

# 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.

## Be Warned! Greasy Grace Fuels the Fires of Hell

Dear Friends,

Many of you are as grieved as we are by the coverage of homosexual “marriages” by the news media. We quickly change the channel because it hurts to see flaunted that which our Lord calls “an abomination.” Just as with fornication and adultery, sin that is *tolerated* becomes *acceptable*, then *proliferates*.

As sad as it is to witness the decadence into which this nation has slipped, it’s worse to see the support for homosexuality, in particular, which people who call themselves “Christian” are giving. Even among my church-going relatives there is homosexuality or tacit acceptance of it. But underneath “tolerance” is a rebellion that blasphemes our Father’s right as our Creator to establish His unalterable laws.

Marriage is designed by its very nature to represent the two-made-as-one aspect of the Spirit’s union with those who have turned from darkness into the Light of Jesus. Both the physical and the spiritual realms of these two covenants are meant to be fruit-bearing: through children from the physical union and through “spiritual reproduction” as we bring the true Gospel to the lost. Any other so-called “marriage” dishonors God.

### God Isn’t Short on Warning!

It’s only a matter of time until the true followers of Christ in the US will be persecuted for abiding

by the commands of God. We who show our love for Him by following His commands, as the Apostle John stresses repeatedly, will be branded “intolerant” and “unloving” because we call sin a sin.

Our Lord impressed on me several years ago that the children of that day would not become grandparents before the days of chastisement come. We see our Lord doing so much to pour out a “spirit of repentance” upon this nation. But, as scriptural precedents reveal, few respond to His kindness and forbearance. The biblical pattern is clear: *The unrepentant both destroy the messenger and decry the message.*

The paucity of people today who are willing to *act upon* God’s warnings corresponds to the resistance of so many Jewish people during the past century to heed His call to return to His Promised Land, particularly prior to Nazi aggression. Beginning in the late 1800’s God sent men throughout Europe to beckon Jews to come to what is now Israel. Few responded.

But God had prophesied this resistance twenty-five hundred years earlier: “*Look, says the LORD, I will send for many fishermen, and they will fish for them. Afterwards, I will send for many hunters; and they will hunt them from every mountain and hill and out of caves in the rocks*” (Jeremiah 16:16).

When the disobedient would- n’t return in response to the warn- ings of “fishermen”, the Nazis became the “hunters,” stirring

many desperate Jews to seek refuge in that set-apart land. Is it hard for you to accept that God would send “hunters” to accomplish His will? Keep this in mind: The loving yet awesome God of the Bible drowned the whole world except for 8 people. The apostle Peter warns that He will use fire the next time! (See 2 Peter 3:10-12.)

Let’s anchor some key truths to rid yourself of the lukewarm delusion that sullies so much of western “Christianity”:

- The words “Old Testament” and “New Testament” do not even appear in the Bible. The Bible is a *continuum* of God’s Person and ways of revealing Himself.
- The Hebrew Scriptures, or Older Testament, are not just for the Jews, nor is the “Newer Testament” solely for the Gentiles. *All Scripture is equally useful “for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”* (2 Timothy 3:16,17).
- The opposite of “law” is *not* “grace” but “lawlessness.” Those who fail to fear God with the awe and honor due Him create the false dichotomy we term “greasy grace.”
- To fear God as His Word demands and to abide in the way of right-

**Preparing the Family of Jesus for the Dark Days to Come**

2eous living that His Spirit directs means that you must *turn away from* all forms of evil that violate His commands.

### Do You Fear God?

Many church people have no concept of the biblical injunction to *fear God*. We're writing this letter so that those who call themselves "Christian" may embrace our Father's righteous requirements — responding with love-grounded obedient trust that will bring them and their families to salvation at the Judgment Throne of Jesus.

Scriptures assures us, "***The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline***" (Proverbs 1:7). To fear God is the first step in truly knowing Him.

