TWELVE TRIBES FREEPAPER

"A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head." —Revelation 12:1

Brand New Culture

FREE

A Brand New Culture

any people have looked for a place to live out what was in their hearts. Oh, so many have to come to the shores of this land looking for that place where they could actually live the life of freedom or independence. or security for their children — the deep things in their own hearts that cried out for reality. But we are those who looked for the place where we could live out what is in the heart of God. We wanted to actually obey the instructions of our Creator and see His life come about on earth as a reality. We gladly put aside our own preferences and old culture to take on His way of doing everything, just as immigrants to Australia in the early 20th century were eager to take on the culture of the land where they sought a new life.

What is a Culture?

Your actions speak louder than your words. What you do expresses who you are. People know who you are by how you live your life — the work you do, the clothes you wear, what you spend your time and money on, what stimulates and inspires you, etc. That's why things like food, clothing, and occupations are so important to our own self-image, and to how we relate to other people. In the same way, the God of heaven wants to be known not only through the wonders of creation, but through a people He can call His very own, who will reflect His character and personality by what they do and how they do it. Everything about them should be characterized by love, revealing our Creator's heart to His highest creation — man.

And so we in the Twelve Tribes are living in a brand new culture. It isn't one we thought of

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ourselves, and it isn't just about being good. We aren't trying to be better at being good than the righteous people of the earth, and we're not just reacting to the hypocrisy of Christianity or the evils of Western society. Our life is something different altogether, for we are growing up, as a body of people, into holiness.

Holiness is such a damaged word, conjuring up images of wise sages living in the mountains of Tibet, or of the churches we attended in our childhood. So we hardly dare to use it to describe ourselves, and yet it is a very important word.

Holy does not mean "better than you," nor does it mean unreachable or untouchable by others. Holy means set aside for a particular purpose, a special purpose, not a common or everyday kind of purpose. In other words, we are not serving our own purposes in living together in a common life, but we are doing it for our Father, the God of heaven and earth.

It's for His sake that we do what we do, so that people would know who He is by how we are. You can't see God, but just as you can "see" the wind by its effects, so you can see the effect of God's presence in how His people are. So what does that effect look like?

We Live Together

That we live together is an amazing thing because our living together is not just a matter of sharing a physical space or a common purse. We're not all lumped together by financial necessity or family ties. We live together because we love and need each other so much that we cannot live apart from one another. We depend on the Spirit within each other so much so that we submit to one another. That means we allow that Spirit in our brother

to direct our lives. But it does not mean we have to be told what to do by an officer or someone high-ranking. We do have elders and shepherds, but we also receive wisdom and direction from one another. We listen to the least. It all works out to this: We listen to the gentle voice of that Spirit in our own hearts and in the hearts of our brothers and sisters.

It can only be likened to a human body in the way that it works. All the parts of your own body do not have their own plans for their life, and so there is no vying for position or beating one another down. Either your body is at peace with itself, or it is dying. But a normal, healthy body has all its parts working together for the common good, under the direction of the head. And so you can see us working together peacefully, but maybe you also have eyes to see the unseen, to see that we are part of one another. Our identity is in each other. We are not independently helping one another out when it's convenient, and then drawing the line when it doesn't suit us, any more than your hand would say to your eye, "Get the speck out yourself." Your lungs would never say, "What about me? I need a break." Your body does not grow weary in building itself up, and as we grow in our love for one another, our strength is renewed.

Our fellowship together is sweet as we work in our kitchens, in our cafés, on our farms, and in our industries. We work together in crews, not to gain personal wages, but using all our money to meet the needs of everyone in our household. Our needs are all met by our brothers and sisters giving freely from what they have when they see someone in need. Our Father has always wanted that there would be no rich or poor among His people. But social justice does not come through laws that force others to give their wealth away or tax them to the hilt so that the government can take care of it. Rather, one of the signs of His character is that love would make His people freely give from their own possessions to meet the needs of others. Such love causes them to live in peace together, with no division.

A Very Distinct Culture

Another thing dear to the Creator's heart is that His people could have a culture that is completely dis-

tinct from the cultures of this fallen world. The internal, invisible things that bind people into a national identity are expressed in the external, visible details of their culture — the standards, customs, traditions, ethics, and attitudes shared by the people in that society. So the Spirit of our Father had to first of all begin to purify our souls of the familiar but wrong ways of thinking that we had grown up with. He is teaching us ethics from His Torah

(instruction) — how to be clean, how to judge fairly, and how to do business with others (and even among ourselves) in a manner pleasing to Him.

But, what is usually first noticed about another culture is its distinctive clothing and food. And so it is with us. Our clothes are made from natural fibres, in simple practical styles that uphold modesty, but also, just as importantly, bring dignity and honour to the wearer. We want to bring out the best in one another, and we are learning to trust our brother's or sister's eye instead of the mirror's subtle lies.

