

Interview with Hakam (Ed Wiseman), Havah Hakam (Jean Swantko), Chets Barur (Luke, Ed's son),
Yonah (David Jones), Yahchebed Yonah, and Ruhamah

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

December 7, 1995

Q: Well, I don't know a whole lot about your community and one of the things I'm really interested in is what your beliefs are. I wonder if we could start by maybe you telling me a little bit about your beliefs.

YONAH: We generally refer to ourselves as a Messianic community, which, to people who have absolutely no idea what we're about, at least can understand it. We believe in the Messiah, and by that Messiah, we mean the historic person of the Bible who is commonly referred to as Jesus. We hold to, in a sense, the orthodox teaching in Christianity about his nature, but we don't hold to the life of Christianity. We have a life that we feel that he spoke of, a life with a kind of love, and that's basically it, a life of loving. He spoke of his kingdom, that what's in heaven would be here on the earth through his followers.

RUHAMAH: And he lived.

YONAH: Well, I've covered a lot of ground by saying the "historical" person and "orthodox Christianity," remember, we believe in him being the one who is the second person of the Trinity, the son of God, born of the Virgin, who made atonement for our sins, physically resurrected from the dead, physically ascended into heaven and physically will return to establish his kingdom. With some people it takes a lot of talk on our part for them to distinguish between why we're not saying that we are following the Jesus of Christianity, that, "Oh, well, you're just Christians," something like that because really we're not. Although, we don't just intentionally try to separate ourselves from everyone.

HAKAM: We started out with the same beliefs as everybody else, believing in Jesus. A lot of us came out of the '60s, in the beginning, of the gun [??] culture and what not, so when we believed in Jesus it was like we thought we were believing in the same thing that everybody else did, talked about Jesus, believed him. But somehow, we really took it serious, the life that he promised, that that life was a life of love, a life of unity. It was a life of . . .

HAVAH: Service.

HAKAM: Yeah, of serving, of giving yourself up for others. The way that we came to believe was that if you really believed in this Jesus then your sins were truly forgiven. The barriers of sin were removed from you life, then you would be able to love in that way, like he loved, and you would be able to live in unity with other people, which is what we all were looking for in the '60s. So we believed it and so when we started doing that, the result was that we had a common life together and we had a common purse, and that's the way we started out. Then, later on, we started realizing when we started trying to take identity with Christian groups, we found that a lot of times they'd get really offended by the fact that we were so radical. We didn't think we were radical. We just thought we were doing what Jesus taught. We didn't really understand much about anything. So we tried to integrate into the Christian system, kinda-like, or something, sorta like, "Well, here's this neat group and all these kids come to them. These hippie-like people are joining them." It all seemed a really good thing, "They're helping these kids get off drugs," and all that, that's kind of how Christian churches were relating to us. So we had the same basic beliefs in terms of basic doctrine, but the result of whatever it is we believed was radically different than going to church and being in a religious system. So that's where we started coming to see that there was a real difference. It's been a very difficult thing for us to make that distinction because a lot of times, if you say you're a Christian, that means that you're all the basic views of Christianity. And then, because we have a heritage a lot from the Old Testament, sometimes people say, "Then you're Jews right, you're

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really in Judaism." Well, we're really not in Judaism either. We wrote a paper, I don't know if Tim showed you that paper. What was the name of it, the one we took to Israel?

HAVAH: Thirty-four C.E. [??] ?

HAKAM: It happened in thirty-four C.E. We'll give you that paper. It tries to make that distinction to talk about how it is that we have roots from the Old Testament that link us to the Jews, we also have links in the New Testament that link us to the early disciples of Christ in the early Church, but we're not really in Christianity and we're not really in Judaism. But we have a lot of the same beliefs of both.

HAVAH: Yeah, the way the community actually started was that a man and his wife who became believers just opened up their home to anybody who wanted to stay and hear what they had to say about Jesus, and then had a coffeehouse. It started there and it developed in obedience to The Word. One of the things that struck me is that in looking at this Intentional Communities Directory, there's all these communities in there but it seems that a lot of them talk about what they're "going to be." It's like all these people have all this vision for how to do it right, and it never reaches the point of materializing. But to me, the thing about this community is it's sort of just the reverse. It started with the germ of what our Master did, which was to give up his life in service of others. He said, "Pick up your cross and follow me." To me, the genesis and the history of our community is increasing and living in obedience to that command. Then everything else flows from that as opposed to having a prototype and trying to put it into place and never measuring up or failing. Starting small and . . .

HAKAM: I think the basic element of what we believe is that we believe in the element of giving up your life. That that's really the main ingredient of whatever it means to be saved.

YONAH: Not incorporating God into your life, but you giving your life to Him.

Q: Okay.

RUHAMAH: When I interrupted, I guess he didn't understand what I was thinking, but to me the difference is we're living the same life that Jesus lived. Not just what he said, because it is so easy to find people who say one thing and do something else, teach good teachings, but we're living the life that he lived. That's what he wanted, that's what was in his heart, and that's what spoke to me the most when I came. It wasn't that people were saying all these nice things, but it was what they were actually doing.

Q: Do you follow what was said in the Acts about men having all things common [??], is that what you're trying to do?

YAHCHEBED: Exactly, yes. That's amazing.

