

OIM UPDATE

August 2012

As noted in last month's issue of OIM News, the intensity of the chronic spiritual warfare within the ranks of the Messianic community of faith, attempting to rebuild the wall of partition that was Scripturally torn down by the blood of the Messiah Yeshua, conveniently distorts the peaceful restorative actions that have allowed His faithful followers to come together in greater unity over the past few decades:

“But now in Messiah Yeshua you who were once far off, have been brought near in the blood of Messiah. For He is our peace, who made both *groups* one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the *religious* Law of commandments in dogmas, that He might create in Himself the two into one new humanity, so making peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the enmity by it. And HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR OFF, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR [Isaiah 57:19; 52; Zechariah 9:10]” (Ephesians 2:13-17, author’s rendering from *Ephesians for the Practical Messianic*).

Obviously, the Adversary of God’s people is extremely knowledgeable about the spiritual arc of history, and the prophesied trajectory that ultimately leads to his defeat. He is apprehensively concerned that the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21) proceeding to fruition needs to be sidetracked, in order to stall the inevitable reconciliation among Jewish and non-Jewish Believers currently under way, via the growth and expansion of the Messianic movement. So during the past month, while surveying multiple strategic maneuvers by different forces of darkness, and tactical battle arraignments from the vantage of a hot air balloon observer—many enlightening thoughts and reflections led to this month’s lead article, “Peaceful Proclamations.” Above all, the realization that the Holy One of Israel is still in ultimate and sovereign control of what is occurring in His Creation, provided me a new perspective on the basic Biblical axiom that His Word never returns void:

“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding *in the matter for which I sent it*” (Isaiah 55:11).

Personally, this foundational realization, coupled with real experiential knowledge—with many of the unknowing pawns, or perhaps misguided actors exploiting the stages of the Messianic arena—resulted in a much more mature understanding of how the Father is working all things together for good, for those who love Him and are called according to His purposes (Romans 8:28).

As a ministry, we have also been quite pleased with the positive feedback to the formation of our **Theological Defense Trust**, and the response to the recent release of *One Law for All: From the Mosaic Texts to the Work of the Holy Spirit*. This book is available to provide you with some important, key answers, as various dynamics continue to change in the broad Messianic community. We find ourselves in a current season where there is an overwhelming need to see all

of the main components of the Messianic, Torah obedient lifestyle shored up, better defended, and better defined for a mixed faith community of Jews and non-Jews. We have confidence that the Lord will allow many people to find this resource, and many of the other publications available and soon to be available from TNN Press.

Thank you for your financial and prayerful support of our efforts, to provide these critical written tools to equip the saints with the Sword of the Spirit! Your prayers for the sale of our house in Florida are also bearing fruit, as we are in preliminary negotiations with two couples who are very interested. Hopefully, with God's blessing, we will be able to come to an agreement and close the sale, and then be able to follow the cloud and be relocated back to Texas sometime by the end of this year.

Advancing His Kingdom, until the Messianic restoration of all things...

Mark Huey

PEACEFUL PROCLAMATIONS

by Mark Huey

The indwelling power of the Holy Spirit of God is an awesome advantage Believers have, as the Comforter or Helper has been placed into the hearts of the faithful, to lead and teach them what the will of the Almighty is for His Creation (John 14:16, 26). With this reality manifesting itself in a very real and practical way, recent impressions from the Holy One, have given me a much fuller appreciation for what He is allowing to transpire during this critical season of the Messianic restoration currently proceeding. Hopefully, by a fuller and more mature understanding of the providential plans of the Lord God, this article will describe some of the means which have often been used by Him to communicate His will to humanity, recognizing the various limitations, because His ways and thoughts are far beyond mortal comprehension (Isaiah 58:8-9). After all, our Maker desires an intimate relationship with His human creations—and regardless of how He achieves it—He utilizes the peaceful proclamation of His Word to achieve His objectives.

The Apostle Paul had a tough dilemma to overcome during his incarceration in Rome, during which he composed what are commonly called the Prison Epistles (Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians). His heartfelt yearning was not to be imprisoned, but rather to be able to visit in person those who were a blessing to him, like his dear friends the Philippians. Paul drafted a letter to encourage these followers of the Messiah, to maintain their joyful perseverance in seeking and serving Him, regardless of whether or not he would see them in Philippi again. However, after the opening greetings of his letter, which describe his joy despite his circumstances—with the gentle admonition to lovingly discern truth through righteous communion with Yeshua the Messiah (Philippians 1:1-11)—he issues a warning about what is to be expected, as the good news of the Messiah would go forth throughout the known world:

“Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in *the cause of* Messiah has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. Some, to be sure, are preaching Messiah even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter *do it* out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Messiah out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. What then? **Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Messiah is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I**

will rejoice" (Philippians 1:12-18).

The predicament of strong willed declarers of the good news—influenced by envy and strife, and perhaps driven by selfish ambition without pure motives—deeply concerned this seasoned apostle. With Paul's history of checkered experience before his Damascus Road encounter with Yeshua (Acts 9), coupled with his years of serving the Lord on his various missionary journeys throughout the greater Mediterranean basin—he had witnessed how different zealous individuals had fallen into the carnal trap of wanting to do the Messiah's work in their own strength, rather than by the leading of the Holy Spirit. However, despite the potential to cause unmitigated distress in his own heart, he made the astounding assertion that regardless of whether the proclamation of the good news is declared "from false motives or true" (NIV), he rejoices just the same.

