

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,

Sue and I just returned from several weeks of rest and visiting family and friends. We arrived back at our apartment complex just in time to participate in an international potluck which our partner, Matt Kowlsen, initiated. After so long away, it felt like a homecoming.

I hope you've had the chance to purchase our friend Wayne Jacobsen's books, *Tales of the Vine* and *He Loves Me!* During our time away I found myself discovering a deeper understanding of the Hebraic Restoration as I read them. When I finished *Tales of the Vine* I was reminded of the words someone close to us had spoken after we arrived back from our research in Israel:

"I don't want to end up like you and Sue, having to trust God the way you do."

Prompted by Wayne's books I saw trust, especially *abiding trust* in our Lord, from a whole new perspective. There are facets of the Hebraic Restoration that are more clearly understood in light of Jesus being The True Vine and those who place their trust in Him the "branches." We encourage you to read John 15:1-17 before going further.

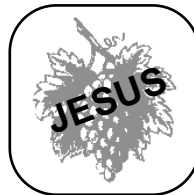
The emphasis which our Lord is restoring is a trusting obedience that flows from our love for Him and our dependence on Him. It is an abiding

relationship of the heart, not just observance of correct religious behavior. [See our January 1997 newsletter: *Orthodoxy vs. Orthopraxy.*]

In light of The Vine and the branches, our friend's statement could be rephrased, *"I don't want to be attached to and dependent on The Vine as you two are. I can make it on my own."* Jesus's reply: *"I am The Vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."* (v.5).

The Hebraic Restoration:

- 1) *Remaining attached to the vine;*
- 2) *Being pruned for fruitfulness.*



The central priority of the Restoration Diagram is Jesus. When we developed the diagram to depict the priorities of the early Church, the Lord prompted us to include a cluster of grapes in the center. The cluster indicates that our *corporate fruitfulness* is found in abiding in Jesus.

Each branch must be attached directly to The Vine. No branch can attach itself to another branch and find life. Even parents must help their children become attached to The Vine and not to their parents' trust. Children need to see the fruit of a viable trust in their par-

ents' daily choices and actions.

The necessity of each person being attached to The Vine is why the Father is so against the *Nicolaitan spirit* in the Church. Nicolaitan teaching places clergy and other leaders as intermediaries between God and His children. [See our July 1997 newsletter, *Today's Gatekeepers.*]

Attached to The Vine

Abel Enoch Noah Abraham Jacob Isaac Joseph



Hebrews 11 recounts the lives of people who trusted God, that is, who remained attached to The Vine. In this same chapter the writer indicates how people become detached: *"And without trust it is impossible to please God..."* (Heb. 11:6).

When Sue and I first began to follow Jesus, we had wonderful role models who showed us how to abide on The Vine. Paul exhorts followers of Jesus to observe the lives of others who are more mature on The Vine: *"Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live [who abide on The Vine as the Lord desires] according to the pattern we gave you"* (Phil. 3:17). He adds, *"Whatever you have learned [from my attachment on The Vine] or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you"* (Phil. 4:9).

Stop for moment: Are you modeling a trust in Jesus for others to follow? What opportunities has He given you recently to trust? Are the testimonies you share of His faithfulness about *current* situations?

Our role models showed Sue and me the importance of attachment as well as the need for our Father's pruning in order to produce much fruit. The singular purpose for fruitfulness is to bring glory to our Father. Paul emphasizes this in Ephesians 1: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ...so that we would bring Him praise commensurate with the glory of the grace He gave us through the Beloved One" (vs 3,6; see also 12,14). To bring glory to our Father is our call to abide on The Vine of His Son.

Our Father prunes! Boy, does He know how to prune!



Pruning is painfully necessary for fruitfulness. If anything about us is not going to bear fruit, our Father prunes it. Even areas of past fruitfulness may be pruned in order to bear greater fruit in the future. This truth is often misunderstood and leaves many frustrated. People who resist pruning by our Father are left with testimonies of *past* fruitfulness. There is nothing current to glorify our Father.

My friend Chuck, an agronomist, visited our retreat center a few days after I had planted several fruit trees. After examining them he asked me, "Didn't you prune these as the planting instructions called for?" I thought I'd done a great pruning

job. He asked me for the pruning shears, and then cut the trees back so far I thought they'd die. "You have to drive the roots deep," he explained. "You don't need the tree to grow right now but to create a healthy root system in the first few years. Then, when they begin to bear fruit, they'll be well-supplied with nourishment."