YONAH: That's important. With the emphasis on it not being a doctrinal blueprint that was superimposed over our lives, that we would conform to what we read there because I can distinctly remember, in the first few months that I was there, of opening the Bible and saying, wow, we're doing what they did. I wasn't even aware of it. It just came from a heart that believed that my sins had been forgiven me because of the great price that the Son of God was willing to pay for my life. Since I believed that, nothing else was going on in my heart but that I would return my life to him. Everything I had belonged to him because he bought me from death, and so as a result, our living together was just like metal filings to a magnet. It all just went to the heart of the matter, and there wasn't a whole lot of

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conscious thought about living together or anything else, we just loved one another. We wanted to love one another. We loved our Master, we knew he loved us, and from the heart we drew together.

RUHAMAH: I'd like to say here, I was a hippie in the '60s. And all I had ever seen with flowers ... I've always been into plants and flowers, I do herbs as my main occupation here in the community, it's just been in me since I was little, and so I noticed flowers. And all I'd ever seen in the communes is somebody on a trip might pick a dandelion or something, they might not even know the name of it, put it in a jar, set it somewhere, and never come back to it again. And I would clean up behind a few months later, no water in the jar, the flower definitely wilted, just laying there. It's all I'd ever seen. And I came into the community the first day, I went into one of our restaurants we had in Chattanooga, and I went into the bathroom to use the bathroom. It was very clean and neat. Everything about it was in order, and there in the back of the toilet was a jar of something like this, a jar, but nothing fancy, was flowers in freshly picked clean water, but weeds, daisies and clovers, and things that somebody had obviously picked on the way to work. I grew up in the upper class, I've seen florists' flowers many times, and the woman would get them and put them on the shelf and, you know, she wasn't any different from the hippies, she'd never go back to them, but they would stay nice looking for three weeks or something. But these were fresh flowers that I knew to be very perishable, in that clean water in that clean jar in the clean bathroom, and what went on in my heart at that moment was I said, if they take care of the flowers like this, they'll take care of me, and moved in.

Q: Wow. That was Chattanooga, Tennessee?

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

Q: And when was that?

RUHAMAH: '75. Because, I just knew from that, in my spirit, that if these people were really doing what I was hearing them talk about, that was enough for me. Everything else supported it at that point and time [??].

YAHCHEBED: She had lived in other communities [unintelligible] . . .

RUHAMAH: All I'd seen was the dandelion dried up for about three years prior to that, but . . .

HAVAH: And human counterparts, I'm sure.

RUHAMAH: Oh, and the details supporting it.

Q: What other communities had you lived in?

RUHAMAH: Right prior to moving into the community, the Lighthouse family that had a house in Atlanta, Georgia; Altemont [??], Tennessee; and San Francisco. Now, I haven't looked in this communities directory, I doubt that they are still around, you probably never heard of them.

Q: No, I haven't.

RUHAMAH: Yeah, I should look to see. It was a spiritual community that was started by some homosexuals, and that was an underlying spirit in the community. It was pretty typical commune kind of thinking that was involved there. People were free to move from each of the houses however they saw fit, whenever they wanted to, and it was all very structured, but the group of people had been together

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for a number of years -- five, six, ten for some of them. I think they actually at that time had gone about ten years. I don't remember now, I haven't thought about it for a long time, but there was some sort of a foundation to keep it together, but it was real loose. And I was living as a part of that community when I came into this community. But we had an experience that sent us searching for something else, the core people. A young man, twenty-seven or something, was shot to death on The Farm [??] because there was a certain amount of prejudice against a bunch of hippies living up in the mountains in Tennessee. And that's what happened. And when it happened, we decided that we were gonna look for something else, that something was missing from our community. We went searching for other communities at that point. I should talk about that. But prior to that whole experience, I had lived in another typical expression of the Sixties, well, I guess, Seventies at that point, where a group of hippies lived each in their own house all in an area in Tennessee. The area covered maybe twenty or so square miles, and they were just a house here, a house here, a house there . . . but this was in rural Tennessee near [unintelligible]. Smithville was the town that . . . Delltown [??] is real small rural Tennessee towns. Artists and hippies . . . and we communicated with each other quite frequently. We were a community, but there was quite a few houses and miles in between. I was there with my brother and sister in a house that had been built during the Depression -- had no running water, no electricity. We happened to be related by blood, but there were other people there coming and going all the time and all the other houses in the area were all like that, there was a core people that stayed in them and [unintelligible]. So I saw a lot of that approach to living at that time. We traveled and visited other communities during that time so I got to see a lot of what was going on. When the Lighthouse family had that experience with death, we started looking at Christian communities. And The Way, The Truth, and The Light, that was in North Carolina, wasn't it? Well, that's where Cindy . . . oh no, no, okay. . .

YONAH: Was that your first communal experience?

Q: The Lighthouse?

RUHAMAH: The Lighthouse Family, no, because I'd only lived in Delltown for almost a year where all the people were scattered about, and that was quite a bit different than the Lighthouse. The Way, The Truth, and The Light was a Christian community, and just on the intuitional level, I did not like it. My intuition said, this isn't right. And I found out a while later that it was a homosexual that had brought it together, he was married and he hadn't really revealed his homosexuality until just about this period in that community and it all fell apart real fast after that. But just the way I was treated there, I was like, wait a minute, the whole thing, it just -- there was something that I didn't like. We visited a lot of other communities, but I don't even remember the names now, and none of them there just, I felt like a little out of kilter [??] in all of them. My spirit wouldn't let me stay there. All this time period was a period of months because we had determined, when the death occurred, that something was missing in our spiritual life, so we were actively looking. And everybody that was involved in that came into this community, because there was something uniting us there. We all had something in us that wanted the same thing and when we came into this community it was what . . .