This new culture is being made pure, so nothing from the old cultures of the world is allowed to come in. We leave behind all our fads and strong preferences about food, and concentrate instead on simple, nourishing food that we can eat with gladness and sincerity of heart. This points to something fundamental about our life together, that our spiritual life sustains our souls and not the food we used to eat for comfort. We focus more on careful preparation of fresh foods rather than rich ingredients, so that we can live a long life serving the One who saved us from death. Above all, we love to be hospitable, both to one another and to the stranger in our midst. Yerba Maté tea, festive meals, and cookies given as gifts are very much part of our culture.

We are growing more and more of our own food, even though it means hard work, because we see that without the rhythm of seasons we are not able to understand the festivals that our God wants His people to observe. These national festivals are the way for our newly formed spiritual nation to really be one in truth, worshipping the one God, and not the many "gods" or idols of the nations around us.

Not many people would think of bowing down to a statue, but an idol is anything that makes you transfer your affections away from the Creator to something created. Our God is a jealous God, and He can only be worshipped in holiness, meaning that He

wants us to fill our souls with Him, His Word, and His ways. So we do not want to lift up our souls to popular music, or movies, or sports, or fancy cars, or any of the millions of things that men and women commonly lift up their souls to. We are developing our own music — a new song infused with His good Spirit — so that we can worship Him free of the attitudes and emotions of popular music. We don't have TVs here either, because we know from our time growing up in this world how that crazy box robs your time and pollutes your soul. Thankfully, our Father is purifying our souls from all worthless input that we took in while growing up in a culture that has gone haywire.

Our Children have a Purpose in Being Alive

If God had a place where His people could obey

Him and live out His heart, what would the children look like? Would they be rebellious to their parents? Would they be hankering after all that the world has to offer — fame, fortune, and pleasure? Surely, He wants sons such as Isaac was to Abraham, who trusted his father with his own life, knowing how much he was loved and needed. It is for this reason that we homeschool our children, not because the schools are bad. For no matter how excellent a school might be, we will always train our

children at home, for this is the command of our God. He said long ago to Abraham (whose heart we hope to have) that He had chosen him for no other reason than this:

"For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him." (Genesis 18:19)

Yahweh, the God of Israel, chooses His people so that they may command their children in His way. Our whole lives are devoted to seeking this way, to

finding out what is pleasing to Him, finding out what is right and just in all the situations that come up in our lives. We educate our children not just in "school hours," but in all the hours of their lives. Our precious little children are by our side where we can attend to their needs, and where they can learn to do everything with their whole hearts.

As we learn to love Yahweh's instruction in our own lives, we teach it to our

children. We are not oppressed by some heavy law, but we desire to be instructed by our Father, and we delight in His Word. Children left to themselves will bring shame to their parents through the rebellion of their

youth. We have seen failures in our midst in this way, too, but we are learning from our mistakes. We have learned that what makes for appalling behavior is the feeling that no one cares, not even God. Children see God through their parents, and if the parents do not care what their child does, the child becomes convinced God doesn't either.

The heart of our Father in heaven is that no child would be lost to destruction. We know His heart grieves over

the plight of children in this world. He has set us on another course from the way the world is going. He has called us to be separate in this way, yet to live among the people of the world so that they can take hope when they see a generation of fathers turning their hearts to their children. The purification of Yahweh's holy nation will take successive generations of redeemed parenting, and not just a few fathers with special ability or opportunity. There can be no generation gap in the people of God, but instead the restoration of all things.

Prophetic Destiny

As wonderful as our life together is, this new culture is not an end in itself, but there is a prophetic destiny waiting to be fulfilled by the people of God. Many people and churches, both good and bad, have come and gone, and even today many claim to be the people of God and to have His Holy Spirit. But the

proof will be whether they fulfill the ancient prophecies. We hope that we can be that people, but to be that people requires that we produce the fruit (or evidence) of God's kingdom. There has to be a witness of love that reaches to the ends of the earth.² It can't just be giving out books or Bibles in every language, and hoping that people can have a better life somehow. It can't be a mystical witness or a mystical unity of sincere believers scattered among the divided churches of Christianity. But it must be a tangible expression of the abundant life that Yahshua* promised to those who followed Him. This life is made up of tribes, clans, households, and families that you can be a part of, where you can change from living selfishly to living for Him.

There has to be a people who are willing to cut off their iniquities (wrong ways), including those that they inherited from their parents. Those people, by the grace of God, will be able to raise a pure generation who

will have no deceit in their mouths because they will have nothing unclean to hide. They will be able to proclaim with authority what God has to say to the people of the earth.

Yahshua, the Son of God, is held in heaven until all of his spiritual enemies are overcome by those who will trust in His power to save them.3 There has to be a people who will be prepared, as a bride is

prepared to marry her king, so that when she is purified and has overcome (as He overcame), He will be able to come to earth and bring judgment to the evil that is destroying the earth and its inhabitants.4 Only when He has a people who love Him more than any other love will He be able to come and bring an end to death, to injustice, to decay, and to selfishness. This will be the restoration of all things.