Likewise, a *passion for God's Word* drives us deep into His will and character to enable us to cooperate with Him for His glory.

Ponder God's pruning passage: "And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as [branches]: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's [pruning], and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord [prunes] those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts [on His Vine]... No [pruning] seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:5,6,11).

Fruitfulness Comes Only Through Abiding on The Vine



Are there indicators that you are truly attached to The Vine? The Bible offers several:

1. **personal testimony,**
2. **love for God's Word,**
3. **answered prayer,**
4. **willingness to suffer,**
5. **obedient trust,**
6. **love for others,**
7. **focus on our Father's will.**

1. Personal Testimony.

A personal testimony flows from those who are attached to The Vine: "It is written: 'I trusted;

therefore I have spoken.' With that same spirit of trust we also believe and therefore speak..." (2 Cor. 4:13).

People attached to The True Vine evidence devoted gratefulness because of the love the Lord puts in their heart: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the trust as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (Col. 2:6,7). There is a natural flow of Christ's nature that comes from the connection—a love for the Father and a certain boldness produced by righteousness—seeking to fulfill our Father's will for His glory. This is a distinguishing feature of those attached to The Vine.

2. Love for God's Word.

Our Lord depicted life on The Vine when He proclaimed, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him" (John 14:21; see also 2 John 6).

Every branch has the same dependent need for The Vine. No one is more or less dependent than anyone else. Think about this. How is dependence lived out? It is evident in those who study and apply God's Word. Wherever we travel we are blessed to encounter fruitful individuals and married people studying and applying God's Word. Through consistency in this, they grow in understanding of our Father and His ways.

Those who don't have a love for His Word or who in sloth depend on others to teach them lead a shallow, almost non-attached existence. Their lives are a pretense of religious form and activity devoid of an abiding

relationship with their Lord. These ³ (Rom. 5:3-5) are the ones who detach during times of trial and find themselves attaching to false vines.

3. Answered Prayer.

We have written extensively about the importance of communal righteousness in having our prayers answered. To reiterate, *“But now, quite apart from Torah, God’s way of making people righteous in his sight has been made clear—although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well—and it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah, to all who continue trusting [who remain attached to The Vine]”* (Rom. 3:21,22; see also Jam. 5:16, 1Pet. 3:12, Psa. 14:5, Hos. 10:12). Your righteousness flows from your abiding trust in Jesus. [See our April 1998 newsletter, *Answered Prayer*, for more on this.]

4. Willingness to suffer.

Suffering in accordance with our Father’s will is an important part of life on The Vine:

“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to trust in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have” (Phil. 1:29,30). Is this your heart’s desire? *“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death”* (Phil. 3:10). But our suffering on The Vine produces glorious fruit: *“We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us”*

Grumbling only indicates your unwillingness to abide on The Vine or to be pruned by our Father. On the other hand, crying out to your Father in trust releases the comfort and encouragement of the Spirit to persevere.

Please note: Beware of two false vines earnestly seeking to attract branches away from The True Vine. One of these false vines teaches that God promises “health and wealth”, a prosperity based on “cheap grace.” Any suffering is considered a result of your lack of trust, because, after all, “God wants you to be happy.” These false teachers need to spend time in the prisons and refugee camps around the world where our brothers and sisters are being persecuted for their trust.

Equally despicable, another false vine calls you *to rely on your efforts* to serve the Lord and to earn His acceptance. This is condemned in the Bible as “legalistic perversion”.

Neither of these false vines are remotely connected to The True Vine. Yet many who detach themselves from The True Vine find these counterfeits attractive substitutes.

5. Obedient Trust.

Every day our Lord presents opportunities to trust Him. Some call for simple obedience, such as an inner prompting to call someone at that moment. Other opportunities may be life-threatening illnesses or severe financial difficulties. But each occasion to trust is a gift designed to bring glory to our Father.

Often your trust is used by Him to enable others to observe your confidence in Him so that they might become attached to

The Vine. Others may be losing their attachment by rejecting an opportunity for obedient trust. Our Father may use you as a role model for them to trust in Him as you display the peace that your trust produces.