How simply our Lord's requirements are stated for those who yearn to please Him as well as enjoy His favor and blessing: "***Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!***" (Deuteronomy 5:29). Also, "***The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love***" (Psalms 147:11).

Don't be deceived into thinking that the heart obedience which pleased God in the Hebrew Scriptures doesn't apply to you as a Jesus-follower! The Triune God of the entire Bible hasn't changed — only the *covenant of atonement* is new! And with the privilege of His *indwelling* presence as consummation (which ancient Israel did not enjoy), we who seek to follow Him are *without excuse* in forsaking His commands!

The Hebrew word for *fear* used here has a meaning that extends from awe and reverence to downright terror! But our fear of Him isn't meant to cause us to flee; rather, He wants our love to be expressed in a *holy reverence* for Who He is, as well as in the *warm*

*assurance* of our relationship to Him as beloved children.

What causes one person to *fear God* and another to turn his back on our Lord's character and commands? We'd like to share some biblical insights to help you fear God as His true child.

### ***"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one"***

(Deuteronomy 6:4).

In biblical Hebrew, the word "hear" means not only to listen with your ears, but to *obey what He says*. This intertwining of *hearing and responding* is reinforced throughout the Scriptures. For example, Jesus teaches us the difference between the "wise" and "foolish" in Matthew 7:24-27. Both categories hear His spoken words, but only the wise *take action*.

**The Wise** — "***Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock***" (v. 24).

**The Foolish** — "***But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand***" (v. 26).

John, the disciple whom Jesus particularly loved, certainly grasped God's definition that to hear is to *obey*. "***We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands***" (1 John 2:3; see also 2:4, 3:24, 5:3; 2 John 1:6).

• Are you a *doer* of His Word, or a hearer only?

### Greasy Grace:

#### ***The Hell-bent Path of Fools***

It doesn't take keen awareness to recognize that judgment has already been rendered on this nation. The promised chastisement will indeed come. As Billy Graham is quoted as saying, "If

God doesn't judge the US, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

No nationwide "revival" will overtake this country, contrary to the "greasy grace message" being peddled today by those wanting to keep their pews full. Greasy grace practitioners distort and pervert biblical "grace", thereby impeding the wholehearted as they press on to keep God's standards of righteousness.

This is true grace:

1. God convicts you of your sin so that you will *repent*, that is, turn away from your sin and turn to Him and His righteous ways for forgiveness and reconciliation.
2. Then, when our Father accepts your repentance, His Spirit *indwells* you to give you the desire and the power to obey Him as your beloved Lord. He helps you to live a life that both pleases and glorifies Him.

Now notice how greasy grace, which lacks fear of God, differs from the biblical concept of true grace:

1. Greasy grace *excuses* your ignorance of God's commands, and enables you to keep on sinning until you feel like turning from sin. After all, "forgiveness *has* no righteous standards."
2. Greasy grace enables you to feel *comfortable* in your unrighteousness. You're never convicted to turn from wrong, or to know and to obey God's righteous ways.

Human sinful nature requires greasy grace! No one finds it easy to be fully obedient to God's commands as His Spirit directs and empowers. Our sinful nature *looks* for ways to get around walking in Jesus' footsteps of obedience.

People who want to give in to their sin nature will seek out "fellowship" wherever they know

3] they won't be confronted with and convicted of their sin, nor called to repent. But, in the end, the greasy grace of deception that appeals to our rebellious old nature fuels the fires of hell for countless so-called "Christians" who serve a god of their own desire and design.

If you yearn to follow Jesus no matter what the cost, greasy gracers will arrogantly call you "narrow-minded" or "legalistic". Don't be surprised by this! Even the psalmist bemoaned that he'd had his fill of "*scorn from the complacent and contempt from the arrogant*" (Psalm 123:4). Our fear of God and love-based obedient trust are the spiritual weaponry which equip us to live free and to glorify our Father through our way of life!

