prisons by blaming others for their hurt. The way of sacrificial love makes no sense to them. They're still stuck in the WHAT. On the other hand, the Sovereign WHO tells us, *"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also"* (Matt. 5:11,12,39).

God's greatest power is not seen in our performing signs and wonders, but in our loving those who hurt us. Sue's and my daily prayer for our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world is that they would love and forgive their persecutors, and that their trust in Jesus would endure to the end. Isn't this the same prayer we need for ourselves? Within our family and faith community we need to help each other turn hurts around to align with God's way and purpose for us. His ways are both redemptive and powerful to change lives. Only the wholehearted discern His ways and live by them, for they are found only along the narrow path.

MY BIGGEST BATTLE IN LIFE IS TO FORGIVE AND LOVE OTHERS NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO TO ME. I HAVE NO GREATER BATTLE TO FIGHT. WITHOUT LOVE I AM NOTHING. Pause here and ask the Spirit to reveal to you anyone you need to forgive from your heart. Then take the next step on the narrow path and ask Him to show you how to bless that person in love!

Willful Disobedience Stops Our Progress

The Book of Deuteronomy, in which the Israelites were repeatedly asked *to remember and to keep* the commands of God, is followed by the Books of Joshua and Judges. All throughout Joshua are triumphs except when God's commands are disobeyed (such as Achan's sin in Joshua 7). Joshua, wholehearted toward the things of God, succeeded Moses and was permitted the joy of leading Israel into the Promised Land.

The Book of Judges begins with the tribes of Judah and Simeon joining forces to acquire the land promised them. But that's where the triumphs end. You don't get too far into the first chapter before you see wholeheartedness evaporate. The rest of the chapter lists what the remaining tribes *failed to do*. These accounts are written as an *example for us*, and I would say, especially to us men since so many of the stories pertain to men—men who faced the same choices we must make today.

little ones are happy? And [SISTERS] how can I more effectively yield my heart to YOU, Father, so that all this is done with *joy and peace*, with thanks that I can be You in the flesh to bless someone?

I'm certainly not offering these questions to bring on guilt or inadequacy but as a gentle admonishment to ME as well as perhaps to you. Have I become infected with the selfishness of the religious tradition that thinks it's obeying God by what it *doesn't* do rather than by pleasing Him with *walking* in His light as He is in the Light?

A thought came to me earlier in a discussion with a friend: Is there enough of Jesus being seen in me by others so that they'll either reject Him in me or accept Him in me? Or will those I talk with instead see me as a harmless religious person no different than they are in choices and standards and attitudes?

The man who delivers our water every two weeks very frankly opened up about his difficult family situation when he discovered that we too had experienced similar pain but had found healing and restoration of relationships through the intervention of Jesus. He knows we pray for him daily and that his family is important to us, even though we haven't yet met them. But never once has he asked us to stop praying, or to mind our own business.

Mike and I firmly believe that as we pray, our Lord releases His power and intervention into each situation so that the ones for whom we pray have an *opportunity to choose*. They may respond toward Him, they may not. But our part is to voice our trust and to walk in it and share the testimonies that validate it. We realize that there's always more to learn about our Lord from others, whether from testimony or written word, but if given a choice of time use between learning more about Him or living more for Him, I do believe our Father prefers the latter!

His earliest disciples breathed Him out with every conversation and lived Him out with every action. Like David, when they fell to fleshly desires, those who yearned for continued intimacy with Him turned from sin and humbly received His cleansing and forgiveness. That's who I want to be: a beloved sheep responding to my Shepherd's voice and following in His power.

The lyrics of an Annie Herring song express this yearning in my heart:

"Oh, I know the time is near when everything that I hold dear will lay before the holy consuming fire. All my works and all my deeds and every prayer said on my knees will lay before the holy consuming fire. But all I want to see is Jesus, all I want to see is Him in me, All I want to see is Jesus shining through me. And hear Him say well done, my precious one. Well done, well done, my faithful one."

Our Father Does Not Sit Idly By and Watch You Sin

When His children compromise, Father sets about a pattern repeated throughout the Scriptures. What did He say to the tribes that disobeyed Him? Like a good parent he specifically notes their wrong and the consequences: *“Yet you have disobeyed me. Why have you done this? Now therefore I tell you that I will not drive them out before you; they will be thorns in your sides and their gods will be a snare to you...In his anger against Israel the Lord handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist. Whenever Israel went out to fight, the hand of the Lord was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them. They were in great distress”* (Judges 2:2,3,14,15).