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Q: How many was that?

RUHAMAH: Uh, none of us were married at the time, but it was four couples and there were only two children involved at the time. And that was in '75.

Q: And what is the name that you call your group of communities?

RUHAMAH: This current one? This one?

Q: Yes.

HAKAM: Messianic communities.

Q: That's just how you refer to it?

HAKAM: Well, really how we refer to it is like in each individual location -- like this is called the Basin Farm.

Q: The Basin Farm?

HAKAM: Basin Farm. And then, we only go by the town we're in. Say, for example, in Rutland, we are the community in Rutland.

Q: Okay, so there's no overarching name for all the different communities.

HAKAM: No, we try not to have one, really, because we're not really hierarchical like that.

Q: Okay. Mm-hmm.

HAKAM: You know, in any kind of formal sense, there's no Vatican or something, you know what I mean?

Q: Right, I understand. Well, you said a man and a woman started the whole thing by opening up their home?

HAKAM: Yeah.

Q: And when and where was that?

HAKAM: That was in Chattanooga.

Q: Okay, so that's the place that you ended up. Okay.

RUHAMAH: That was kind of the center one.

Q: So that was the very first.

HAKAM: I think it was in '72, right? '71 or '72.

HAVAH: We can give her a copy of John Boseman's [??] paper.

HAKAM: Yeah.

HAVAH: There's a lot of the things that you're asking and the background is documented by different people who have interviewed that might help give you a lot of this background information or . . .

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Q: Mm-hmm. Okay.

HAKAM: One thing, Deborah, I wanted to say about when you were asking about beliefs -- I want to make one more statement about it. The thing that we saw that was always missing from other attempts to believe in something meaningful or even to find meaning in Christianity, or whatever. That really, this element we were talking about before of giving up your life, that that was really the missing element. It wasn't like people coming together and trying to accommodate everyone's . . .

YONAH: Inclinations?

HAKAM: . . . inclinations or trying to accommodate everybody's selfishness, basically.

RUHAMAH: Yeah, that's it.

HAKAM: But it was the opposite of people coming together because they really saw the worth of the Messiah. They really saw the love of the Messiah in dying on the cross. Because of that, seeing that he was worthy to give your life up to him. So every person coming in and being baptized would give up their life, their future, their possessions. And really coming into the lifelong commitment, covenant. So really, that's really how it is. It's not like it's his way or my way or anybody else's way, but we're all coming into understanding what the word of God is really all about. And all of us wanted to do it. And our experience has been, as we've met other people in other groups and even with other religious or spiritual foundations to their groups or no spiritual foundation to their group or whatever, that it seems like always the problem gets to be trying to accommodate everybody's preferences and selfishness. And I think that Robert Hurrier [??] has a lot to say about this. That was one of his overwhelming conclusions of -- I don't want to get into what he might say, but I think that would be a good topic to address with him, get his perspective.

RUHAMAH: I want to say something about it. I think that this sums it up the best for me and my experience, because of course, while it was happening, it wasn't so easy to step back and say, this is what's the problem. But looking back, it's very easy to agree with that. I grew up in the upper class. My only sister and one of my brothers were in this communal situation I was describing in Delltown, Tennessee, in the house that had been built in the Depression. Lots of people came and went, very loose structure, no real rules or any problems because they were ready for people to come and go and do their own thing and that's what people did. And I'm a hard worker, always have been. I love to work with plants, I was out in the garden all the time, and I kept things clean and I wasn't a negative influence. My sister kicked me out. Yeah. She and I had done alright growing up together. We didn't have big problems or anything. I'm sure we went through what sisters go through, but there was never a thing where I would've said she didn't like me, and I never thought I didn't like her. And one of the young ladies there who had been in that house for a long time with my sister came to my sister and said, "How come? I like her." And I kept to myself and I did things around the house. Didn't think I was causing a problem. My sister just didn't want me to be there. And then right after that I came into to the community that I was in that led me right into this one. So for me it worked out just fine, but that, to me, expressed what Hakam was saying from my perspective. There was no rationale to what was happening. There was no way to fit in and there was no laying down your life for one another. Because then love can really happen. I've thought of myself as one of the very few practicing hippies that's still practicing in '95 because we're doing here what was in people's hearts to do in the Seventies, but they couldn't do it. My sister couldn't love me even though she was a hippie right next to me in this idyllic

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situation, it was wonderful there. There was no pressure on us, there was no problems, everything was going well. She couldn't love me. I couldn't [??] love her. I mean, I'm sure I did lots of things that bothered her, but I never knew about, but here we can talk about those things because the whole way of interacting is entirely different because we laid down our lives for each other and just changed. It breaks down the barriers so people can touch hearts, and you couldn't do that anywhere that I experienced in the Sixties and Seventies. There was no way to break down the barriers and actually touch hearts with other people. You could say a lot of things, but most people couldn't relate beyond talking about the acid they were doing or the trip they were on. That was just about the level or bond of communication.

HAVAH: This is our son Luke. This is Deborah.

Q: Hi.

CHETS: Hello.

Q: And you grew up here.

CHETS: Yes.

Q: Your whole life here?

CHETS: Yes.

Q: Great. Did others of you have communal living experience before you came here? I don't remember.

YAHCHEBED: Well, as she's been talking I realize that I probably actually lived in another one too. It all comes back. It's all coming back!