### **To Honor God is to Fear Him To Fear God is to Honor Him**

The psychological sensibilities of greasy gracers thrust an unbiblical over-emphasis on *personal feelings*. Therefore, a holy and awesome "**fear of God**" comes across as a negative, an "Old Testament" phenomenon. But biblically, to "fear God" is to *bring honor* to Him in our hearts as we recognize Him for Who He is.

Greasy gracers make Him into a "benevolent grandfather" who tolerates sin, rather than a holy God who requires *holiness* from His children — set-apart-from-sin living. Consider the example of the righteous ark-builder: "*By trusting, Noah, after receiving divine warning about things as yet unseen, was filled with holy fear and built an ark to save his household. Through this trusting, he put the world under condemnation and received the righteousness that comes from trusting*" (Hebrews 11:7).

Has God altered His righteous requirements for His children today? Not at all! We are still commanded to "**make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be**

**holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord**" (Hebrews 12:14). It is crucial that we who follow Jesus never be characterized by these words: "*There is no fear of God before their eyes*" (Romans 3:18).

To *honor* Him as God is foundational to any hope you may have of growing in Christ-likeness and experiencing salvation at the Judgment Throne. Our Father does not take dishonoring Him lightly. Both Moses and Aaron forfeited their opportunity to enter the Promised Land because they set such a poor example of shallow regard for God's holiness. "*Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them*" (Numbers 20:12).

Never forget that *God* knows Who He is as the one and only True God. Only the *true* God could call Himself "**I AM**". Until you seek to know Him as He is, you can never fully honor Him as God. Your failure to do so will reap dire consequences not only for you but for your children as well.

We want to cover this topic more fully so you can understand the seriousness of your responsibility to *honor God* and to honor others in authority who deserve your honor.

Initially, this honoring will be difficult if you have ascribed to the false teaching of greasy grace. Intentionally or not, you have created a god in your own image, and disregarded the God of the Bible.

Keep this key point in mind: **The more you fathom the awesomeness of God and honor Him as such, the easier it is for you to understand and fulfill your role as a parent or grandparent.**

As we have shared in other writings, especially **The Covenant Gospel is the Pilgrimage to Salvation**, the word "covenant" means to live *in union with* another. In our pilgrimage to salvation

our Father offers to live in union with us, that is, in *oneness* with us. It is within our yearning to live in *union* with our Father and His Son, Jesus, that we *honor* God through obedience to His Word.

To truly honor someone is a deep responsibility that can flow only out of sincere humility. Honor can be given only when you correctly understand the position of the person due your honor.

On the other hand, *lack of humility* causes you to bring the other person down to your level—God included. Greasy gracers bring God down to the level of Someone they don't have to fear, Someone who will ignore their sinful choices and give them what will make them happy.

For example, suppose someone surveyed greasy grace "Christians" and asked them to evaluate their view of Jesus. Do they esteem Him more as "Lord", or think of Him as their "friend"? From our experience, you'd find 'friend' far more prevalent than the 'Lord' of whom Paul describes us as *bondslaves*. What is your view of Jesus?

Greasy gracers emphasize Jesus as a buddy confidant. Many portray Him as "poor Jesus standing at the door of your heart knocking to be allowed in." What a far cry from the reality of His true identity — LORD of Lords!

When you study the heart motivation of greasy gracers, you discern a **rebellious** and **bitter** core that keeps them from honoring God as He deserves and requires. That arrogance keeps them from becoming the servants of God that Peter commands: "**Submit as people who are free, but not letting your freedom serve as an excuse for evil; rather, submit as God's slaves. Be respectful to all — keep loving the brotherhood, fearing God and honoring the emperor**" (1 Peter 2:16,17).

Humanity's basic nature rebels against God's commands. And *unresolved bitterness* is the ultimate

4 form of rebellion against God and against others. Picture this:

**Bitterness is an eraser that wipes away from your life all that Jesus accomplished on the cross for you.**

Greasy grace “Christianity” thrives on letting the bitter *stay* bitter. Today’s mega-churches would not exist if they began bringing messages of conviction to those who humbly need to *for-give* and *be forgiven*.