When we fail to repent, our Lord uses spirits of oppression in order to turn us back to Him. Can God be driving you and your family back to Himself at this time? Take the time to discuss these questions with your family or small faith community (*“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them”* Matt. 18:20):

- Are thorns plaguing you right now?
- Are the values of your family or faith community similar to those who do *not* claim to be Christian?
- Has your life hit a series of dead ends in which our Lord has withheld His blessing?
- Is your faith walk hollow?

Being WholeHEARTed

David was a man like us. Even though an adulterer and a murderer, he was still known as “a man after God’s own heart.” What a wonderful way to be known! I believe David’s love for God’s Word was part of his intimacy with his Lord: *“I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you”* (Psa. 119.10,11). When he did sin, he was quick to repent when the Lord convicted him. If you find that God is stirring to bring you to Himself wholeheartedly, then get into His Word earnestly. It is because of our Father’s jealous love for you and your household that He is using these chastisements to bring you back. As you repent and learn from His Word you may find yourself agreeing with the Psalmist, *“It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees”* (119:71).

Men who are wholehearted for the ways of God find themselves eagerly discussing them as opportunities arise. As Jesus declares, *“For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks”* (Matt. 12:34). It’s easy to tell what a man values most—it’s what he talks about first or most often. What does *your* mouth reveal?

Caleb entered the Promised Land along with Joshua. The Lord describes him as having *“a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly. I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it”* (Num.14:24). Your wholeHEARTedness will do more to bring about God’s blessing for you and your family than anything else you can give them. It will not only bring blessing but will role model for them the way of the Lord. Isn’t this why God choose Abraham (see Gen. 18:19)?

A key facet of the Hebraic Restoration is understanding life as a *pilgrimage* with salvation offered to those who persevere on the narrow path to it. Let’s walk it together!

A pilgrim like you, *Mike*

[SISTERS] Creative Provision: Learning the Contentment of Obedient Trust

As I meditate on our Father’s Word, I’ve discovered that the only thing we’re to truly look forward to with eager anticipation is the *return of Jesus!* Yet do you ever catch yourself moaning that your current situation or circumstances can’t get over soon enough? As Mike wrote, the WHO in our lives is the all-important factor, not the WHAT of our discomfiting agitation. We might not be filled with joy at what He’s asking of us, but when we pause long enough to realize WHO is doing the asking—our all-caring, all-providing Lord of all Creation, then the marching orders pale in significance to the plans and purposes He has, even if we’re not so sure how it’s going to turn out for good!

Let me use as an illustration a wonderful opportunity our Lord gave to dear friends who are just beginning in their pilgrimage with Him to discover how creative His provision can be. This couple knew from prayer and confirmation that our Lord was taking them along a pathway less traveled. The work to which He was calling them would be dependent on others coming alongside with the resources necessary for their expenses and bills to be paid.

They were somewhat nervous about this, but as He’s privileged us to live in this manner for the past 18 years, we encouraged them to love and trust Him and look expectantly for creative provision from His hand. They didn’t have long to wait.

Within a few days, friends from a family camp in Montana contacted them with an all-expenses-paid invitation to relax and share with them for a week. One of the campers, a waitress at a local restaurant, then unexpectedly picked up their tab out of her earnings, not even knowing they were short on cash. Then other friends called to say that He’d prompted them to give the couple their car, since they were getting another one. Did they see the loving hand of their Father provide in ways they never could have pictured? Oh Yes!! The WHO never fails, and we must remember that promise whenever we get anxious about the WHAT He’s allowing us to experience!

NavRugs Update: Amazing Connection!

Near the tiny town of Mitchell, NE where James and Joyce Skeet were visiting our dear ones Griff and Reva is the main wool processing plant from which the NM trading posts buy wool to sell at huge markup to the Native weavers. When the Skeets visited the plant, James prayed a blessing for the manager and may now be able to acquire wool wholesale for the rug weavers! What wonderful encouragement for the ladies to then receive a greater percentage of the cost to make their rugs when they sell!! Praise to our Father!

With a song of thanks to our Lord, *Sue*