YONAH: It was a while ago.

YAHCHEBED: My brother lived in a house and it was like a commune, too, and I lived upstairs for a short time, but that was just a short time, that's probably why, but it made me think of it when she was talking about it because it was like it didn't work because nobody wanted to do the dishes after awhile. It's the same old problem, I guess, probably.

Q: Where was this?

YAHCHEBED: This was in St. Petersburg, Florida. And let's see, I forget how old I was. I think I was nineteen.

Q: Did the group have a name?

YAHCHEBED: No no, this was one of the many probably hundreds . . .

Q: Of shared houses?

YAHCHEBED: . . . that's probably more what it was. For sure it wasn't a community. But I did relate to a lot of people who lived in some big houses there in St. Petersburg called [unintelligible] Park. It was just an area. I guess, back in that time, the early Seventies, there were a lot of these neighborhoods that had the bigger homes and a lot of the hippies moved into them and fixed them up or didn't fix them up, or

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whatever, and they lived in them. So that was my stomping ground, so to speak, for a long time, for a while. But then I became really disillusioned with the whole scene, just like Ruhamah was saying, because I realized that the things that I was seeking for in that type of lifestyle, which was peace, you know, the peace, love, freedom of the hippie philosophy or hippie, whatever, ideal maybe, wasn't there because it came back out of that same thing. Everybody was selfish and there was no way to break through that selfish root that was in each person there. No matter how much you wanted to love, no matter how many flowers, I became a flower child for one day, just to see what it was like.

RUHAMAH: One day! How did you do that?

YAHCHEBED: Alright, the reason I say one day is because there was an organization that started to sell flowers on the streets back in the early Seventies, called Flower Children Incorporated, and actually, I did the job for one day, I was a flower child anyway, but it was like for one day I said, okay, I'm gonna go do this. I'm gonna sell flowers, I'm gonna [unintelligible], what a wonderful thing to do. So I did. I went and got my bucket of carnations and I was out there on this corner in St. Petersburg, and I started selling flowers. People would drive up to the stoplights and go, "But I don't have any money, but I really want a flower," and I'd go, oh, here, you can have one anyway, and at the end of the day, this is what I was gonna survive on, this money that I was making, at the end of the day I realized I had given all my profits away. I'd just given all the other flowers away. I got some money from someone and I said, I'll starve doing this, so I stopped doing those. My one day experience as a flower child. That was my one day experience. But I was really looking for those things. I wasn't really heavily into drugs, and so I wasn't seeking so much of an experience in that way. I did do some, you know, pot and [unintelligible] socially, things like that, but I was really truly looking for God. In my deepest self I had always believed that there was a God, and so I thought, well, this is it. Everybody was growing their hair long and I just got into the whole scene. It seemed like love was really going to be found there, because that was the ideal and that was what was spread through all the music and everywhere. But then when it came down to the reality of it, the relationships that I had in those community-type situations were never satisfying, never fulfilling, were always shallow, and never left me with the sense that I was going anywhere right. It was hurtful, always hurtful.

RUHAMAH: Oh, yes.

YAHCHEBED: And so as a woman back then, it was like after so many broken relationships at that point I really saw that this was not where it was at. This was not where I was going to find what "love" was, so I became very disillusioned with that whole thing and really distraught, to the place where I was just really almost ready to die because I was so in search of the truth. I said, I've gotta find the truth, and I wrote poetry, and you know, all the poetry of the age, of looking for the truth. And then, probably one day I ran into a small little community of Christians, Jesus Freaks, in the early Seventies, and they invited me, actually, into their home in St. Petersburg, and they had a house of probably thirty people living together, young people, Jesus Freaks, that's what they were. And they had long hair still, and it was run by a nice couple that had a big home. They all lived together, they took all their meals in common. But they still encouraged the young people there to go to college, and still pursue some type of career, preferably something having to do with the Bible, but they wanted people to continue to be in the system, so to speak. In the evenings we'd go witnessing to people on the beaches of Florida, just talking to people. And I liked it, I really liked it. I was still in college at the time, and had a job, but then I met a

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man from this community here that I'm in now. He came, amazingly enough, all the way to Florida to that very house that I was living in, from Tennessee. We believe it was the angels that brought him.

RUHAMAH: Who was it?

YAHCHEBED: It was Samekh [??], this brother named Samekh, and he came to the house that I was living in. It was called Jesus Manor, that was the name of the house I was in. And he came there and he lived there for two months. I took him to work every day, he was working. He was there for a medical reason, he had cirrhosis on his hands, and he had to live in the sun for a while, it helped him, so that's why he was there. And I just totally fell in love with the spirit that he had. He was so loving and friendly, and I said, this is really amazing because he was doing the same thing. He was living in this community here, but yet, they didn't pursue their own careers. All their emphasis was on living together, working together, and not pursuing their own individual lifestyles anymore. So he was going to be married, he was engaged to be married to this woman up in Tennessee, and he invited me to the wedding. So I went to the wedding, and the rest is history. I went there and I saw what they were doing.

RUHAMAH: That was your first visit? Samekh's wedding?

YAHCHEBED: Yes. April first.

HAKAM: She went out there for that wedding and she met this guy and whammo! I'm telling you.

YAHCHEBED: We were both tall enough for each other. He was looking for a tall wife, and I filled the bill.

