



ONE in 2000!

January 2000!

Blessings as we enter the New Millennium!

Unity: the Desire of God's Heart

We prayerfully considered the topic for this month's letter, desiring to know what was on God's heart as we embark upon the greatest adventure of our lives _ living for God as Messiah's coming draws near. The word that the Ruach Ha Kodesh dropped into our hearts was "UNITY" _ oneness in the Lord.

There's much that the church can learn about unity from the Jewish people. There is a real sense of being "one" among Jews, even with all our differences. Persecution throughout the centuries has caused us to cling to one another. So has a common conviction of being chosen by God, promised a Land by Him, given Torah to live by, and a day each week set apart for worship. The Jews are "a people." Many of our prayers begin with "we," rather than "I." Some of our most well-loved songs speak of unity. "*Hiney ma tov uma naim shevet achim gam yachad!*" from Psalm 133:1 is translated in English as: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*" Psalm 133 continues with the theme of unity, comparing unity among brothers to anointing oil being poured upon the head.

Unity (oneness) comes from above. It originates in the heart of God, and is generated by the Spirit of God. Unity begins with the high priests, with leaders, with heads of households, and flows downward. Unity, like oil and like dew, refreshes. It reaches out to include others. When there is unity, there is blessing. In fact, God **commands** the blessing! (Ps. 133:3)

Unity: Yeshua's Final Request

In the magnificent prayer found in John chapter 17 where Yeshua the Messiah as our *Cohen Gadol* (high priest) prays on our behalf to His Father, unity is of utmost importance. In fact, five times in the prayer, Yeshua asks His Father to make believers one, even as Father and Son are One.

*"Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that **they may be one, as We are.**"* John 17:11

*"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that **they all may be one**; as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that **they also may be one in Us**: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; that **they may be one, even as We are one.**"* John 17:20-22

*"I in them, and You in Me that **they may be made perfect in one**; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me."* John 17:23

Can you hear God's heart in these verses? Has Yeshua's prayer been answered yet?

Is there unity among the various Christian denominations?

What about Messianic Jews and Christians?

For our part, we thoroughly enjoy fellowshiping and worshipping with believers of many denominations who share a common love for Yeshua (Jesus). When we have the same Father (the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), we are family (*mishpochah*). We sense a kindred spirit (the Holy Spirit) in true believers in Messiah and don't find uniformity to be necessary in order to have real unity.

One Heart - One Mind

The promise of a New Covenant by the Jewish prophets included a promise from God of unity of heart and mind. Consider the following verses:

*"And I will give them **one heart**, and **one way**, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."* (Jer. 32:39)

*"And I will give them **one heart**, and I will put a new spirit within you."* (Ezek. 11:19)

These verses show that unity is a gift from God. Israel received the gift after Yeshua's resurrection.

*"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place."* (Acts 2:1)

*"And the multitude of them that believed were of **one heart** and of **one soul**."* (Acts 4:32)

The ideal has not always been the reality, as is the case today, so believers needed to be exhorted concerning unity:

*"Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of **one mind**, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."* (2 Cor. 13:11)

*"Stand fast, in **one spirit**, with **one mind** striving together in the faith of the gospel."* (Phil. 1:27)

*"Finally, all of you be of **one mind**, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous."* (I Peter 3:8)

One in the Olive Tree

One of the most beautiful pictures of unity in the New Covenant Scriptures is found in Romans 11 where we see the body of believers compared to an olive tree. Jewish believers are part of the good olive tree. Gentile believers are from a wild olive tree. They are grafted, contrary to nature (a supernatural graft!) in among the natural branches. Together, Jew and Gentile partake of the root and fatness (anointing) of the olive tree.

The gentile branches (vs 18) are warned not to boast against the natural (Jewish) branches, since they do not support the root, but the root supports them. HUMILITY is an essential quality among believers for UNITY to be possible.

In his latest album, Messianic recording artist, Joel Chernoff, has recorded a wonderful song called "Jew and Gentile." The message of Jewish/Gentile unity comes across beautifully with a tune so catchy, you'll be singing it in your sleep. **The Restoration of Israel** is a must-have album for 2000!

