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Encouragement from S.A.M.

Shalom Aleichem!

Once again we greet you with joy as we are now in the season of expectation, Counting the Omer toward Shavuot! It has been a very eventful month for us here at Set Apart Ministries as we imagine it has been for all communities that celebrate *Pesach/Passover*. We were pleased to celebrate with 40 people, several of them experiencing this wonderful feast for the first time. We were also pleased that so many of our community were actively preparing as Marilyn has noted in her article on spiritual adoption. We have learned many lessons over these past years and are able to work together with minimum strain, each one doing his/her part. May *Yahshua* be praised in this! We used the Believers Haggadah as prepared by Hebrew Roots ministry and were so very blessed to continue our focus on eschatology and our preparation as His Bride through recognition of *Pesach* as the remembrance of the beginning of our betrothal! a large gold menorah, a beautifully decorated chuppah and menorah centerpieces bedecked with roses and lace all reminded us of our Husband to come!

What else is happening? Well, the study on "Where is the Faith Given Once for all to the Saints?" did get online several weeks ago! [You can find it by clicking this link](#) We are excited to offer this piece as a tool for those who want to help others understand why they find coming back to our Hebrew Heritage so important. The flow chart is an effort to give a visual overview as succinctly as possible of church history, beginning and ending with *YHWH/Yahshua*. It is color coded as it goes, so that the "called out ones" understanding should always be central in the chart and in blue, while "generations of conflict" fall off to each side. Sun god worship is represented by a specific color and progresses to this day, tracked by lines at each side. Judaism and the Roman Catholic Church are also tracked in this way as so many branches of understanding, or various ways of mis- understanding, have continued to co-exist.

An Equipping Ministry

April 24, 2006

Being Spiritually Adopted



Throughout my life there have been many people who have come and gone. Although, I was blessed to have a good family growing up, *YHWH* was not a central part of our lives. My European mother had been raised Catholic. When I was in my early teens she became aware that something was not as it should be in the Catholic religion. As a result, we stopped attending. My mother then went on a search for truth, looking at many

By the time of the Reformation, there are many strands, each color coded as well, but ultimately returning again to the two sticks noted by Ezekiel. A brief history of each of the names/organizations on the flow chart is then provided on the Descriptions page with links for those who want to know more. We have provided some information and links from George Barna's poll on what he calls "Revolutionaries." That is, people who have left the institutional church, not because they are leaving God behind but because they want more of Him. Seems relevant to our growing fellowships doesn't it? Our prayer is that this effort to compile information in an easy to access format will encourage greater understanding of where we have been as Believers and where we are going!

Survey responses to our Messianic Leadership Concerns project have begun to flow in. Thanks go to Dean and Susan Wheelock of Hebrew Roots and MIA, via Scott Diffenderfer for helping us get the word out. David Gipson of Sheep of Israel is also preparing to present our request for input on this most vital area. We intend to schedule telephone follow up interviews with those who have said they are willing, as we begin to prepare the results and our recommendations. We hope to have this report available at the Nashville MIA conference.

It has also been a momentous month in that we have received blessings for our efforts to create a bridge of understanding for those Christians coming into *Torah* understanding yet also chastisement because we have chosen to use the name, Jesus, in our general interest outreach coaching newsletter only. (Some of you may be getting both newsletters but some may not know that we have a second newsletter for this purpose) These comments and several others have led to our recognized need to go back and deal more thoroughly with the subject of legalism, but this time coming at the issue from the direction of evaluating the role grace plays in our process of coming back to the ancient paths spoken of by the prophets. The initial part of that project will be found later in this newsletter, with headings for it's continuation in the coming issues. We are so very grateful for those who have taken the time to express their concerns to us! It helps us and hones us as we continue our equipping efforts.

Plans are moving ahead for our attendance as a community at the [Nashville MIA conference](#). Will we see you there too?

Our monthly teleconference For Women Only! is scheduled for next week, Sunday April 30. We hope to "see" you there! It has been a small but vocal group so far! Details in the article below.

different religions but never settling on one. As a result, my understanding of the scriptures was limited.

I always believed in *YHWH*, knowing Him as God and Jesus. I specifically remember the night I realized that *Yahshua* gave His life for ME! It was time of repentance and turning my life around. I then began a search for a church.