RUHAMAH: I was thinking, earlier today, in preparing to meet you, there was a spirit going around in the Sixties and Seventies. Some people were affected by it, and some people weren't. I came from a family of five children, I have one brother who couldn't care less. The rest of us were all affected. And that spirit led people in different places. It led them, mostly, to community of one sort or another. So I was thinking, why did people end up in the various communities that they ended up in? And I don't really know that I know too much about that, so when I was thinking that way I said, I know why I ended up here, and I heard the same thing in what Yahchebed said. Ever since high school, I think, I can't really remember when I was conscious of it, there's been something in me that knew the truth existed. And I spoke it to my sister once. I said, I can remember my very words, if the truth exists, which I think it does, I'm gonna find it because I search in many places. And you're gonna find it because it's dropped on you. Now, it hasn't dropped on her yet. But I did search in many places. I mean, I was a very active person. I looked. I was consciously looking all this time. And when I got here, I knew it wasn't anywhere else. I was totally satisfied. I had been here maybe five or six years, and all of a sudden that what went on in my head, the voice that had come to me in the sense of my thoughts, was, what is the ultimate reality? That was the thought that would center me on this. Every time it came, I would go, well, haven't found it yet. And I'd been here about five years when that thought came back. I said, I haven't that thought in five years. That's right. I'm here. This is what I was looking for. And there was somehow that had been put into me. I can't explain it any better than this, but there was a deep sense in me that the truth existed. And when I got here, I knew that this was what I had been longing for my whole life. My parents had plenty of money. I was educated as the elite. I had all of the . . . I was a hap, definitely. I could've done anything, gone anywhere, I was prepared for that. But it all led me to here.

HAKAM: I think one thing that was a common experience for all of us coming here was that, you know, people called it different things like some were looking for ultimate reality, some truth and peace and all

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these things, but the bottom line was that really, everyone was looking for love. They were looking for relationships that worked. Yeah. Being really confused about why it is. Why is there a war? We didn't want to go to Vietnam and that's all well and good, but why is there war? Why do people make war? Why . . . why . . .

YONAH: Why does God allow it?

HAKAM: Yeah, why does it happen, you know, all these questions. The ultimate thing was, there's gotta be some way. Is there some way that human beings can not live in a way that they divide from one another and create war with one another, they're hostile toward each other? So that's what happened to me. When I walked into this community, I walked into a spirit of love that just knocked my socks off of me, literally. That's really what I [??] said. I walked in and I said, I've never seen anything like this. If there is a God, this has got to be God, you know? Because I think from the Sixties, I came out of that experience saying, if there is a God, God has to be love.

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

RUHAMAH: Mm-hmm.

HAVAH: Mm-hmm.

YONAH: Mm-hmm.

HAKAM: You know what I mean, God has to be love, you know, it's got to be that human beings can care for each other and live in peace with one another, and that is God. I think [unintelligible] a lot of times is a very dramatic experiences. I don't want to sound too mystical here, but of coming into the community and really sensing that love really was real, and being drawn to it, and paying attention to the words that were being spoken about . . . you know, I can remember saying, well, how did you get this life? How did you get to be this way? And then that's when I heard the message of the Gospel, and I think that was true for a lot of people.

RUHAMAH: But I was too burned out to here the words. I just . . .

Q: You just felt it? Uh-huh.

RUHAMAH: I could feel it was really happening.

HAVAH: I think -- I was looking at your pamphlet here, and two questions I have something to say about, one was, "What motivated people to seek communal living?," and, "What lessons can be learned from this unusual period in American History?" I was listening to everybody here speak and I think it's sort of telling that that time was when the baby boomers were coming of age and all of us were people who had everything, you know, we didn't live through war, we were educated, we had freedom, we had everything, but yet, we were the generation that saw that what our parents and what rich people had, what the prevailing status quo had wasn't enough, wasn't what we wanted. There was still greed, there was still war, there was still injustice. So it seemed that wealth and having things wasn't it. That materialism wasn't it. So that we were really looking for what they've all been talking about, essentially, love. My background's a little different because I was raised Roman Catholic. I graduated from high school in 1968, and I touched all these things because I was interested in wanting the freedom that they had, I didn't want the restraint, but yet, somehow I was raised with enough, whatever, substance and values that when I would encounter these different groups, like, I lived in the suburbs of Philadelphia in the late Sixties and early Seventies, when I'd go downtown to the hippie streets and what not, when I

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was in immersed in it I could see the problems with it. I could see the dirt. I could see the filth. I could see the unhappy people underneath all the clothes and the flowers and the incense and all the stuff that looks good. There was something in me that never . . . I guess that's the reason I never lived in a commune. I never could quite jump into it full force even though I wanted the results. I went to college and then I went to law school because I believed in the thing of a person can make a difference, you know, changing society from within, which I guess most of the people that you're talking to are people who sort of dropped out and opted for an alternative way. So what happened to me is it wasn't until ten years later, until '85 that I moved into this community, because I spent that, whatever, fifteen or twenty years following my ideals and trying to make a difference. And going for the ideals but not becoming a hippie and casting it all to the four winds. What happened when I met the community in '85 was the same thing as all of them are saying. It's like realizing that you couldn't change the system from within either, you know what I mean? You couldn't make people love one another, no matter what programs you got involved in, no matter if you had a career, no matter if you became a judge or a lawyer or social worker or whatever. It still wasn't going to change the mess that was there. So I think, in terms of the lessons that can be learned from this period, as far as we're concerned, is that we know that we found hope, you know? That there is an alternative way that is the answer, that we believe that all these people that you're probably interviewing here, that were seekers in the Sixties and Seventies, that we have the answer to what was in their hearts.