After all, by this point in his life, Paul absolutely understood that the Holy One was going to accomplish His will for His people—despite any impure motives by those attempting to profit from the good news of salvation in the completed work of the Messiah's crucifixion and resurrection. Paul recognized that human nature had an insatiable desire for knowledge, just as Ecclesiastes 1:8 communicates, "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing." The curious mind would naturally be attracted to seeking out people making profound declarations, in order to listen to their arguments. But beyond simply recognizing such human proclivities, Paul knew from his familiarity with the words of the Prophets of Israel, that God's ways and thoughts were so much higher than human beings' ability to comprehend. The Prophet Isaiah actually declared that God would even use nations other than Israel, to make His own chosen people turn from their wicked ways and seek Him:

"Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you, because of the LORD your God, even the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you. Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding *in the matter for which I sent it*" (Isaiah 55:5-11).

As one who was doubtlessly familiar with the words of Isaiah, Paul knew the inherent power in the written and spoken Word of God. Regardless of how God's Word was specifically presented to the multitudes of people

searching for answers, God's Word would never return empty or void—but would accomplish exactly what He intended. This may be said to compliment the parable of the sower of seed, issued by Yeshua the Messiah to His Disciples:

“When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: ‘The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. Other *seed* fell on rocky *soil*, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other *seed* fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. Other *seed* fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great.’ As He said these things, He would call out, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’ His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable meant. **And He said, ‘To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is* in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND [Isaiah 6:9-10]. “Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky *soil are* those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. The *seed* which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity. **But the *seed* in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance”**’ (Luke 8:4-15).**

So with an understanding that the seed or Word of God will often be sown in various ways by different individuals, and perhaps will result in various degrees of responses from the recipients—the crucial admonition to consider is that regardless of the outcome, the Word will not return to Him empty. God's Word will accomplish exactly what He foreknows in the hearts of the listeners or readers, and it is His responsibility to see or know if there is going to be a positive response by those receiving the power of the Word sown.

In Paul's writing to the Corinthians, he used a similar horticultural metaphor, to explain that it was not people like him or others like Apollos, who simply preached the gospel or taught the Word, who were responsible for the growth of the seed—but God Himself:

“For when one says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another, ‘I am of Apollos,’ are you not *mere* men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one. **I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.** Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive

his own reward according to his own labor" (1 Corinthians 3:4-8).

So, in Paul's letter to the Philippians referenced before, he instructed these Believers to be warned about some innate problems with the selfish motivations of various teachers or itinerant preachers. However, if they were at least proclaiming the good news on some level, and not coming against the work of Yeshua—even with some impure thoughts—the Lord would still eventually accomplish His will in the recipients' hearts over time, as the Holy Spirit was going to cause growth as so ordained.

To further Paul's conviction that permitting people to proclaim the good news, and even presumably use the authority of the Messiah to impact people around the known world, we need to consider some of Yeshua's own instructions when His Disciples approached Him about those who were performing miracles by Him—yet were not a part of their own inner circle:

"They came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He *began* to question them, 'What were you discussing on the way?' But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which *of them was* the greatest. Sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, 'If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.' Taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, 'Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me.' **John said to Him, 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we tried to prevent him because he was not following us.'** But Yeshua said, **'Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is for us.** For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as *followers* of Messiah, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward. Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea...For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty *again*? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another'" (Mark 9:33-42, 49-50).

The Disciples were debating and comparing their own rank among themselves, as followers of Yeshua, as He listened to them while they were traveling. When they finally stopped for a rest, Yeshua gave them some strong instruction and admonished them with the word, "For he who is not against us is for us" (Mark 9:40). In other words, despite not being a member of His actual Twelve Disciples, Yeshua was more concerned that the good news of the Kingdom and His Lordship were being proclaimed. He knew that His Father would sort out the results of the declarations being made, regardless of the motivations. In a summary statement, the Messiah made it absolutely clear to His Disciples that they were not only to be salt to the teeming masses, but He declared how critical it was to be at peace with one another. This was to be necessary, in order to eliminate or at least mitigate any strife, division, or dis-

cord that might arise from anyone wanting to control the actions of others.

Reflecting upon some of these Bible passages, I had something very important communicated to me. About a month and a half ago, on the second to last morning on our family vacation in Gulf Shores, Alabama, I was awakened at 4:30 AM with a loud word that I had never heard before. The word was: **theotainment**. I quietly slipped out of bed and placed myself before the Lord in prayer, and I asked Him what that word was and what it meant. Immediately, I realized that it was a contraction of the Greek word for God (*theos*, θεός), and the second half of the English word **entertainment**. (The term *theotainment* was something quite different from *theology*, meaning a study of God and His Word/ways.) Within a few seconds, I understood that many throughout the world proclaiming subjects, which dealt with God and perhaps even the gospel of salvation, were simply a cadre of “theotainers.” These are people who use the subject matter of God and His ways, to basically draw a crowd and earn a living. After all, with humanity’s inherent desire to want to know about God—or if there even is a Creator God—the insatiable need to sort out who God is, and a multitude of other questions in one’s mind, never ends.