My search led me to a little church where my paternal grandmother's family had attended. I decided to give it a try and attended with my Great Aunt Violet. I stayed. Many people came into my life. They became spiritual parents to me. One couple especially comes to mind, Sid and Sarajane. I spent time with them and did Bible studies with them for years learning from them. I saw their lives as an example of a godly walk. They had lost a teenage daughter to cancer years earlier. I saw how their faith had sustained them in their loss. They loved me, encouraged me and spent time with me. I felt a part of the family at the church.

As time went on, I developed more confidence. I began to

Please come!

I have been honored to be a reviewer for Frank Houtz's latest series of articles in which he is addressing issues of such concern to us both. In his usual thorough manner, Frank has laid the groundwork for understanding much of the confusion and miscommunication that happens both within our Messianic communities, and between us and those in more traditional Christian settings. He is incorporating Scriptural knowledge with information on brain function and maturity, as well as stages of thinking ability in order to provide some needed guidelines. The first three articles can be found by clicking on each link: [Theological Reactivity](#), [I Reasoned like a Child](#) and [Shame On You](#). The fourth is in preparation now. The final article is filled with specific areas of concern and a set of questions for leaders to ask themselves as they go about shepherding the flock in their care. Abundant blessings to you, Frank, for this helpful information.

Marilyn and I do have two surveys in which we would like your participation. Marilyn's survey question is about [Women in Life Transitions](#) and what their perceived most difficult issue is and Barb's question is regarding the most significant concern you have about [Christians and depression](#). You can find these surveys by clicking on each link above, and thank you for your time! They are just one question surveys in which you have the freedom to write as much or as little about your concern as you want. Participants will receive a free e-book on these subjects before the e-book becomes available to others. The depression survey will be closing within the next two weeks. (This is another part of our outreach efforts and coaching services.)

Our heartfelt thanks go to the many people who have contributed their services, time, food, products and financial resources to our little community. We know and feel the prayer support of many as well, which is essential in ways you may not even realize. Your support is making it possible for us to carry out our equipping mission and we are grateful! Praise be to *Yahshua*, Who is able to provide, direct, protect and finish what He has started!

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blossom as I learned to minister in the Body. I began relationships with women who became my spiritual sisters. We went on picnics and trips with our children. We went on retreats, spending time in prayer and worship.

Many years ago, I began to work in the church office and a new pastor came to serve. He became a spiritual Father to me-- teaching me more about prayer, spiritual warfare and the gifts of the Spirit. My relationship with my Heavenly Father deepened as He pruned me and taught me many lessons.

I believe all of this became the basis for my training-- to desire truth, worship and service for my *Elohim*. My faith was tested throughout this time with my teenage children, health and financial issues. The church family was there for us throughout all this time, but I always knew that my trust was to be in *YHWH* alone.

Then the day came for *YHWH Elohim* to challenge me even further in my dedication to Him. I met a woman who turned my faith upside down. For months I studied like I had never studied before. The day came when I

But What about Grace?

It has come to our attention that people new to Hebraic understanding may be concerned about what Messianic Believers think about the presence (or absence) of YHWH's grace for them in the process.

It seems that "grace" has become a buzz word of late for many Christians. Unfortunately, the current understanding of what this means range all the way from the idea that anything goes because "Jesus loves me" to a more sedate understanding that grace is our gift through our Messiah because we can never measure up.

Many have come from a church background in which it was taught that there *was* no grace in the "Old Testament." It may seem as though this Hebrew understanding is all about learning so many commands of how to do this and how not to do that; about setting aside all we have held dear and learning a new rhythm and calendar of feast days which include observance of non-work days, and fear that we can't absorb it all at once. It may seem like a fearsome burden to be more aware of sin and guilt, whether intentional or unintentional, as we begin to examine details of our lives we may never have looked at closely before. Are we to lose our freedom and joy in the midst of becoming Torah-obedient? Are we stepping out from our freedom in Messiah, losing the grace He gives us only to fall into some kind of fruitless search for perfect obedience to law? How can we be certain we don't come under some kind of controlling, legalistic rigid expectations that exclude "grace?" Where does Set Apart Ministries stand on the subject of "grace?"