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

RUHAMAH: Mm. I can see . . .

HAVAH: That this is the answer. This is where you can find love and it's obeying the words of our Master and giving up your life, and it's quite the opposite of what was said in the Sixties, doing your own thing. It's actually giving up doing your own thing and laying your life down to love somebody else. One other thing that struck me when somebody was talking about war -- I never had this thought before, but you know the button in the Sixties, the big button was make love not war. And that's what everybody did, so I'm not gonna hate, I'm gonna love people, so they went and slept with everybody, and they created a whole different kind of war. You know?

HAKAM: Civil war!

HAVAH: It created a whole different kind of hurting, heartbreak, and I was thinking, you know isn't it interesting, the button didn't say "make peace not war," but that's what our life is about now. Making peace, because to make peace what you have to do is give up your own way, is to surrender. And that's what our Master was. He was a peacemaker, and that's what he commanded his followers to be, and that's what the Word says is the peacemakers will what? Inherit the kingdom of God? You know, and that's it. So the answer is really to make peace but not point out [??] other people who don't make peace, but you have to become a peacemaker yourself, in your marriages, with your children, with the people you live with, and not just move on to the next experience and think that's where your thrills are gonna come from or your satisfaction, or whatever.

RUHAMAH: That's right.

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Q: Luke? Would you be willing to talk a little bit about what it's been like to grow up here and what the community means to you?

CHETS: Yes. Um, I don't know where to start.

YONAH: What was it like to be a child?

Q: When were you born?

CHETS: '75.

Q: '75. And your parents were living in the community at that point? In Tennessee?

CHETS: Yes.

Q: You'd been in the community, what, two years?

HAKAM: Yeah, about a year and a half [unintelligible].

Q: And that was in Tennessee?

CHETS: Yeah, and when I was four we moved up to [unintelligible].

Q: So you've always had a lot of other adults around beside your parents.

CHETS: Yeah, oh yeah. And we were educated at home our whole life.

Q: Oh, all you kids are homeschooled?

YAHCHEBED: And you were born at home, in here, too?

HAVAH: No, no no.

CHETS: Born in the hospital.

YAHCHEBED: You were born in a hospital, that's right [??].

Q: Are most of your kids born by home births?

YAHCHEBED: Yes.

RUHAMAH: My second daughter was the first one to be a home birth.

Q: Do you have a midwife in your community?

YAHCHEBED: We have several.

Q: Several? Oh how nice.

RUHAMAH: Because we have several children, mainly.

HAKAM: One midwife couldn't keep up with it.

Q: I was just wondering if you had to go out to get a midwife or?

YAHCHEBED: No. All the communities have their own.

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Q: Oh, that's wonderful.

RUHAMAH: We had to go out in my situation, but then from that point on we handled it ourselves.

CHETS: Yes. So I grew up there. I also lived in Nova Scotia, Canada.

YAHCHEBED: What was it like growing up like? You didn't go to school so you were taught at home.

Q: Were there lots of other kids around to do things with?

CHETS: Yeah. What I liked about it was that there's a relationship with the teachers that is unseen of ... I'll finish what I was saying. And one thing about this friendship with the teachers. And there's authority there. So the teachers have the exact same mind as my parents did. And it really helped us to grow up straight and it had proper things put into us. You know, respect for people that are older than us. And I'm really grateful for the way I was raised. I mean, there's just so many opportunities living in a communities to learn all different things, all different trades. I started playing piano when I was four years old. There was this other guy in the house that played the piano, and I was just totally interested. So I watched him all the time and he started teaching me.

YAHCHEBED: So you don't really see a need to go to college or anything?

CHETS: Well, there's opportunities within the community to expand our learning prospects. There's people in the community who've graduated from Harvard and MIT and Yale, things like that, and they can teach us different trades and studies that, we don't really need a degree to get by. There's no reason just to have a degree. We do different things around here and within the community. But . . .

RUHAMAH: Do you think you've missed anything by living in the community?

CHETS: No, not at all.

HAVAH: I have a question for you. What matters the most to you in your life?

CHETS: Um, having a good conscience. Not having a load of guilt on me like so many people do and you see them walking down the street and they can't even look you in the eye because they're so weighed down with guilt. And having friends, true friends that aren't phony. True friends that lay down their life to love you. Not just because you have a lot of money or you have a nice car, you know what I mean? We're loved for who we are and not what we can do or what we have to offer.

HAVAH: You're twenty. Do you feel like you know what you're gonna do with your life?

CHETS: Yeah. To a certain extent. I like to teach music.

YAHCHEBED: I mean, you want to be in this community for the rest of your life?

CHETSR: Definitely.

HAVAH: She doesn't know you like we know you.

YAHCHEBED: She doesn't . . . I mean, I know that.

CHETS: Yeah.

YAHCHEBED: We're helping her.

CHETS: I want to be in this community for the rest of my life, yes. I don't want to go anywhere.

YAHCHEBED: Do you want to follow what your father's been doing?

