

September 19, 1995 Bellows Falls

Report on the Katherine Hikel Meeting of 9-19-95

(This is not a complete set of notes of all that was said, nor is it even a listing of the things we said we would do before the next meeting,¹ but an attempt to capture the essential things our Father spoke to us. Proverbial lessons are slowly and painfully learned, it seems.)

The brothers who have been assembled many times over the last year to plead with our Father for direction and wisdom in this most difficult matter gathered again to consider what was on His heart concerning a settlement with Katherine Hikel, and how we could conceivably make friends with her. As usual, it was not an easy meeting to attend. We were helped not only with Havah's presence for part of the meeting, but also with Khemdah, Ayal's wife. She was there to provide us with the latest on how her husband was doing and his heart about this matter. Her report was sad, not encouraging.

While the real prospect of a settlement with Katherine Hikel was encouraging, we were given a clear picture of the damage done to our Master's name by our behavior in this matter, specifically our disobedience to Mt 5:24. While other aspects of this case were discussed, especially lengthy time devoted to where the money would come from, and the future ramifications of paying for it this way or that way, the issue of Katherine Hikel's heart was our primary concern. It was very sobering.

Yonah wondered what would come forth if we really haven't admitted our responsibility. He said our greatest responsibility in this is to hallow our Master's name. What if we made some kind of deal with Katherine Hikel but she still wasn't satisfied in her heart? We have been talking over the years about the restraint on Judah. Would it be lifted if she still has something against us after we settle with her? If we can't remove the bitterness in her heart somehow, wouldn't our Father have to still discipline us because we hadn't received the first discipline (of all this trouble and expense and heartache). Yonah said he wanted this thing to be done with. He wanted it to be history and not something that lingers on.

The Accusation of the Evil One

¹By our Father's grace, brief reports will come out after these meetings to serve as reminders of whether we have carried out the things we said we would do.

Shoresh said that we want to see this settlement wipe everything clean with Katherine Hikel. But there is a great obstacle in the way to that happening. We didn't obey Mt 5. Going to the one you've wronged or harmed quickly, and making friends with them before they become your opponent at law *keeps them from being opened up to the accusations of the evil one. Katherine Hikel has been open to those accusations for years.*

Years ago, if we had irresistibly prevailed upon her she would never have been open to these lies. The whole issue of settlement is one of our Father's name.

As I sat in court last December the overwhelming thing in me was that we don't belong here, under the scrutiny of natural men — some of whom were already hostile to us — with our life and finances picked apart and made to look as evil and sinister as possible. The impressions the opposing lawyers wanted to make about us have been felt by the people in that courtroom, the people of St. Albans, and those who read the accounts of the trial in the press. Some people know that we are being falsely represented, but most don't. We were dragged into court by these slick lawyers because we didn't make friends with her while we had the chance to.

The sin of King David with Bathsheva wasn't just that he was immoral with her, he went on conniving after his sin in an attempt to cover it up. He brought shame to the name of the God of Israel, and our Father made sure he felt the sting of it for the rest of his life.

Settlement

Shoresh said it is only personal contact that could wash her of what she feels against us, the bitterness in her heart about what she went through and our feeble efforts to make it right before the trial. I would like to offer her a lifetime supply of Common Sense Products. Maybe every time she came in to pick up her soap she would have a little contact with us, and would come to see our hearts, and be able to be affected by our love and our desire to see her made whole.

Perhaps other industries and communities could do this as their heart moved them to as well.

Havah spoke up in tears, feeling the agony of the whole Body she has had to bear so much during this ordeal because others hadn't taken their proper share of responsibility, "Milchah asked me one time, "Do you think Katherine Hikel would take a slave? Someone to serve her for

the rest of her life, to help make it right between her and us? I would be willing to be her slave."
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Shoresh continued, we want to make friends with her by giving her more than what she asked for. Usually with lawsuits the money is coughed up with bitterness and cursing. We don't want any of that in us. I am saying these things because the damage done *by our disobedience to the Word is greater than can be repaired by mere money.*

Zadok said what Shoresh is talking about is for the future. Nothing other than a good, solid chunk of money is going to start washing away her bitterness.

We saw that even though the situation was about as bad as it could be, that we couldn't let responsibility for the debt we owe to permeate Judah as an obligation. It can only come as a free-will offering. Shoresh remembered what Yoneq had said to us in his letter about Mt 5, wishing we had been obedient in the beginning when we were all in Island Pond and could have given her everything we had. But to obey Mt 5, especially after the time when we should have, does not mean that we can go against what our Father is establishing on the earth — local government of the Edahs.

We also decided to hire Tom McCormick to be our lawyer through the settlement process. He represented Ayal, and has been our friend and at times our mediator with Katherine Hikel's legal team. He is familiar with the law in this area, which Havah isn't. We thought in light of possible future repercussions to an unwise settlement agreement on our part, and our ignorance of such matters, it was wisest to hire him.

Since the meeting we have heard that John Garvey, the principal trial lawyer for Katherine Hikel, is favorably inclined toward our settlement offer of \$500,000. This would be paid with \$400,000 in cash by January 1, and the rest within a year. He said it was something they could work with. We have also heard that the bank is favorable towards the mortgages on the properties we own outright in Island Pond (our means of raising \$250,000 cash, with the rest coming from other properties already sold or in the process of being sold). This includes the Sugar Bush and the

Chesney building as collateral, as well as the entire inventory of the Shoe Shop. Considerable discussion went into what this would mean for Island Pond to pay this off and how the other communities could help. Keli said Boston could improve properties there (so their selling price would be greater, allowing the money to be used to finish the \$100,000 or going against the principal on the loan). Shoresh said his community could give products to the Shoe Shop so the whole retail price could go towards paying off the loan. Other communities could help as they were able and willing.

We saw we needed to recall all that was left of the Wood's Crew equipment from Maine and sell it. We heard that the log loader involved in the accident just sold to someone for \$8,500, to be paid over several years. Khemdah told us Ayal wanted conditions met by the community before he would return to Island Pond to work in the Shoe Shop to help pay off Katherine Hikel. He is getting very involved in the world and getting set in his own ways of thinking.

Somehow in this meeting, more than any other, we touched upon the heart of the matter — the damage we have done to our Master because of the wrong done to Katherine Hikel — and what our disobedience has allowed to fester in her heart.

It is our earnest prayer that we could receive the mercy to make this right.