THE DILEMMA As one begins this walk toward Torah obedience, my picture is that of finding one's way from one road to another. As Christian believers in general, and in particular as those who DO take our faith seriously, we have understood the institutional church teachings on how to follow our Messiah and have tried to honor them to the best of our knowledge, whatever faith tradition we may come from. We THOUGHT we were on the correct road of our life choices—our prayer life, Bible study, our holiday observance, participation in communion, church membership and regular attendance, charity and so forth-- that would take us to heaven to be with Messiah one day.

When the Hebraic understanding comes into focus, it dawns on us that He has said He never changes: that He is the Alef and Tav (Alpha and Omega in the Greek we are more familiar

knew I had to totally yield before *YHWH Elohim*, to His truth, not the man-made religion that I had come to know. Not that it was all wrong and not that the people I had come to love did not have a heart for *YHWH*, it was just not the whole TRUTH!

I remember the day I went to Barb (yes, my co-author) and said, "I understand." We hugged and since that day, our sisterhood has grown. In ways, she has also been a spiritual mother to me. I have learned much from her. I can be certain she will confront me when I need it and readily offer encouragement. I also receive love and confidence in the relationship we have along with the third strand of our three-strand cord, Janell.

Since coming into the Hebraic understanding, we have become family! We spend Shabbat together, we pray together, we spend the feasts together, cry together and laugh together. Coming out of the church was a very difficult transition for me and without the support of my sisters beside me, it would've been...well, I can't even imagine. I faced persecution, *lashon hara* and loss of respect.

hearing) , the One who was with God in the beginning, Who WAS God, Who was the Word proceeding from God, Who came in the flesh to tabernacle among us, as the Living Word or the Living Torah Himself! We realize that He, *Yahshua* (Whom we have called by the English transliteration "Jesus"), is the same as the Law Giving YHWH God of the "Old Testament." The "Law" He has promised to write on our hearts is the very same Law (or more accurately translated, Law= Righteous Teachings of YHWH) that He has now written on our hearts via His Renewed Covenant with us and through the Presence of the Holy Spirit (Ruach ha Kodesh in Hebrew, the breath of the Living God.

Early in the process, I recall it being a comfort that the familiar name of Jesus was used. I could rest assured that we really were talking about the same God I already knew. Later on, as I came to understand the problems with that name, it changed my focus and practice, as it has for so many. [Set Apart Ministries has a position statement on the use of the Name](#) which can be found at this link. We think it speaks to the subject of grace in the process.

We can now see that He still means what He said all the way from Genesis through to Revelation: that His definitions of righteousness, and sin, and holiness (more accurately understood as "set apartness"), and what constitutes food have not changed. But our forefathers DID change! We suddenly find that some of our faith expressions are based not in YHWH's commands but in the traditions of men. And, worse yet, not only the traditions of men, but *pagan* traditions that involve idolatry and worship practices that YHWH has said are an abomination to Him. That was *never* our intent or our heart's desire! Now what do we do? How do we walk? Where is the right road?

Many people then worry about condemnation for all that we have done before we could comprehend the difference between Torah righteousness and what our ideas of righteousness may have been. Here is one place that grace must enter in, lest we fall into an unwholesome burden of guilt or shame.

Recall Romans 8:1: *Therefore, there is no longer any condemnation for they who are in Messiah Yahshua.*

We have had no control over what our forefathers practiced and taught. No one alive today is responsible for the additions of pagan practices to the faith of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Because we believe that *Yahshua*, the Son of the Living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob really is ONE with His

Relationships are not always easy, but to know that someone is standing alongside you through thick and thin is an example of *Yahshua*.

Here is a perspective from a 14-year old girl on what spiritual adoption has meant to her: *Having a spiritual family has been wonderful because they love you for being you. You don't have to put on this face that you hide behind. They help you through the hard stuff and are by your side no matter what. You can go to them in times of trouble and know that they won't turn you down. They'll help you to the best of their abilities.*

They are a part of every day life. They are one of the people who, no matter what, are there for you to help and to guide you. They are there for you and they love you for who you are.

