

July 2010



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for calendars,
Judaica, and
much more!

Dear Partners in the Good News of Messiah,

A Serious Summer

The summer of 2010 is unlike any other summer in history. Never before has the potential of an all-out nuclear war been a possibility. Never before have so many nations around the world turned against Israel. Never before has an American president declared that we are no longer a Judeo-Christian nation, nor blatantly called evil good and good evil.

We still say, "Enjoy your fun in the sun," but, at the same time, be careful to seek the Lord as never before. Cherish your family times, pray together often, read the Word of God for guidance and strength, share your faith with lost souls, and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The Lord would exhort us this month from 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10, *"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Yeshua HaMashiach, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."*

Tikkun Olam

Tikkun Olam, pronounced tee-KOON o-LAHM, is a Hebrew phrase that means "repairing the world." The concept of *tikkun olam* in Judaism originated in the early rabbinic period and is still included in the traditional *Aleinu Prayer* which is recited three times daily in synagogues around the world. *The Aleinu* praises God for allowing the Jewish people to serve Him, and expresses the hope that the whole world will one day recognize Him and abandon idolatry.

Tikkun Olam took on a slightly different meaning after World War II when the Reform Movement in Judaism adopted the phrase as a rallying code word for achieving social justice and universal peace. This concept, which includes various types of social action programs, continues as a fundamental value within the various branches of Judaism today. In an attempt to make *bar/bat mitzvahs* more meaningful, Jewish synagogues throughout the U.S. encourage youth to do a *mitzvah* project as part of their coming-of-age ceremony. In a June 6, 2010 article in the Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel, a traditional rabbi from Boca Raton commented, "Having a bar mitzvah is not just about standing on the bimah. It is about doing acts of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world."

The phrase *tikkun olam* has come to connote social action and the pursuit of social justice—fixing the world as we know it. OUR WORLD IS PROFOUNDLY BROKEN! The younger generation, especially those in their 20's–30's, is very concerned about this sad state of affairs. They have a global consciousness, largely due to the connectedness of our world through the internet and social media. They feel a human responsibility to work to improve society, both home and abroad.

A Light to the Nations

When God called His people out of Egypt, He told them more than once not to forget that experience, but to identify with the oppressed and the downtrodden since they had been slaves themselves. He also told them that as His holy nation, they should model charity and kindness among

themselves. We read in Deuteronomy 15:11, *"For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'"* Charity was to begin "at home," and then extend outward to the nations.

In Isaiah chapter 49:6, God says to His servant Israel, *"It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth."* Of course, we know that Israel ultimately achieved this goal through the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua. Messianic Jews, who have the spirit of Yeshua swelling within them, now have that calling to the nations—to the ends of the earth—to bring Messiah's Light into a dark world!

Justice and Mercy

The God of the Bible is a God of justice and mercy. That, and His overwhelming Love, is what motivates us to continue leading Mercy Missions to Israel. Lord willing, we will go as planned this Hanukkah. Whatever happens in the next few months, there will be many hurting, needy people in Israel this December. We want to obey Micah 6:8, *"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

Israel is not treated "justly" by the world community, and, sadly, this includes the U.S.A. But we know the truth (i.e., concerning the "Flotilla Fiasco" of May-June, 2010), and will stand by Israel and God's end-time purposes and plans for His nation. We will show mercy to needy children and their families at a time when relief agencies in Israel have been forced to cut back on food. We will extend Yeshua's hand in their time of need.

The Jonathan/Jesse Generation

Many of you have asked for an update on our two sons, Jonathan (Jon) and Jesse. Jonathan turned 25 this month; Jesse turned 21 in January. Both boys are very involved in *tikkun olam*. Young people today have a global outlook and a global social conscience. In the case of our sons, there is a blessing that has been passed down to them from previous generations: Jamie's grandfather (on her mother's side) was a Commissioner in the Salvation Army. John Allan and his wife, Maud, preached a strong gospel message all over the world, wrote hymns, played musical instruments, and had a deep burden for the poor, the oppressed, and those bound by sin.

