

Asher, 1994

Yael

*(Letter to Rose)*

Dear Rose,

Thank you for your wonderful letter. I was so happy to receive my first letter from another community and to hear about what's going on for you. We are still pouring over your words to understand it all.

You asked me how I met the community, so I have been thinking about how I was saved and how wonderful our God is. I am so thankful for this mercy, patience and understanding.

Where to start? I've written a couple of drafts — one with the skeleton details and one with my "life story," so I hope this one is sufficient and objective. Last Christmas Eve I went to the hostel BBQ, where I was living in Perth and met Otto, a traveler from Vienna (traveling through Australia, then planning on seeing New Zealand and the States). We started a friendship, walking miles and talking the whole way, but he only stayed a week before continuing to Adelaide and Melbourne. I wrote to him, he wrote back, I wrote again, he wrote again. Even though there was no romance in our letters, there was something that spoke to my heart. I had to make a decision — was I going to remain passive and self pitying or was I going to take a risk and go to him? Somehow against every emotion and reason (he was just a traveler, he hadn't asked me to come, he never said he loved me) I had hope. I went to Melbourne and found him and we began an urgent relationship. It seemed everything had to be resolved today. On the second day I was with him, we were staying at my brother's and he saw that my brother was manipulating me and that I got involved with that. He saw that I had layers of masks and defenses and I was never going to change while I was still involved/entangled with my family. We had a huge fight, a hopeless, no-winners argument that went on and on, until he said, "You have to decide. Do you want your old life or will you come with me? If you choose to stay I will understand that and still love you but I'm not going to stay and watch you do that. This place is no good for us or for you. I want you to come with me. I don't know where we'll go but I want you to trust me and just come with me. I'm going now, you have to decide in this minute where you want to be." So I followed him with a little bag of clothes, without money or ideas about my future. (Later that week I went to my cousin's to get my passport and bankbook and said good-bye to her but I didn't say good-bye to my brother or my parents.) I just left and went with Otto. Later he told me I was like a child that he led across the road, through the parks, from one full hotel to another dirty one until we found a place to sleep, on armchairs in the lounge of a hostel. That was how we started our life together. Every day we had big fights as layer after layer was exposed of my hypocrisy, sarcasm, judgmentalism, negativity, self-pity, passivity, all exposed

by him. He wouldn't tolerate anything less than being real. It was one day at a time for us but somehow at the end of the day we would have peace between us.

That was the pattern for our three months together, although towards the end we were a bit more peaceful as our trust in each other began to grow. It speaks to me now about how much he hated it that I didn't trust and obey him — all the teachings and instruction we have about being submissive make perfect sense to me when I think of those days when I was so strong and distrustful. I see too that Otto wanted me to be submissive from love and not from fear that he would leave me.

Otto left Australia when his visa expired and traveled to New Zealand. I went back to Perth to sell my possessions and then meet him in the United States. But in Perth I let passivity and self-pity overtake me and I lost my way, getting involved in a new career as a temp., getting a great house free of rent, etc. I kept deferring my departure, causing Otto much pain but I was confused and self preservation is strong in confusion. Then he sent me an Imagine card and a letter saying he'd met the Community and it was what we were looking for. The paper he sent talked about Yahshua. I shuddered. I thought he was with a bunch of Christians and for the first time since we parted my eyes were turned to him as I wondered what kind of loneliness had led him to accept some weird Christians. He wrote again a few days later saying, "Come now. I need you." It was very frustrating because there were school holidays in Australia and I had to wait three days for a flight out of Perth and another three days for a flight out of Melbourne.

All my armor had gone back on in our time apart, which speaks to me that we can't truly change anything outside Yahshua. I arrived on Friday night, ugly and suspicious. When he told me we were to be in separate rooms and he agreed with it I was angry and bereft and confused. We argued and argued and he got more and more discouraged. I put him through a lot of suffering that evening and the next day, arguing with him, trying to persuade him to leave, blackmailing him. It grieves me that I could be that way, it pricks my pride that I couldn't love him objectively. But I can see now that it applied pressure to him, forcing him to make a choice between following Yahshua and caring for me.

That night, after Nun told the story of the chariots of fire, Otto spoke up that his eyes were becoming clearer and he wanted to follow Yahshua. Everyone jumped up, shouting and cheering, except me. I felt shocked, humiliated. I didn't want to talk to anyone except Otto, which we did on the path to the water. I said, "Can't you wait? This goes too fast for me." But he said, "This is my life. I can't wait for you to be ready, just come with me." So I went to the sea and saw him baptized Elionai Gabor Bekor, which means one who's eyes are turned to God, strong and gentle man, first fruit of Australia. I was happy for him but I was sure I wouldn't be able to follow him this time. I stayed on because I had no where to go. I was able in a worldly way to get a job or go back to Australia but I already left those places and my old life and I

couldn't really go back. My "future" — Elionai had left me. I stayed on because I felt desperate. I could see it was not just a lifestyle but that every person believed in Yahshua and that was the starting point, the foundation for everything. I got really hopeless because I tried and tried but I didn't believe in Him. I felt hopeless, worthless, frustrated. I couldn't stand to be alone so people talked with me all day, showing me patience, understanding and love. I had just lost one Otto and found eighteen people just like him. I started to love all of them. I know I got saved through the care and prayers of every person in our house.