Having a spiritual family has helped me a lot because if I have to tell my mom something, I can go to another adult, tell them what I have to tell my mom, and they give me pointers on how to tell her, which in turn makes my relationship with my mom better. We also don't have a lot of family so it's nice to know that someone cares. These people also

Father, we understand that He also, would never have incorporated any pagan practice into our worship of YHWH. To do so would have been to change what was already established. Had He done so, He would not be our Messiah because He would not have met the criteria established by the Prophets and the Written Word/Torah.

It is commonly taught that the church fathers were able to "Christianize" the practices of the pagan religions in order to now practice them for the glory of our YHWH God.

. This belief was part of my understanding long before I began to understand the implications of it. It does sound noble to desire to include all people and draw them in through familiar practices, doesn't it? Yet, our God, Who is Holy/Set Apart, has said that we are not to do what pagans do and call it worship of Him. Could grace be a part of the equation here? Yes, our God has promised in Leviticus 26: 44 that although we may have fallen into practices He considers an abomination, He promised not to destroy us and that He would bring restoration in His time. (Further exploration of this is a subject for another time.)

Returning to the road analogy, it is as though that road we were on has become much less pleasant, and we feel lost! Just as when we may be traveling cross country, from highway to highway and find ourselves physically lost, we have several choices:

Do we try somehow to go back in time to some earlier point/crossroad in our life, and begin again to walk in Torah? (Not really possible to re-live our life, is it?)

Do we just keep on the same road indefinitely until we study enough to learn what to do differently?

Perhaps we may think that because we are really sincere in our current faith practices that the road will somehow still lead us to His Presence?

Do we just stop dead in our tracks in horror at where we have been?

Or do we see that there is indeed, a "highway of holiness," of set apartness that has been laid out for us in Scripture. Do we lift our eyes and begin to see that there are others around in this day and time who are also making a course correction? It is much like choosing to get off the path we had been on, to go cross country through what seems like uncharted territory in

*help us out when we argue.
They help us calm down
and sort out our feelings.
All in all, having a spiritual
family is the best thing a
kid could ever ask for.*

Yes, spiritual adoption takes time, energy and sacrifice, but I know I would not be who I am if not for the people YHWH put in my life. The family has changed in the past few years, but nonetheless is an important part of my life. At Set Apart Ministries, we had such a time of joy working together to prepare for Pesach. Each person in the community worked or prepared in some way. As a result, it was an evening of blessing, joy and worship. Did this all happen by chance--NO! We have learned from working together throughout the past few years. We have learned by being vulnerable and honest with one another. It hasn't always been easy, but we see the fruit from allowing trusted people to come into our lives.

*But, maintaining the truth
in love, we grow up in all
respects into Him who is
the head, Messiah, from
whom the entire body,
joined and knit together
by what every joint
supplies, according to the
working by which each
part does its share, causes*

our desire to find the obedient path.

Where is Grace in the Process?

How do we chart our path through the "wilderness" of new concepts and behaviors? How soon do we have to be doing things "right?" And who really has the definitive word on what Torah observance looks like in this age and in this non-Torah observant society anyway? What does YHWH expect of me and how quickly does He really think I should be making changes before I am considered "in sin?" What happened to that free feeling I had before when I thought that all that I did was freely covered by His shed blood, and that "Old Testament" things had been done away with? I have been told that grace exists only in the New Testament; that the God of the Old Testament is all about wrath and punishment so aren't I in trouble if I lose my sense of freedom and grace? I need to know!

UPCOMING SEGMENTS OF THIS DISCUSSION OF THE PRESENCE OF GRACE

Grace Defined

Historical (Mis)interpretations of Grace

Is Grace the Opposite of Legalism?

Is Grace Really Missing in the Old Testament?

Can the Concept of Grace be Misapplied to Avoid Learning YHWH's Commands?

How Do we Deal in Grace with People who don't trust God and His Grace because they have been Betrayed and Traumatized by Those who Should Have Protected Them?

As One Moves toward Torah Obedience are there Precautions to follow to avoid falling into a Legalistic Snare?

This series will continue next time!

Keeping Your Joy Full!



There be whales there! Our family is planning to go to Chicago at the end of this month to visit the Shedd Aquarium. They have whales along with dolphins and many other aquatic sights to see. This is a joy to anticipate being

with family and seeing a place we haven't yet toured.