Contemporary greasy gracers are no different than the self-serving crowds who followed Jesus only to benefit themselves. In the end the self-focused all fled Him. They feared and despised the cost of true discipleship. *“As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore”* (John 6:66).

Yet, true followers of Jesus are like the disciples who honored Him by staying with Him. They became like Him even to the point of suffering as He did.

### **Honor Breeds Honor**

A humble person raises up those whom he seeks to honor. He never brings them down to his level of immaturity or ignorance. It is the prerogative of those who are due honor to extend blessing to those who honor them. But when *dishonor* is given, blessing is withheld.

A few examples from the Bible will show you the blessings that honor brings, and the lack of blessing that attends dishonor:

#### 1. The Faith of the Centurion (Luke 7:1-10)

The Roman centurion loved his servant and asked Jesus to heal him. When the Lord offered His help, the centurion honored Him: *“I do not deserve to have you come under my roof.”* The result of his faith? Jesus blessed him by healing

his servant and by praising the Roman’s trust: *“I have not found such great faith even in Israel.”*

#### 2. The Faith of the Syrophenician Woman (Mark 7:24-30)

A distraught mother anxiously sought Jesus to heal her demon-possessed daughter. She humbly fell at His feet begging Him to help. Such absolute confidence in Him honored our Lord. Assured by His word, she went home to discover that Jesus had blessed her by healing her daughter.

#### 1. The Faith of Joseph (Genesis 39-41)

The decisions and responses of Joseph honored both God and his father. After being sold into Potiphar’s household, the young man honored both God and his owner by refusing to fornicate with the man’s wife. In jail, Joseph’s attitude of honor brought him favor in the eyes of the warden so that the prisoner was successful at whatever he did.

Joseph’s willingness to honor both God and those who were due honor resulted in God giving him the power to interpret Pharaoh’s dreams. His wise use of this gift resulted in Joseph becoming #2 ruler in all of Egypt. Then he blessed his family by forgiving his brothers and saving his kin from starvation.

#### 4. Jesus Rejected at Nazareth (Luke 4:14-30)

When Jesus returned to His home town, word of the miracles He was doing preceded Him. On the Sabbath in the Nazareth synagogue He read this prophetic Scripture from Isaiah: *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”* (61:1,2a).

At His proclamation that *“to-day this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing,”* their hearts refused to honor Him as any more than Joseph’s son. Their lack of faith to honor Jesus elicited no miracles in Nazareth.

You can count on this:

**Humility of heart that honors both God and others results in exceedingly abundant blessing.**  
***Lack of honor brings lack of blessing.***

### **Honor Begins at Home**

Our Father desires that each generation grow in accumulative appreciation of Himself that they pass along to their children. Isn’t that what He commands parents in Deuteronomy 6:4-9? Isn’t this what Paul reminds us of in Ephesians 6:1-4?

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ — which is the first commandment with a promise — ‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Over the past half-century parents have rapidly lost an understanding of their duties to God and their spiritual responsibilities to their children. And, through the pleasure-bent pit of the retirement mentality, younger parents no longer benefit from the support of their own parents as they struggle to impart Christian character into the next generation.

Accentuating parental loss of responsibility has been greasy grace “Christianity”, especially through false gospels that do not call for repentance. Almost all the major ‘so-called gospels’ peddled today in the US nullify God’s con-

5] ditions in the Older Testament for entering into Covenant with Him. Why should they look there? False gospels ignore the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus revered and made clear, because that's where "the law" is, and the "Old Testament" is supposedly just for the Jews.

Secondly, greasy grace promulgators negate the crucial, God-given responsibility to honor and fear God, to honor parents, and to honor all others in authority.

Few parents we meet who ascribe to greasy grace Christianity even know what it is to be honored by their children. It's their insolent kids, not the parents, who are in control.