CHETS: Yes. The last two years I've done a lot of traveling. We had a temporary community in California and I went out there. It made me really sad to see how degraded society was. Like, I was in Santa Cruz and it's beautiful out there. I'm not saying that everyone's a bad person, but people's morals were so watered down that anything went. One guy even told me what Hitler did was fine because he had to do

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that to come to a certain level of consciousness, so, I mean, how far people have watered things down, you know, to be "open minded," you know? And then when you start mentioning morals and everything they say, well, you're narrow minded. But they're narrow minded to our morals, you know what I mean? And then, I was in our community in France for ten months. I just got back with my brother. We worked there putting on a slate roof of our chateau. It was all kind of deteriorated, we were putting the slate roof on. And it amazed me to see all different nationalities living together in peace, you know, Spanish, German, and French, all in complete harmony within the community. It was like two hundred and fifty people there. And, I mean, history bears up that virtually impossible. Fought wars together for centuries. They hate each other. But somehow, in our community, that [unintelligible] has broken down the barriers that separate people, and they can live together in harmony. It just amazed me.

YAHCHEBED: The German and the French and the Spanish.

Q: When you were growing up did you have friends outside of the community or people that you played with or did things with?

CHETS: Some. I knew people but I wasn't really close friends with anyone.

Q: Because I was just curious what you saw as maybe the difference between your life and their life.

CHETS: Mm. Well, I saw a lot of people that didn't really have much of a purpose. Their parents go to work and they just play around, fool around, watch T.V., just kill time, pretty much. They really didn't have anything to do. There was no one to motivate them and pass something into them. Whereas our life is so full of things to do and so much opportunity and friendships. You know, we always had a purpose. Always working with someone or learning something. We did activities too.

RUHAMAH: I wanted to say something about what Luke said. He was saying that all of the adults all his lifetime have had this same point of view, the same understanding about things as his parents. And when I was in the communes out in the world, there was no standard. I love children, I always have, and I was attracted to the children. And as I moved from community to community, I was growing in my spiritual awareness of raising children, and I'd do something in one community that through pain and suffering I had discovered was the only thing acceptable in my hippie philosophy of raising children. Get to the next community and they'd just . . . I'd get hurt all over again because that wasn't their philosophy. I remember this one child, so neglected, this is when I lived in Altemont [??] Tennessee, neglected. And I told her to do something at one point, that was pretty important that she did it, like so she wouldn't get hurt or something, and she didn't do it, and I spanked her on the bottom. And I immediately felt guilty. Oh no, what have I done to this child? It was so confusing. There was just no way to know how to raise a child. But my heart longed to know. I had even considered adopting a child as a single parent at one time because of my love for children. And I am so thankful that I'm here and that there was everything that's here in raising children. This young man I've known almost his whole life. He is wonderful. He is a wonderful person. And I am really thankful to be around him and to be around children like him with his qualities. I know I wasn't raised like that, even though my parents had all this money and I went to the finer schools and all that, I didn't have one fraction of the character that this young man has. And I'm so thankful that my children were raised here where together we groped to know how to raise children. It wasn't that we went with one person's philosophy on how to do it.

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Groped to be able to produce fine young people like this. I have a daughter almost his age, she's nineteen and a half, she's going to be twenty in several days. And I'm really thankful that I was brought to this place because our children [unintelligible]. Everything that was in my heart we have in my children. But I never ever could have done it on my own.

HAKAM: Deborah, we have lunch, if you want to.

Q: Yeah, would you like me to turn off the tape recorder?

HAKAM: Well, maybe for a minute.

YAHCHEBED: Just while I serve.

HAVAH: Just while she serves. [TAPE PAUSED]

Q: Do you eat all your meals in common?

RUHAMAH: Mm-hmm.

YAHCHEBED: Yes, we do.

Q: And how many people live at this farm?

YAHCHEBED: Right now it's around fifty. Forty-five to fifty, but the number swells in the summertime sometimes. Up to different numbers.

Q: A lot bigger?

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm. We have camping out.

HAVAH: When we first moved here we were out in the camper and our children were up in tents. We were part of the swell.

Q: Yeah, it's a lot easier to do that in the summer.

YAHCHEBED: Yes.

Q: So is most of the housing like . . . I didn't really get a good look at it when we drove in. Is it like this building and then are there some other out buildings?

CHETS: There are some rooms in the silo there. And we're in the process of building a cabin across the river.

Q: So most people live in this building?

YAHCHEBED: Yes.

CHETS: But we have two houses on the hill on the edge of the town. There's about, what, fifty-five people there?

HAVAH: Oh, seventy-two I think.

CHETS: Seventy-two?

HAVAH: I think so. Something like that.

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Q: So people don't live in family units really.

HAVAH: Yeah, we do.

YAHCHEBED: Yes, we do.

HAVAH: Oh, yes.

Q: Oh, okay, so a family will have a suite of rooms or something?

RUHAMAH: Yeah, whatever their needs are.

HAVAH: Every couple has a room, and then however rooms necessary to accommodate their children. Yeah, we're very strong on the nuclear family. Actually, that's a good point to bring up.

RUHAMAH: It is probably something that you could talk about.

HAVAH: A lot of people think of communes . . . we don't think of ourselves as a commune really, we think of ourselves as a community, because the building block's the family. The whole focus of our parenting is on parental authority. We have teachings in our community on everything. Everything from raising children to what we eat to how we sing to what music we have, on everything, cover every aspect of our life, because we've given our life up, leading us to follow the Word. So our Father really instructs us on everything. It's like the parents are the building block of everything, like what God commanded to Abraham was that you have to command your household to be able to lead Israel. We see it that adults aren't fit to rule unless they can rule over their own family.