6. Love for others—Clustering

It is time for people who call themselves “Christian” to get rid of the *individual* focus of their faith and turn to what the Bible calls a collective, mutually belonging, “Body life.” Isn’t Paul writing about a *cluster* on The Vine when he admonishes:

“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ [abiding on The Vine], if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:1-4).

Pray that God would join you into the cluster of His choice with others who are abiding on The Vine. A congregation is too big to be a cluster. To *cluster* calls for you to spend discretionary time with others in your cluster. These relationships cannot be nurtured as part of scheduled meetings. Scheduled activities seldom produce intimate relationships. Yet, intimate relationships produce a variety of meaningful activities.

As Sue and I have moved to different cities across the country to share the Hebraic Foundations, we have prayed that God would raise up others who have a regard for righteousness.



Sometimes it has taken several⁴ months before we could join with others whose trust has caused them to abide in Christ.

“Salvation” in the early Church was understood as a *pilgrimage* that culminates at the Throne of God. Your salvation is to be worked out together with others: “*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your [plural] salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose*” (Phil. 2:12,13). The word “your” is in the plural, as in most verses pertaining to your life with Jesus.

Deep love for others in the cluster is shown when you confront those who are losing their attachment to The Vine through unrepentance: “*My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth [detach themselves from The Vine] and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins*” (Jam. 5:19,20).

Belonging is not the same as being with other people. At the retreat center I would see many on retreat who didn’t feel they belonged to others from their own congregation. Most often, the ones who felt “outside” were the oldest child in a family, the clergy, and business owners. It was sad to see God’s children in proximity, yet so many experiencing loneliness.

Emotional isolation is also characteristic of those who belong to no cluster on The Vine. They remind me of the pain of “*an unloved woman who is married*” (Pro. 30:23).

7. Focus on Our Father’s Will.

The Bible encourages us to both *know* God’s commands and *obey* them. This can only happen as we abide on The Vine.

We’ve been noticing increasing demonic attack on people attached to The Vine who are fulfilling God’s purposes. Distractions of many sorts, including illness, problems with family members, and enticing temptations are plaguing many. An inordinate focus on these distractions keeps many from completing what God is requiring of them.

The importance of focusing on the objective despite distractions reminds me of an incident while flying helicopters off the coast of Vietnam. We were making our approach to land on the tiny flight deck of an LST. My very qualified co-pilot was at the controls. As we approached the ship, he failed to slow down. Recognizing the imminent danger, I took control and flew us out of harm’s way as the flight deck crew kissed the deck.

When I asked about his mental lapse, he told me he was disheartened by a letter from his wife. Bellowing “words of encouragement” to him, I pointed out the number of lives, not to mention his own, that had almost been lost because he’d lost focus on the objective.

Remember that even as we remain attached to The Vine, our Father is *permitting* these distractions. But that doesn’t mean that a person on The Vine should give undue focus to them. Instead, concentrate on trusting His will and following through with obedience. Entrust the distractions to our Lord in prayer. My Mom used to say, “Whatever you give to the Lord, don’t take back!” Amen, Mom.

Detaching from The Vine: Becoming Dead Branches



Dying Branch: *Unforgiveness*

Being part of The True Vine produces a forgiving heart. In fact, in order to be attached to The Vine, you must *forgive* so that our Father can forgive you. This is a crucial point because part of the suffering you encounter is often inflicted by others. God’s intent is to use the power of your forgiveness to extend His Kingdom and bring glory to Himself. A forgiving heart comes from the nature of Jesus—“*Father, forgive them.*”

As we mentioned earlier, suffering is the initial step to produce *hope* in you. Yet many, influenced by the non-suffering, *health and wealth “happiness” teaching* of some of the churches today, choose to remain bitter. What they fail to realize is that bitterness crimps the flow of God’s grace and eventually leads to a dried branch that falls off.

For years we raised sheep. We docked the tails of the lambs so that fecal matter would not stick to the tail and bring infection and illness. An elastic band placed around the tail caused it to shrivel and drop off. This is what bitterness does to many people. Their trust shrivels and they eventually fall from The Vine. Sadly, swayed by the pleasure-bent view of much of the church, they persuade others who are suffering in accordance with the Father’s will to detach themselves also.

