



Oasis

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In a far away land lives a boy of 12 years. He was adopted when only 5 months old by a childless couple, devoted disciples of Yeshua. Here is his parents' touching description of the adoption process:

- *God's hand led us to each other. It was supernaturally orchestrated.*
- *We chose him. It was intentional.*
- *The adoption completely changed everything about him: his name, identity and citizenship.*
- *Adoption is forever. It is final and irreversible.*
- *Adoption is a strong expression of grace and mercy.*
- *We experienced the whole adoption process as something holy. Through it all we had an awesome sense of God's holiness and His guidance.*

This process exquisitely describes our adoption by God. Adoption is central to the way He relates to us. **"You were all once orphans, gripped in the bondage of your fear and loneliness. But I have brought you in, to become my full heirs with all the rights and blessings of sons and daughters."** (my rough paraphrase of Romans 8:14-17)

God characterizes Himself as the **"Defender of the fatherless"** in Psalm 68:6,7. He also cares for the widow, provides for the poor and places the single in families. **"I was a father to the poor."** (Job 29:16) His priorities are to **"rebuke the oppressor, defend the fatherless and plead for the widow."** (Isaiah 1:17) He is not willing for any to perish (2 Peter 3:9). This is not a theological formula; it is a fact of His fatherhood over all humanity. Here is a dad who has lost massive numbers of children He desperately loves. So what does He do? He instills in us a spirit of adoption to reclaim the children He's lost.

Adoption brings Abundance

Yeshua focused on people - the paralytics, demon-tormented, prostitutes, tax collectors and damaged individuals. This is His passion, to touch and to adopt the homeless, hopeless and helpless. **"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress..."** (James 1:27) He continually drew people to the Father. This is an "adopting mentality." When I am FREE with the provision of

SPIRIT OF Adoption

by Eitan Shishkoff



Continued on page 6

God - not jealous, not guarding, not withholding - there is abundance. **“There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds...but it leads to poverty.”** (Proverbs 11:26) God adopts us into His family. Then He wants us to embrace the rest of His adopted ones as brothers and sisters. How is this to affect the atmosphere of a local congregation? Here’s just one inspiring, uncomplicated, do-able example.

My dear friends Moshe and Katya Morrison are “adopters.” Years ago they took a family of four abandoned teenage girls into their home and raised them. In Israel they have systematically integrated single-parent kids into their home after school to receive love, attention and healthy boundaries. Their latest adoption is a young blind Israeli woman with a background of severe abuse, who recently came to faith in Yeshua. I’ve watched the lasting fruit of their “adoptions.” Remarkable, and so pleasing to the Great Shepherd! When we connect with the Father’s heart and manifest His spirit of adoption, lives are changed. It takes time to rebuild trust that’s been crushed by abandonment. But patient investment in people pays off - forever.

Jealousy toward the Prodigal

In a family it’s easy to be jealous. Remember the older son in the prodigal son story? He reacted with jealousy and resentment to the Father’s restorative forgiveness. Our Father wants to include, to bless, to bring in more...but something in us resists. What are we afraid of losing? Our place, provision and pre-eminence? We are easily wounded, rejected and left out. As a kindergartner I felt rejected for being fat. I felt alone when transferred to a new class in the middle of 2nd grade. I was rejected by boyhood friends when they became anti-Semitic. You have stories like these too, and worse. Jealousy and rejection come easily. The feeling of being underprivileged seems embedded

in our flesh. Does it go back to the Garden, when Satan accused God of holding out on us?

To be an orphan is to be rejected. To be adopted is to be accepted. So what is God’s answer to our battle with rejection? He tells us resoundingly **“you are accepted in the Beloved.”** (Ephesians 1:6) The Father waits with open arms to receive us into His full favor. Ours is the story of the prodigal. Our own adoption equips us to adopt others.