In the midst of all the stressings of life, it is often a challenge

growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Eph. 4:15-16 The Scriptures)
(M.G.)

Quick Links...

[Biblical Holidays](#)

[Sheep of Israel-David Gipson](#)

[First Year Torah Observance Survey](#)

[Messianic Community Leadership Concerns Survey](#)

[Messianic Discipleship Resources from Natan Lawrence, Hoshana Rabbah](#)

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to be joyful. Yet, a cheerful heart does one good! If you haven't found anything to be cheerful about of late, try planning an outing to someplace fun, perhaps once every six weeks or every two months. Experiment to see how often you need something scheduled to hold on to the anticipation of joy between such times.

Teleconference Announcement



Ladies! Mark your calenders!

Sunday, April 30, 2006
9:00 - 10:00 AM CST

Our next scheduled For Women Only teleconference will be held in the morning again this month! This time has worked out well for those who have participated in the past few months.

This teleconference is open to all women who are coming into a Torah observant lifestyle who may be single, divorced, widowed or even married but whose spouse isn't yet interested.

Our discussion will follow the format below: Introductions and Get Acquainted Time

Topic for today: Are you experiencing grace or legalism as you come into *Torah* observance?

To register for this months teleconference, please contact us with your email address. We will send out a reminder several days prior to the conference, with the telephone number and PIN number to use to enter into this months discussion!

About Us

Barbara L. Klika, MSW, LCSW, Personal Life Coach is a licensed mental health professional and founder of Set Apart Ministries, Inc., in practice since 1983 with an abiding interest in working with attachment/bonding and maturity issues for individuals, couples, and groups. She has been a congregational leader for



over 20 years in several areas, including Bible Study and vocal and handbell choir direction. She is also a certified Bethel Bible Study teacher who has participated in serious study of the Word since 1993 through such organizations as Precepts Ministries and First Fruits of Zion. She has completed basic coaching training through MentorCoach, Inc. and will be continuing work toward an additional Masters degree in coaching. Barb has provided the clinical leadership in pursuing the Life Model group and individual teaching and processing emotional and maturity issues for the past 3 years. She offers her gifts of exhortation, discernment, intercession and prophecy to the Body of Messiah, both locally and in our extended community via telephone and the Internet.

Marilyn T. Guffey, lay counselor, Personal Life Coach. Marilyn had been a congregational leader in her home church for over 20 years, providing Bible study, worship opportunities and lay counseling for women in transition for most of that time. She has completed her basic coaching training through MentorCoach, Inc. Marilyn has been the coleader in the provision of group and individual teaching and processing emotional and maturity issues for the past 3 years. Marilyn is a serious student of the Word and has participated in and provided many Bible study opportunities, most recently with First Fruits of Zion and numerous additional Messianic Torah study materials. She thrives on offering her gifts of mercy, discernment, encouragement, intercession and helps and has a strong desire to support the Body of Messiah in growing in maturity and faith, both locally and in our extended community via telephone and the Internet.

Board Member (VP) and support person Janell Schroeder, BBA works professionally as a computer reports specialist for a very large transportation company. She has been instrumental in the founding of Set Apart Ministries, functioning as a support person for people going through trauma recovery. She has attended numerous training experiences in this area and has participated in the Life Model program since its beginning. Janell is a certified Bethel Bible study teacher as well as a certified Precepts Bible Study teacher. She has also been in leadership in her previous congregation as a member of church council and in Adult and Child Education. She is currently working on her Bachelors Degree in Messianic Studies and plans to complete a Masters Degree through the Messianic Bible Institute Yeshiva. She brings her spiritual gifts of teaching and helps to our home Set Apart Ministries Community.

Board Member, Secretary Treasurer: Robert Klika, BS Bob currently works professionally as a supervisor in the area of milk sanitation for the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture. Bob has been a leader in previous congregations through service on church council as well as in men's ministries. He provides leadership in several areas of our home community, particularly in the areas of practical arrangements for gatherings, youth ministry and fun nights, and corporate prayer as well as keeping accounts and necessary organizational paper work. He completed his high school education in a Roman Catholic Seminary and has participated in Bible study since then through several studies, including the Bethel Bible Study series and Messianic Torah for the past 4 years through First Fruits of Zion and many additional supplemental materials.

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