I don't remember much of what I was told except on the next Friday, I was helping out in the kitchen, doing dishes and I asked what else they needed. Chen said they needed me to be saved. That really touched me that it was on his heart all the time, not just something to pray for at night and in the morning. I remember too that Derushah would give me long hugs and tell me she knew our Father was going to save me, in His own time. That really encouraged me. Zakar had a dream that I was going to be saved. Yedidah told me our Father is a God of love who isn't critical and judgmental, He just wants us to be like children, happy like Sekel dancing with Yotham, laughing and carefree.

But on Saturday I felt hopeless and hard. I didn't want to talk to anyone or listen to them. That night Yedidah told me the story of Yael and I got offended that so much effort was being put into saving me!! Yotham was host to our guest meal and I tried everything I could to offend him but he is so good natured I couldn't offend him, he just kept smiling and laughing. I have never been able to resist seeing the ridiculous aspect of what I'm doing in a temper, I can always be joked out of taking myself seriously. Soon I was laughing with him at his impersonations of me being offended. That night for the first time I heard about the evil one. I told you I didn't believe in God (other than a fuzzy being out in the universe) and I also didn't believe in evil. I didn't want to be judged so I didn't judge anyone else. I had troubles reconciling that to the reality of the world but I just swept it under the carpet. But when Yotham started talking I thought of the people I had met through my brother who have not a single redeeming feature in their character, who are given over entirely to do evil, violent, sadistic acts. What he was saying all started to make sense and I realized with a thump that Satan was real and powerful and active even in my insignificant life. I was afraid of how much I had given myself to him.

Yotham told me if I bought a camping ground that evil bikies were living in and I the owner told them to leave, swept them out, soon they would come back, one by one. Those evil people are insistent, you can't keep them out and they pollute everything they touch. One bikie makes the whole camp unclean. But if Yahshua buys that camping ground, if He wins our souls, then He puts a secure fence around us. The good thoughts stay safe and the evil thoughts stay outside. Yotham said, "If you want to you can test this out. Tonight you can try, for five minutes,

to not let one impure thought come to you, not let one selfish or perverted idea stay inside your head and I can guarantee you won't be able to."

That night there was a big storm and I laid in bed listening to its wild and troubled thrashing. I didn't want to try it out (pride, in case I couldn't do it), but it was like a sore tooth I couldn't resist sticking my tongue into. I tried his test and I failed. I tried again and again and again, all night to keep evil out of my head for just five minutes. It was ghastly and after four or five hours, in the early dawn, I just gave up and started praying to Yahshua to help me. It was eerie how quickly He answered me. Instantly I had great peace settle on me and outside the storm seemed to cease also. Everywhere was all quite, I could only hear the soft breathing of Yael asleep in the next bed, then I too fell asleep. In the morning I remembered in the story of Yael, that the little girl had to go out of her house, run to Yahshua and speak. I resolved to speak at the morning sacrifice but a great weight came on me. That morning for the first time, no one prayed for me but prayed instead for Klaus and Flower who were coming that day. I thought I could only be saved by prayer and I suddenly thought no one would pray for me again, so I had to speak and be saved but I couldn't. It made me feel frightened that I couldn't get any words out of my mouth. Amen was said and people made to leave the room, I was near the door and I cried out, "STOP!" but then I couldn't say anymore. I should have prayed then but I didn't think of that, I just tried with all my own strength to speak and finally I got some words out. Asher said, "Why are you talking so strangely? Just be real." I felt the weight come off me as I remembered the night Elionai was baptized; I was snapping at everyone to be quite, to stay away from me. But down at the beach, after the others had taken Elionai up the steps to the road, Asher waited for me and spoke gently to me, saying he wanted me to be his sister. He gave me a big hug and I started to cry because I realized I wasn't going to be cold-shouldered until I got the hint and left. I remember Asher saying he wanted me to be his sister. A whole lot of words came out, mainly about the storm and Yotham's words and how I had never had any peace in my life. Nun asked me about Elionai but I didn't care about him or anything else, I only wanted to give up my miserable life. But everyone sat in silence and I felt dead inside because they hadn't jumped up and shouted like they did for Elionai. I thought they were saying no to me. After a bit Nun said, "Well, what do you think, should we baptize her?". There were some murmurs so Nun said, "Do you want to be baptized?", and I said, "Of course what do you think I'm standing here for!" He started to laugh and laugh (I really like his laugh) and hugged me and shouted to the others who were somehow hugging me too. I felt so relieved that I was going to be baptized that I walked straight down the stairs and out the front door but I was held up while things were collected. We stood in the garden, a fresh strong breeze filled our garden, Yotham played "It is a Wonderful". Yael told me how she had been really waiting for me, praying for me from before I even arrived

in New Zealand, from when Elionai had told her about me. Apparently everyone had been praying for me with hope and confidence, like expecting a baby.