Naturally, my first reaction, to this revelation, was to recall all of the interactions our family has experienced with a wide variety of professed servants of God over the years. Coupled with the spiritual warfare that is once again beginning to rage in the Messianic community of faith, I became quite disenchanted and a little perturbed. However, after sharing my concerns with my family and spiritual counselors, I believe that the Holy One wanted me to grow in my understanding of Him and His ways. So over the course of the past several weeks, as I have sought Him for His will for my life, the Holy Spirit kept bringing up verses to memory like those I have quoted above, and especially a passage of Scripture like this one, declared to Roman Believers by the Apostle Paul:

“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY [Leviticus 19:18],’ says the Lord. ‘BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD [Proverbs 25:21-22].’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:9-21).

The reverberation of the statement that “If possible, and to the extent that it depends on you, live in peace with all people” (CJB), echoed in my spirit for days. So with the prompting of the Holy Spirit, I have been making a concerted effort to resolve any known conflicts with those in the ministry, where disagreements in the past have obstructed the peace that the Lord desires for His people. This has been a wonderful experience for me, as those contrite restorative actions—confessing faults and seeking forgiveness—is already bearing good spiritual fruit. *Praise the Lord!*

Nevertheless, I cannot conclude this article without being reminded that it is not up to me or others to judge the motivations, of those who minister the gospel of Messiah Yeshua. *Such is between them and the Lord.* Each of us is to diligently test and examine ourselves periodically, to know that we are personally in the faith:

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Yeshua the Messiah is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test. Now we pray to God that you do no wrong; not that we ourselves may appear approved, but that you may do what is right, even though we may appear unapproved. For we can do nothing against the truth, but *only* for the truth. For we rejoice when we ourselves are weak but you are strong; this we also pray for, that you be made complete” (2 Corinthians 13:5-9).

So while each of us still lives in an imperfect world, we should each hope that through our weakness, we are strong in the Lord (2 Corinthians 12:10). We are each on the road to completeness, striving to be vessels of mercy (cf. Romans 9:23; 11:31) and ambassadors of Yeshua the Messiah (2 Corinthians 5:10). And, we are definitely required, as the Apostle John exhorts, to test the spirits in order to discern their origin:

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Yeshua the Messiah has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Yeshua is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antimessiah, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. **They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them” (1 John 4:1-5).**

Finally, take to serious heart this warning from Yeshua Himself, as He closed His Sermon on the Mount with this extremely sobering summation:

“In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets. “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is nar-

row that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS [Psalm 6:8].' Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock."Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.' When Yeshua had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes" (Matthew 7:12-29).

While standing on the Rock of Salvation—treating others as you would have them treat you, listening to the peaceful proclamations of those called to declare the truth regardless of motivation—be sure to inspect the fruit of their ministry efforts. Note that some false prophets wearing sheep's clothing will come to the Messiah at a future point in time, claiming that they have entry rights to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven—with all sorts of claims that they prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles in His name. But lamentably, Yeshua will declare that He never knew them. And because they did not enter the narrow gate but rather practiced lawlessness while building their house upon the shifting sand, perhaps with motivations only truly known by the Holy One, they will be directed to depart from Him and not enter into the Kingdom.

Instead of expelling the time and effort to criticize and speak ill of those, who are perhaps fooling themselves about their true relationship with the Messiah of Israel—should we not be praying for them? Should we not be hoping that the light of truth would come upon them, and their usefulness for the Kingdom of God on Earth would be rewarded with the ultimate entrance proclamation, "well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21-23)?

If you need to resolve any problems and heal relationships with those in the Body of Messiah, please do so. I can positively testify that our Heavenly Father is well pleased with our individual and collective obedience to His Word!

KOSHER YOUR PLATE

edited by Margaret McKee Huey

It is my intention to bring our Messianic cooks timely recipes of interest in each issue of the OIM News. In this issue, I have included two of our favorite desserts for Summer!

Brownie Pie

4 eggs
1 square of sweet cooking chocolate, melted and cooled
½-cup Bisquick
½-cup brown sugar, packed
½-cup granulated sugar
¼-cup softened butter
¾-cup chopped nuts

Grease 9" pie plate. Beat all ingredients except nuts until smooth. Fold in nuts. Pour into pie plate. Bake at 350 degree in a preheated oven until set for about 30-35 minutes. Cool for 5 minutes and serve warm with ice cream!

Buttermilk Chess Pie

1 ½-cups sugar
1-cup buttermilk
½-cup Bisquick
1/3-cup butter, melted
1-teaspoon vanilla
3 eggs

Heat over to 350 degrees. Grease 9" pie plate. Beat all ingredients until smooth in a blender or with a hand beater. Bake in over for about 30 minutes or until a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean. Wonderful!

Please submit your recipes to Margaret Huey at the OIM office for inclusion in this column and our upcoming cookbook "Kosher Your Plate."