A warning: There is a powerful spirit loose which is encouraging women to divorce their husbands if they find themselves

unhappy in the relationship. If ⁵shrink back and are destroyed, but you hear phrases such as, "You were never married in the Spirit," or, "You can serve God more freely if you aren't trapped in this marriage," you are hearing this demonic voice.

In *Demolishing Strongholds*, we have identified the spirit behind this false teaching as

Independence & Divorce

Possible Symptoms:

Insensitive	Lonely/Aloof
Self-willed	Devil's advocate
Withdrawn	Excuse making
Lack of trust	"Martyr" complex

Remember, your spouse is the first "grape" with whom you can begin to form a cluster. Also, it is nearly impossible to attach yourself meaningfully to others when you break the covenant of marriage. If you encounter a married woman in ministry without her husband, be suspicious. A number of these women are exporting the spirit of independence and divorce.

If you are suffering in a relationship which our Father has ordained, be it marriage or work, it is His plan to *strengthen* your attachment to The Vine through your trial, not to detach you. As you are changed, others around you will be impacted.

Dying Branch:

Failure to Trust God or Trust His Promises

An increasing number of people who once trusted have forsaken their trust in The Vine and now find themselves detached or barely hanging by a fiber. God warns us about the consequences of failing to trust: "For in just a very little while, 'He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by trust. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.' But we are not of those who

What happens to people who refuse to trust God?

Have you ever considered *why* Cain killed Abel for offering the sacrifice God desired? The sinful attitude of Cain is in all of us. When we are attached to The Vine, our Father prunes the "Cain" from us to produce the fruit of "Abel". Once you are detached from The Vine, you return to the nature of Cain and attack those who remain in Christ.

We find Abel in Hebrews 11, "By trust Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By trust he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by trust he still speaks, even though he is dead" (v. 4). Abel is still speaking to warn us today. He is telling us to stay attached by trusting our Lord.

In essence, the two false vines mentioned earlier are "Cains" who attack and destroy the "Abels" who lovingly trust their Lord and remain attached to Him. (I think that persecution from the "Cains" will increase.)

Are there consequences for not trusting God's promises?

What if Sarah returned today to see what her distrust has wrought? She advised Abraham, contrary to God's promise, to take her slave girl Hagar and bear a son. If it were not for the birth of Ishmael, whom God prophesied "will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers" (Gen. 16:12), the Jewish/Arab crisis would not exist today.

Many who God intended to bear fruit through their trust instead take actions based on *distrust*. When people weigh the "pros and cons" of obeying God in a particular situation rather than seeking His *rhema*, they are exercising distrust. Most end up suffering the consequences of failing to seek God's will!

How many others find themselves *comforting* these people rather than *confronting* them with their need for repentance to become re-attached to The Vine? Isn't this why Paul warns those who comfort the disobedient, "Be careful, less you too be tempted." You may find yourselves being lured away from The Vine as you comfort others who are suffering the sinful consequences of their distrust.

Discernment is indispensable: There is suffering that comes from being attached to The Vine. There is also suffering that is the consequence of sin. One deserves comforting, the other confronting.

Encouragement

Please take the time to consider the relationships you have embraced in the Hebraic restoration, such as your trust in Jesus, devotion to spouse and children, and committed load-bearing spiritual family. Don't they *collectively* make more sense as we consider them in light of our abiding relationship on The Vine?

Mike & Sue Domgiewicz
"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim. 1:17).

1-866-NAVRUGS
(1-866-628-7847)

James and Joyce Skeet of our sister ministry, Covenant Path-

ways, have been able to help⁶ establish a Navajo Christian business. Several Christian women are beginning to make handwoven Navajo rugs.

This is an opportunity to purchase excellent quality wool rugs or wall hangings that can be passed along for generations. These make ideal gifts for Christmas or Hanukkah, and will help these sisters in Jesus provide for themselves. The weavers are able to incorporate into the center a variety of designs and patterns, including a menorah, lamb, shofar and the star of David. Please call Covenant Pathways at 1-866-NAVRUGS for more information.

Please keep the Skeets also in your prayers as God opens avenues of ministry for them among Native people.

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by Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz

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