What does it mean to be "One" in an olive tree? Good news. You couldn't be grafted into a better tree. The

olive tree is:

1. Remarkably tenacious of life; very difficult to kill.
2. One of the longest-lived and most beautiful of all fruit trees.
3. Principal constituent of the fruit is oil, occurring in both seed and flesh.
4. One of the few trees that will tolerate long periods of drought, up to 5 to 6 months in the summer.
5. Very tolerant of all adverse conditions including poor soil.
6. Plentiful in the Promised Land in Bible times; vitally important to the people (fuel, food, sacred, cosmetic, trade, medicinal uses).
7. Frequently surrounded by offshoots, the strongest of which are kept for transplanting (netzer = an offshoot that grows from the roots of the tree).

If you're Jewish by birth, welcome your non-Jewish brethren into the olive tree. If you're gentile by birth, enjoy being grafted in! Cherish your roots. Look forward to a long life of serving God and man.

Ruth: One with the Jewish People

Be like Ruth! Ruth, a non-Jewish Moabitess, became one with the Jewish people. She is a prophetic picture of the true Church. Her mother-in-law Naomi is a prophetic picture of the Nation of Israel. When Naomi told Ruth to return to her own people and culture in Moab (once the famine in the land of Israel was over), Ruth refused to go back. She clung to Naomi in commitment, loyalty and love saying: "*Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.*" (Ruth 1:16)

Boaz fell in love with Ruth in part because of her kindness, faithfulness and selfless devotion to her old, dejected mother-in-law. Naomi did not have the means to reward Ruth, but she did give her excellent advice concerning how to approach Boaz. The same is still true today concerning Israel and Messiah's bride as expressed by Reuven Doron, in his book **One New Man**: "Fatigued and embittered as she may be, ancient Israel can still offer counsel and wisdom to the young and vibrant bride-to-be as she approaches her Beloved."

Ruth's sister-in-law, Orpha, on the other hand, returned to her gentile/pagan society and its gods. Doron sees the prophetic meaning of Ruth and Orpha as follows: "These two women prophetically typify two kinds of churches _ the one that will turn its back on old, desperate Israel, and the other which will be her friend. Both were married into the covenant people, but only one lived up to her vows!"

Which type of church do you attend? The hour is late. The new millennium is here. The true church must be aligned with the plan and purposes of God concerning Israel. Israel is not just any other nation! Israel is the key to world redemption, the apple of God's eye, the special focus of God's everlasting love. Encourage your church to be a "Ruth" church that stands by Israel in love. You will win the heart of Boaz! (the Kinsman-Redeemer, symbolic of Yeshua).

As we enter the new millennium, the prophetic picture is as follows:

It's harvest time. Naomi is returning to Israel with Ruth by her side. Boaz is waiting for them in the midst of the harvest fields. Can you sense the ONENESS?

Up to Zion as ONE!

Come experience the unity yourself as we go up to Zion from April 1-13. Jew and non-Jew together, old and young, Jamie (like Ruth) and Neil's sister Phyllis (like Naomi) will be arm in arm. There will be at least one honeymoon couple with us and a special marriage rededication ceremony. We will have Jesse on the trip (our 11 year old son!).

This will be a fairly small and intimate group. There's still room for you. Prayerfully consider joining us. Our Boaz, Yeshua, will be there to meet us!

One . . . In the Messiah

The message of Oneness, of Unity in Yeshua, is not a new one for Jewish Jewels. For the past ten years, we have been ending our weekly television program the same way: "*In Yeshua, Jesus, the middle wall of partition has been broken down, male _ female, Jew _ Gentile, all One in the Messiah.*"

The real basis of unity among believers is the sacrificial death of Yeshua that made a way for us to become part of the family of God. God sent the gift. As we receive the gift, and are rightly related to God through Him, yielding to His Spirit, and desiring to please God in all things, we will naturally walk in unity with our brothers and sisters.

P.S. We are enclosing a card describing the "Sky Angel" satellite. For many of you, this is the best and only way to receive *Jewish Jewels* and other high quality Bible-based television programming. You'll also enjoy the 24 hour per day Praise and Worship channels. They are a real blessing.