Jonathan and Jesse embrace scriptures such as, *"Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow"* (Isaiah 1:17). A verse from Isaiah 42:2-3 (NLT) is pivotal in their current pursuits: *"He will reveal justice to the nations... He will not crush those who are weak or quench the smallest hope. He will bring full justice to all who have been wronged."*

Our sons have a special place in their hearts for children, especially the fatherless and the abused. They also have a strong sense of justice and a passion to right the wrongs of injustice. We are thrilled that they are working together on their first (of many—!) *tikkun olam* projects. It all began when Jonathan received a "graduation" present, following his five-year B.A./Masters studies at the University of Florida. The gift was a surprise from God—a very BIG surprise—a very GRACIOUS one, too! A foundation in Canada gave Jonathan the opportunity to travel around the world to work with and experience the poverty, homelessness, orphans, hunger, and pain of the world. Thus far, he has preached and ministered in music (his own music) in Guatemala, Israel, India, Kenya, and Uganda. He has experienced life without running water, electricity, toilets, beds, showers, and other things we so often take for granted. The orphans in Guatemala adored him. The secular, Messianic and Orthodox in Israel were all blessed by his joy and personal warmth. The Africans totally embraced our firstborn who regularly ministered in African-American churches while in college, and was invited to go on tour with African-American rappers as the only "pigmentally challenged" member in the group! (*Jon's words, not ours*). Jon usually describes himself as a Caucasian, Jewish Guitar Playing Rapper

who loves Jesus! Jon loved Africa, but India, more than any other country thus far, has moved him to tears and broken his heart. For it was in India that Jonathan met a group of people known as the Dalits (pronounced dah-LEETS).

Dalit Degradation

The Dalits are probably the most oppressed people group on the planet, but before Jonathan spent six weeks in India in February of 2010, we had never heard of them. Historically, they have been known as "Untouchables," and exist as a people group because of the caste system in India which began more than 3,000 years ago when the 'Aryan' people arrived in the country. The Aryans were fair in complexion and considered themselves racially superior to all others, including the original inhabitants of India. (Sound familiar, right? Think: Hitler!) Under the caste system, there are four groups, with the Brahmin or priestly caste at the top. The Dalits do not even belong to this pyramid of castes, and are therefore known as "outcastes." There are more than 300 million Dalits; they are considered unclean and even lower in status than animals.

Dalits are socially, religiously, economically, and politically oppressed, deprived, and exploited in India according to Joseph D'souza, the author of **Dalit Freedom Now and Forever**, of the DFN (the Dalit Freedom Network). The Dalit people gave themselves that name because it expresses the idea of oppression and being crushed or broken. (Its root is found both in Hebrew and Sanskrit.) The life of the Dalits is shocking. Seventy percent of Dalits live below the poverty line. Only two to three percent of Dalit women can read and write. Millions of Dalit children serve as "bonded laborers."

The Brahmin or highest caste makes up only four percent of the total population of India, but they continue to hold most of the power. They enforce caste rules which bind Dalits to degrading manual labor. Dalits have accepted their fate believing, as Joseph D'souza writes, that "...God did not love them, that they were born to serve the upper castes, and that they had no rights." We were appalled to read in D'souza's book that Dalits are not permitted to even hear the reading of Hindu scripture. If they do, boiled lead is poured into their ears. If a Dalit touches a live cow, the cow is considered defiled, and the Dalit can be murdered.

The most outrageous, heart-wrenching atrocity connected with Dalits, primarily Dalit women, is something called "manual scavenging." These women are told that they were born to have the degrading occupation of collecting human excrement from a dry toilet and carrying it to a dumping ground. This is done by hand every morning. The human waste is scooped into baskets and carried away so that the higher caste members of the village can have a clean toilet. No gloves. No masks. No protective equipment. It is estimated that there are up to 1.3 million manual scavengers in India today, most of them Dalit women (even though "on the books" it is against the law).