Should we blame the children? No! Few children in "Christian" homes have parents who role model for them a holy fear of God. Nor do many parents fully apply the corrective measures of discipline that the Bible calls for. Children grow up failing to revere His awesomeness as Creator of all things. The word "Lord" for them is no more than a commonly used Christian expression, rather than the hallowed Name of a holy, omnipotent, and omniscient God.

The youthful leadership (under 50 years of age) in greasy grace congregations have no concept of fearing and honoring God. They, like corporate America, use any means to attract people into their pews. Perhaps you've received, as we have, mailed invitations to visit newly established congregations that promote "fun worship, rock music, and light sermons." Does any of that sound biblical or life-changing to Christ-likeness?

People who disregard God's awesome holiness can never fulfill His commands for those who lead others on the path to salvation. Note Paul's injunctions to two separate faith communities:

*"We ask you, brothers, to **respect those who are working hard among you, those who are **guiding you in the Lord and confronting you in order to help you change**"** (1 Thessalonians 5:12); and, "**Obey the ones **leading you and submit to them; for they watch on behalf of your souls as those who will be rendering account, that they may do this with joy and not with groaning, for this would be profitless to you**"** (Hebrews 13:17).*

Greasy grace leadership cannot and will not confront those who walk in sin, because they are marketeers pursuing large numbers of people as a measure of spiritual success. Marketeers manage and direct using a corporate model, but fail to glorify our Father through personal example or confront those who refuse to keep God's commands. Accelerating their slide into hell, greasy grace congregants like it this way.

You never really get to know a man until you spend meaningful time with him in his home and interact with his family. Greasy grace leaders seldom visit homes themselves, nor do they invite those they lead into their homes. This is Corporate America doing religion!

### **How To Save Your Family From Greasy Grace**

You need to use both your home and the times when your family is together as the primary means for passing along a trust-based biblical lifestyle that will matter at the Judgment Throne. It begins with *you* getting to know the God of the Bible yourself. It manifests itself by *you* teaching your children from the Bible to apply and live by His commands. It grows through *you* living out the biblical character qualities that honor God, and knowing and instilling these in your children. The home is where it **all** happens!

The psalmist proclaims with eagerness, "*Your words are a **doorway that lets in light, giving understanding to the thoughtless. My mouth is wide open as I **pant with longing for your commands****" (Psalm 119:130,131). Do you pant with eagerness for insight from His commands? Remember, to let the light in, you have to open the door of His Word!*

He continues, "*Guide my footsteps by your word; don't let any kind of sin rule me*" (v. 133). Exploring both testaments of God's Word brings light and guidance and understanding of what pleases Him, and strengthens your reflection of Him to others.

Is your sloth to meditate on and apply God's Word resulting in spiritual starvation for your children or grandchildren? Or, are you greeting each morning with eager prayer and satisfied soul because you've dug into His Word and strained out morsels that will prepare your family for the day ahead?

As a child, when I woke up early some mornings, I'd find my father on his knees praying by the dining room table. Sometimes I'd catch him at night kneeling beside his bed talking with God. Today I do the same...

You might as well put into humble practice that which God commands will ultimately occur: "*God highly exalted [Jesus], and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*" (Philippians 2:9-11). Get on your knees!

Home is also where the biblical guidelines for manners, relationships, attitudes, behavior, work, and deference to authority are molded into a child. You can't outsource this responsibility to others. The sooner you fulfill

6 what God commands, the better for your children to learn yieldedness with a willing, teachable spirit.

Instead of more games or clothes for your family, invest in some quality materials that impart lessons in character. Two outstanding resources are *Character Sketches* by the Institute in Basic Life Principles (www.iblp.org/iblp/ or 800-398-1290), and *Building Christian Character* by Blair Adams (Truth Forum, 2433 N. 43rd St., Waco, TX 76710).

The crucial generational question God gave to Moses is repeated by Paul because it impacts your children's and grandchildren's opportunity to live in blessing: "**Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you in the land which the LORD your God gives you**" (Deuteronomy 5:16; see also Ephesians 6:1-3).