Tolstoy’s Cobbler

In the writings of Leo Tolstoy, the Russian literary giant, we find a poor cobbler. While reading the Gospels this aging shoemaker, who earnestly sought God, heard the Lord say *“I will come to you tomorrow. Look for me on the street.”* Day came and the old man received a procession of three visitors. First, he invited an old man in from the freezing snow and gave him tea. Then he found a poor mother and her baby outside with no jacket. He gave her a warm coat. Finally, a hungry boy stole an apple, was caught and faced severe punishment. The shoemaker paid for the fruit and defended the lad. That night he “saw” each of them in the dark corner of his tiny abode. They each laughed and disappeared. *“Who are you?”* he asked. Then he heard the voice of the Lord. *“It is I.”* Yeshua told him. *“For where love is, God is.”*

This tale draws me to the piercing simplicity of Matthew 25:40 **“Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”** Love, Yeshua taught, is laying down your life for your friends and even for strangers. It is what He did. Though most of us are not called to physically lay down our lives, we are all called to show His love daily.

“Raising adopted girls took me out of my religious rut.”

(Derek Prince)

What IS the House of the Lord, after all? It’s a halfway house. It’s a refuge,

a place of healing, repair, restoration, cleansing. The beloved Bible teacher Derek Prince, focused in his final days on God’s heart for “the forgotten” of society. Prince’s life testified to his message. He and Lydia adopted and raised 12 girls of many nationalities. In his 80’s he said *“This experience delivered me from self focus. It made me. It took me out of my religious rut.”* His booklet *“Orphans, Widows, the Poor and Oppressed”* is a masterpiece of succinct instruction on our mandate to share bread with the hungry, bring in to our homes the outcast and to cover the naked. These phrases from Isaiah 58:6-12 challenge many of our basic assumptions about life’s priorities. Am I to live primarily for myself and my immediate family? Or am I to be a conduit of Divine provision for the desperate and distressed?

This is the question with which the Lord challenged me in 1989, while showing me the tents of mercy vision - a desert oasis containing tents filled with supplies needed by the poor Jewish immigrants returning from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia. The results of my simple “Yes” to His question are recorded in the past 16 years of newsletters. But God puts the same question to you. *“Will you be my conduit, my heart of adoption in a cruel world?”* If so, you WILL be used amazingly by God and many lives will be touched. This is His design for you, His purpose in redeeming you from death - to cause His water of life to flow through you to those dying of physical and spiritual thirst.

“If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall shine in the darkness ... the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought ... you shall build up the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of streets to dwell in.” (Isaiah 58:12) ✨

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Our Vision:

Tents of Mercy - to participate in today’s historic exodus by assisting Israel’s returning exiles.

No spectators in the Kingdom - to be a worshiping, sharing community based in homes, equipping each one for service.

Come back Yeshua - to welcome Yeshua home to Israel, by restoring the Jewish roots of New Covenant faith.



**“Tell them
I just
stepped out...”**

By Moshe Morrison

Kaddish (sanctification) is the traditional Jewish prayer that is said in honor of someone who is deceased. It is said at the graveside, at the funeral, in the synagogue three times daily for eleven months, and after that, every year (according to the Hebrew calendar) on the anniversary of the death. It is, in reality, not a prayer for the dead but a prayer of trust in the absolute faithfulness of God in spite of death.

When my father passed away in 1993, I was still living in Baltimore and I went

almost every morning to pray the Kaddish at the Orthodox synagogue that he had attended. The 14 years that I have lived in Israel I have gone to various synagogues on the anniversary of my father's death (“yahrtzite”) to honor his memory.

The Letter of the Law

One year, here in Israel, the sun was beginning to go down on my father's yahrtzite and the time for traditional evening prayers was drawing near. I was in an unfamiliar neighborhood; however, in Israel

you can hardly go more than a few blocks without finding a synagogue. Sure enough, there was one close by. I entered, sat near the rear of the sanctuary and waited for others to arrive and the service to begin. There was only one person inside, an old man sitting in a corner praying alone with great intensity. It struck me as rather unusual that no one else was there.