Yeshua and the Oppressed

If you check Jonathan's website—jonlash.com—you will read about his identification with Yeshua's mandate in Luke 4:18-19 at what Jon calls the Messiah's "coming out party"—His first unveiling of His character and ministry: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor... To proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."* This is what both Jonathan and Jesse want to do with the Dalit people.

We want you to hear Jonathan's heart—his passion—in his own words: "The Dalit people are treated AND EXPLICITLY TOLD that they are sub-par human beings. They can't drink from the same wells as Upper Caste members. They can't go to the same schools. They can't even use the same glasses in restaurants or coffee shops! AND, this is all happening in a "democracy"! I love India. A LOT. I love the food, the people, the landscapes, the architecture. BUT I HATE (and I KNOW that God hates) what is happening to the Dalit people!

God is so BREAKING MY HEART for these mercilessly oppressed people. We can't talk justice and NOT TALK DALITS today! It is impossible. My heart is being broken (and ANGERED) at the horrible injustices I have seen here in India. Pray for me. Pray that God does ALL that He wants to do in my heart. Pray that He fills my heart with LOVE for the people of India, and HATRED for the EVIL I am seeing. I want both. 'You who fear the Lord, **HATE** evil,' right?"

Touching the "Untouchables"

Jesse has designed a website for Jonathan called "Music and Justice." They are selling bracelets made by Dalit women in India. All proceeds from the sale of the bracelets go directly to provide education for a Dalit child in order to break the cycle of abuse. Jonathan has already made enough money through the sale of bracelets at one of his concerts to sponsor a Dalit child in school for an entire year (\$364)! Our boys say, "Buy a bracelet. Free a slave." The bracelets can be purchased from Jewish Jewels for \$10 which includes shipping. \$7 of this sale will go directly to sponsor a Dalit child. A free bonus CD of Jon's music will come with your bracelet. EDUCATION, especially English-based education, is considered the best way to begin the eradication of the oppressive, dehumanizing caste system in India. We encourage you to check out the Dalit Freedom Network. They have seen thousands of formerly Hindu Dalits come to Jesus. As Jonathan says, "We want holistic justice. Justice without Jesus is only partial liberation." The Messiah is the One who sets people totally free!

In addition, our newsletter offers this month are our calendar found on pages 1-2 of the enclosed catalog, and an excellent little book by **the late Moishe Rosen (of blessed memory)** titled, **The Universe is Broken: Who on Earth Can Fix it?** This book is thought provoking, not "preachy," and a timely outreach tool for sharing the Messiah with both pre-believing Jews and Gentiles.

A Modern Day Holocaust

Jesse is also involved in another social justice initiative. He is the marketing intern in Los Angeles this summer for a new organization called Falling Whistles—a campaign for peace in the Congo. Two of the directors of Falling Whistles are descendants of Holocaust survivors. This is a large part of why they are so dedicated to ending a modern-day holocaust that has already claimed the lives of 6.9 million people. While the organization is secular, the same compassion and broken heart for the oppressed and downtrodden is the motivating force that compels them to action.

Why "Falling Whistles?" Boys in the "Democratic Republic of Congo" are routinely abducted by a rebel army. The ones not big enough to hold a gun are given a whistle and put on the front lines of battle. Lines of boys fall as nothing more than a temporary barricade. Those who flee are shot from behind. Jesse and the other eight summer interns (all volunteers) say that their motivation is simple: "Kids are dying. They need our help."

Falling Whistles is trying to get the boys' story out—to be their voice to the outside world. Fifteen volunteers working out of a garage are trying to fund the rehabilitation of war-affected children and advocate for an end to the violence. You can find out more at www.fallingwhistles.com

God is Whistling!

Did you know that GOD WHISTLES! Yes, He does. See Isaiah 5:26 and Isaiah 7:18. He is whistling for His Jewish people to come home. He is whistling among the nations. He is calling us—just as Neil used to call our sons when we went anywhere as a family. Daddy had a special whistle, and we all knew it was him, and where to find him when he made that distinct sound. *Shema!* Listen! God is whistling, calling His children to obey, to come, to join Yeshua in His mission of freeing the oppressed!

Praying for you daily!

Love in Yeshua,