Do your children understand what *honor* is? Have you taught them and modeled it in your own life? So many church-going kids bad-mouth their parents and teachers while the parents silently excuse it as "just a phase."

You would never even consider such things as incest with your children, or murdering your neighbor. Why not? How do you know these things are wrong? Because they're mentioned in the Bible as *repugnant to God*. Who is going to affirm that homosexuality and adultery and hatred are against God if *you* don't teach your children from the pure truth of His Word?

It's as simple as getting into your Bible yourself in the morning, and then using an appropriate time that day to share with your family what God's Word says. For kids to hear truth from a parent or grandparent who lives out His Word and shares testimonies about it has far more impact than

whatever anyone else can impart. **If You Want to Be a God-fearing Parent or Grandparent, Avoid the Abilene Paradox**

Our book *Growing Relationships Through Confrontation* includes an anecdote from Jerry Harvey, a business management specialist who addresses the need to *speak up*:

One particularly sweltering afternoon in West Texas, Harvey, his wife, and her parents were sitting on the shady veranda playing dominoes. Suddenly his father-in-law piped up, "Let's get in the car and go to Abilene and have dinner at the cafeteria." Abilene was fifty miles away, and their old car had no air-conditioning.

As Harvey inwardly groaned, his wife enthusiastically agreed. He asked his mother-in-law, who also agreed. So off to Abilene they went. The food was lousy and the drive brutal. When they finally returned, his mother-in-law complained, "I wouldn't have gone if you all hadn't pressured me into it."

Aghast, Harvey exclaimed that he'd been content to stay on the porch. His wife admitted she had gone only because she wanted to please her father. The father-in-law confessed that he had suggested the trip only because he thought they might be bored. Four people ended up doing something none of them really wanted to do because no one wanted to speak up.

What does it take to get you to willingly voice what needs to be heard from a heart that really loves as our Lord does? Your children and grandchildren and other people you care about who are living contrary to God's commands need to hear from you. Your

silence only compounds their problems! If you choose not to sound a word of warning, they may choose to reject God's Lordship and find themselves heading to eternal destruction.

Align your perspective with our Father's and grieve over the blatant disregard for the way of life He's so graciously laid out in His Word. Mourn with the psalmist over his fellow "churched" kin: "*Rivers of tears pour down from my eyes because they **don't observe your commands***" (Psalm 119:136).

We've met too many fathers who remained quiet when their daughters married men about whom they had doubts, and later the couples divorced. When we asked, "Why didn't you speak up? Why did you go to the wedding?", they replied, "My wife made me keep quiet because they're 'in love'...." That's as bad as Adam telling God, "*The woman you gave me...*" in order to divert responsibility. Your silence only makes the grease greasier.

If you are trapped in "greasy grace Christianity," you'll stay stuck in it until you speak up and question the biblical basis to their lawless religious practice. Your silence only makes the grease greasier.

### **God Purges the Men Who Flee Greasy Grace of Presumption and Lawlessness**

An increasing number of men whom our Lord is preparing as future leaders of His chosen and faithful are encountering His refining fires. The fiery trials are designed to burn away their sins of *presuming* on God, and of abiding in *lawlessness*. Let me assure you that God *isn't* against you! Instead, He is readying you to lead His children when His days of chastisement come on this nation. You are being purged of the influence of greasy grace in your life. Far better to have it singed now so you'll be

7 available to serve His purposes, than to watch those you love be consumed in their sin.