Afternoon prayers in the synagogue can be said anytime after 12 noon and before sunset; usually they are done just before sunset (the service is only about 10 min-

utes long). After the sun has gone down, evening prayers are said. This arrangement makes it possible to complete the thrice-daily prayer obligations in just two trips to the synagogue instead of three.

I waited, but no one else came. Since the Kaddish is said in the context of a set service with at least ten worshippers, it was clear to me that this evening there would be no prayers. I resigned myself to it and thought that I would just spend a little time there reading psalms, praying quietly and remembering my father. The old man had finished his prayers and it was quiet and peaceful in the sanctuary. I was leaning forward in the pew with my head resting on the back of the seat in front of me. Suddenly there was a loud sharp sound, which caused me to jerk upright.

In many older synagogues each pew has a slanted back that provides a book rest for the worshipper in the row behind. These slanted backs also serve as the lid for a small cabinet where worshippers can stow prayer shawls or books. The sound that so startled me was the sound of a lid being lifted open and then dropped shut. The old man was wandering through the sanctuary, opening these little cabinets, rustling around inside of them (they all seemed to have noisy crinkly plastic bags in them), and then dropping the lids. I could hardly believe my eyes and ears. I did my best to ignore him. I closed my eyes and went back to my thoughts and prayers. For a few brief moments it got quiet in the sanctuary and I thought that he had gone. Then suddenly there were noises just in front of me and above my head. I looked up and there he was, standing on the pew in front of me changing a light bulb over my seat. I thought, "This guy is nuts," and I got up and walked out in disgust.

It was only later that I fully understood what had happened and that the man was neither just obnoxiously rude nor simply crazy. His were indeed conscious actions with a specific motivation. A friend of mine who grew up in a religious Israeli

family explained to me that it is forbidden to ask someone praying in a synagogue to leave. Since this man was ready to go, but did not want to violate the commandment, he proceeded to make it so unpleasant for me that I had to leave. He could pat himself on the back for his "righteous" solution to the problem. He had gotten rid of me without asking me to leave. This is probably one of the clearest examples of obeying the "letter of the law," while grossly violating the spirit of it.



Sy Morrison and his son Moshe

Nothing but the Truth

My relating this little adventure is in no way an exercise in bashing religious Jews for legalism and self-righteousness. They certainly have no corner on the market. This is prevalent among all humanity and not just among religious people of various persuasions. It is reflective of our condition as fallen and flawed beings. We know what is right and what is wrong, but the desire to serve our self-interests is very strong. Thus we employ "creative" means in order to avoid doing what we ought not to do or not doing what we should do and still appease our consciences.

Sometimes our actions are relatively harmless. Years ago I was in charge of the maintenance department at a large ministry

in New York. I had an office in the basement. Often times, supply salesmen would come to the receptionist at the front desk and she would call me. Generally, I didn't want to be bothered with them, so I asked her to count to ten and then tell them I had just stepped out. In that time I got up and walked out the back door. It was absolutely true, I had just stepped out. (Why I didn't just have her just say that I wasn't interested is a mystery to me today.) Although my behavior was not quite as insensitive as that of the man who drove me out of the synagogue, this illustrates how our words may be literally true while their meaning can be far from the truth.

A number of years ago an internationally known evangelist held some meetings here in Israel. He then wrote in his newsletter about all the Israelis who were attending his meetings and what an impact he was having on the nation. His report implied that multitudes of Israelis were coming to faith in Yeshua through his ministry. However, the vast numbers of attendees were already believers, some Jews, but mostly Arabs and Christians from the West. The few unbelievers who attended were curious, but could hardly be construed as the vanguard of a mass movement of salvation in Israel.

While the way in which the words were written might have been technically correct, the message conveyed was a distortion of the truth.

What is God's Heart?

God is calling us to walk by the Spirit of the Torah, not by hyper "t" crossing and "i" dotting observance. We are to live and to communicate the love of God in a genuine way - a walk that is not satisfied with a literal compliance that has an appearance of being outwardly correct, but at the same time overlooks the heart and intent of God. Let's find out what the Lord wants from us and pursue it with all our hearts in sincerity and truth. ✡