As we haven't seen Him come back, and we haven't seen an end to all the misery of selfishness, we know that there hasn't yet been a people who has fulfilled the will of God. For it is not the will of the Creator that suffering would go on forever and ever, that people would just live and die for no purpose millennium after millennium. He has a purpose and a plan for all mankind and the infinite universe.

These are just some of the prophecies that are waiting, like all of creation, for the sons of God to be

A Heart of Compassion

This is the wonderful commission of His people: to express the heart of the Creator to His highest creature — mankind. While the words "For God so loved the world..." are easy enough to say, to demonstrate that love takes God's heart of compassion the heart Yahshua had, too. He laid down his life for the sake of those who were lost. We were once the unlovely and the unloving, yet now that we have been loved, we owe a great debt of love.

And we want His name to be justified, or made right. Some people, claiming to be His representatives, say that He would gladly destroy forever anyone who had not even heard of His Son, the Messiah. Clearly, His Name must be vindicated from such charges of

cruel injustice. He is the God of mercy and lovingkindness who will by no means acquit the guilty, but who knows the frame and circumstances of every person, and who loves to show mercy. He will show mercy whenever He can, and many people will be given eternal life who have been condemned by the

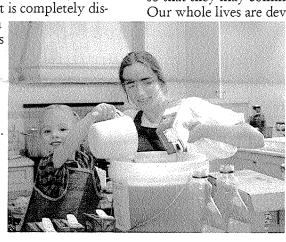
We are coming to know Him, and we are glad and happy and thankful that we have finally found a place where we are able

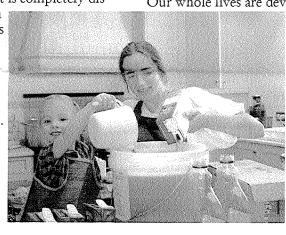
to live entirely for Him, and to obey Him who loved us first. If you have the same longing to find a place to belong, where you can find out the will of the One who made you, please come and visit. You can come for a day or to stay. 🖋

1- Matthew 21:43 2 - Matthew 24:14

3 - Hebrews 10:13 4 - Revelation 19:7-21

*Yahshua is the Hebrew name of the Son of God. It is what His father Yoceph (Joseph) and His mother Miriam (Mary) called Him when He was born, as recorded in Luke 1:31 and Matthew 1:21. The footnote for this verse in the NIV New Testament reads: Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua. In Hebrew, as in old English, there is no "J" sound, and the name is more accurately rendered Yahshua. It means, "I am powerful to save," since it is constructed from Yah, the name of the Father (as in Hallelujah, "Praise Yah") which means "I AM," and shua, which means "power and authority to save." We call Him Yahshua because that is truly His name. (John 5:43; 17:11)





WHO WE ARE

We used to be desperately lonely, even though most of us had a lot of friends. Some of us were successful in what we did, and some of us were failures beyond hope. We came from everywhere and we have done everything trying to make sense out of our lives. But no matter what we did, we were left feeling dirty inside. We were scarred deeply from the effects of mistrust and hurtful relationships. We strove for acceptance, money, and whatever else could give us comfort. Some of us had dreams of a better life, but most of us had given up the struggle, settling instead for compromise and consent to the way things are. We were lost, scattered, without direction, doing our own thing. Then we heard a voice that spoke to us right where we were, exposing the emptiness of our lives. This voice matched up fully to the longing of our hearts. Somehow a lifetime of being unable to trust was overpowered by this voice of hope. It came from a people who had their dirty conscience washed clean. They had a clean slate and an absolutely new life. This new life they eagerly offered to all who wanted it.

So now we have a life together. We no longer have to be separated by race, education, appearance, position, status, or where we came from. Instead, our days are filled with seeking first the needs of our brothers and sisters. In so doing, we find our own needs are met. This new life has given us the power to care.

We hate the death, war, strife, hatred, starvation, murder, injustice, greed, and selfishness that is leading the whole world to destruction. We want to see all of this come to an end. We want many, many more people to hear the voice of hope we have heard, to come and see the life. We are

thrilled to be able to invite you to come and see that it is a reality.

We are a messianic community, and by community we do not mean a town or locality. Nor do we mean a loose association of individuals living near one another. And we surely do not mean a religious organization centered around meeting in a building, otherwise called a church. Community, as we use the term, means those who love one another so greatly that they are of one heart and mind, holding all things as common property, living together, taking their meals together, devoted to one another because they're devoted to the One who saved them from death and misery.

Where We Are

The Community in the Blue Mountains 196 Bathurst Road Katoomba NSW 2136 Telephone (02) 4782 2131

The Yellow Deli in the Blue Mountains Cnr Katoomba and Waratah St Katoomba NSW Telephone (02) 4782 9744 The Community in Picton at "Peppercorn Creek Farm"

1375 Remembrance Drive Picton N.S.W.
Telephone (02) 4677 2668 thecommunity@peppercorncreekfarm.org.au
www.peppercorncreekfarm.org.au

Common Ground Cafe and Bakery 1580 Remembrance Drive Picton NSW, 2571 Telephone (02) 4677 0600

for a complete list of international addresses, see: www.commonwealthofisrael.org