As you begin to understand the insidious character of greasy grace because of its lack of fear of God, you realize how presumptuous it really is. The “grace” that permits you to continue in sin presumes that God has lowered His righteous standards and is soft on sin. Rather than seeking to walk in love-grounded obedient trust, greasy grace presumes that because we call ourselves His children, He is obligated to help us out of our difficult circumstances — even those we bring on as a consequence of unrighteousness. **MEN WHO GO ON BELIEVING THIS DISHONOR GOD!**

Greasy grace trains you to keep only the commands of God that suit you. This is lawlessness. **MEN WHO GO ON BELIEVING THIS DISHONOR GOD!**

Consider this: Our Father permits you to make decisions that may ultimately lead to your humiliation. In this way He confronts you about your sins of presumption and lawlessness. We encourage you: **Learn your lesson well!**

The psalmist certainly did:

*Before I was **humbled** I went astray, but **now** I keep Your word. You are good and do good; **teach me Your statutes**. The arrogant have forged a lie against me; with **all my heart** I will observe Your precepts. Their hearts are as thick as fat, but I delight in Your law. It is **good** for me that I was **humbled**, that I may **learn Your statutes**. The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces” (Psalm 119:67-72).*

The classroom of humiliation isn't one you want to repeat. If you find yourself experiencing a period in which you are humiliated as a result of foolish decisions, humble yourself before our Lord! Don't try

to find an easy way out and make excuses — that's the greasy grace way of dealing with things. Eventually you'll find yourself in another humiliating circumstance until you humble yourself to have your heart changed.

Until you learn the lesson of humbly honoring God and the others who deserve deference from you, He has a limitless supply of ways for you to humiliate yourself. The easiest path is the humble path; the hardest is any other way but humility.

God does not use the school of humiliation for your destruction, although like Haman (see Esther chapter 7), you can hang yourself in your own humiliation. Our Lord has a wonderful purpose in mind: *He wants you to experience His merciful forgiveness so that you can represent Him and His Word as one of His shepherds when you come of age and wisdom*. The pinnacle of a God-fearing man's life was to become the *zaken* (zah-KEN: grey-bearded), that is, a compassionate elder who represents our Father's heart in wise counsel and godly living as he cares for His children.

The young men and women who will undergo the days of chastisement are going to need spiritual leaders who have learned from their mistakes as King David did. He wasn't perfect, but in holy fear he *repented* of his sins and sought to honor God.

Remember these words of instruction as you are refined by our Lord:

*You have forgotten the counsel which speaks with you as sons: 'My son, **don't despise** the discipline of the Lord or become **despondent** when he corrects you. Regard your **endurance as discipline**; God is dealing with you as sons. For what son goes **undisciplined** by his father? All legitimate sons **undergo discipline**; so if you **don't**, you're illegitimate and not a son! Furthermore, we had physical*

*fathers who disciplined us, and we **respected them**; how much more should we **submit** to our spiritual Father and live! Now, all discipline, while it is happening, does indeed seem **painful**, not enjoyable; but for those who have been **trained by it**, it later produces its peaceful fruit, which is **righteousness** (Hebrews 12:5-11).*

May our Father prepare each one of us to represent Him in our pilgrimage of righteousness as lamps of holy fire to those seeking light in the coming darkness.

Your brother,

**Mike & Sue**

**PS** As we were finishing this newsletter, David Wilkerson's latest message arrived. I'd been questioning, “God, why are we writing the May-June newsletter in the middle of March?” After reading his letter, I realized that the warning needs to get out quickly.

Wilkerson's March 8, 2004 letter is entitled, “God of Our Monsters.” Peruse some excerpts:

America is now indulging in sin not even known in Sodom and Gomorrah...The hour of chastisement has come...I believe our nation is hurtling swiftly into a period of trouble beyond all comprehension, a time such as the world has never seen...Multitudes of Christian marriages are being tested...The Bible warns us that in these last days, God will put his people through purifying fire...Our present sufferings produce one of two things in us: either hardheartedness and a spirit of unbelief, or a glorious vision of God's control over everything concerning us...You see, our loving Father wants his children to know him more deeply than merely through worship services, Bible study or prayer time. He wants us to know Him intimately in every aspect of our lives. And that includes our deepest trials and sufferings...Yet, the sad fact is that many Christians have built their house of faith on the sands of ease...