HAKAM: So really, what's happening here is the development of a new social order. A whole new way of relating. Restored way of human beings relating to one another. I think in the Communities Directory there, they created a spiritual path for us in their little thing [??], which we told them. And we were very happy to see that they really got it. [unintelligible] those guys really got it.

HAVAH: They gave us our own category.

HAKAM: They gave us our own category. They considered we weren't Christian, weren't Jews, whatever. In their book, we called ourselves A New Social Order in Messiah. So, for spiritual path, in their book, that's what they put us on. New Social Order in Messiah. So that's really what's going on. That's what's being built here. So it's a whole culture, you know? It's like in every nation where we live, this culture is being formed. If you were to go to France you'd see people from different countries, but you'd see the same kinds of social building going on. The same kind of culture emerging in all these communities.

Q: Do you have any other messianic groups that you're connected with or tied to or feel an allegiance with or?

HAKAM: Just the ones that have been raised up. We have friends and knowledge of different groups and interaction with some of them, but we're not in any kind of alliance with them or anything.

YONAH: Do you know Albert Bayes [??]?

Q: Yeah.

HAKAM: One thing I wanted to say about that is, I know in the beginning, I remember my Daddy, he'd say things and we would hear this very common question or concern in the early days, of having children and raising them in community. Some people were saying, aren't you afraid that your children

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are gonna forget who you are? That they're gonna forget who their parents are? Because you all live together, and all that view. All that will break down, but because there's such a strong influence on the family unit, it doesn't break down. Even though we live together and our children do things with a lot of other people, we've never seen that kind of disintegration of a sense of what your family is. You don't come in and see people in the community just sort of floating through like not really belonging anywhere.

YONAH: Drifting.

HAKAM: And I've heard of [??] some communities that in the second generation their children grow up somewhat bitter. Because of maybe in the social structure of the community, they believe in open relationships. So some of the children will grow up and not know who their fathers are, for example, and create a lot of bitterness and so they're leaving the community because they thought they got robbed of something really fundamental in the basic foundation of their life and upbringing. So anyway, we really seen that because of the emphasis in the Bible and what's in the Bible is centered on families but it's in the context of like a tribal nation, so that's how we see ourselves is a tribal nation, you know, with many clans. We call this a clan here. A clan of a tribe. So these communities are like tribal communities. We don't live in tents, we live in houses.

YAHCHEBED: Except in the summertime, we throw a few tents.

HAKAM: Yeah, we like to live in tents.

Q: Yeah, I bet it's nice in the summer. What are your relations like with neighboring people? The broader community?

HAVAH: They vary. For the most part, when people get to know us, they're good when they actually get to know us. If they read negative publicity about us or receive fear, I mean, there's a basic fear of the unknown in people, so we find that our best way is to be ourselves, do the work we do and as people get to know us, our reputation is good. People come in from the outside who . . . I don't know if you're familiar with the Cult Awareness Network?

Q: Yes.

HAVAH: Okay. The Cult Awareness Network has basically done us a lot of damage trying to destroy us and spreading lies about us, so we have to live with that. So sometimes that's the source of bad impressions, on the part of people, but we're sort of getting better at knowing how to address that without reacting to it and becoming unglued by it. Just sort of continuing on being who we are and letting people judge us for ourselves seems to bear good fruit.

HAKAM: That's what we consistently find everywhere we go, that the longer we live there, the more people like us because they get to know who we are. Because even though we work together, we really are interacting with the out there world quite a bit, like the business that you saw in town.

YAHCHEBED: And the cafes really help the response. We have a cafe in Boston. It really enables people to come in and see us on a ground that they can deal with, because, you know, we're feeding them. And then we are able to talk to them. They have questions, they come in. Over a period of time they see who we are, they see how we function together and they ask questions, and some want to even come to our homes and see more about who we are. We invite them. Our homes are always open to people. We

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keep an open door all the time, to people, so it enables that fear that she was talking about to start becoming less. The more you get to know someone, the less you are afraid of them so it breaks down those fears. So we're always extending invitations to people to come into our home, to get to know us.

HAKAM: So over time people in town come to see that we pay our taxes, we pay our bills. It might take us a while, but we do it, you know? And we're not rich, we live day to day, really. We live from what our Father provides for us and this little cottage industry. We do some contract work like in the trades, building and stuff like that.

HAVAH: One of the things that happens with us is, I guess, there's always a tendency to label or categorize groups. When people see us, it's like lots of times, religious people think we're hippies, and alternative people think we're religious. So it's like we can be x'ed out of somebody's interest level because they think, oh, we're too religious or we believe in free love, one or the other. And actually, we're neither.

Q: Do you have worship services that people can come to if they're interested to find out what you believe, or . . . ?

CHETS: Yes, twice a day, morning and evening. And then on Friday night, that's the beginning of our Sabbath, Friday night to Saturday night, at sundown, and we have a big celebration to bring in the Sabbath, we do Israeli folk dancing and things like that.

YONAH: That's Friday night. But we have a meal together and it's really a wonderful time for us to be able to communicate. We have a lot of guests that we invite particularly at that time phase.

HAKAM: So we invite guests from the town. Just recently there was music group called Phish, they are what would you say, prototypes of . . .

YONAH: Well, they've basically been following the path of the Grateful Dead as a band, and they have a following that kind of crosses over into the Deadheads, so a lot of the Deadheads are big follower of Phish. And there are also the Phish worshipers, too.

HAKAM: So they're becoming sorta like . . . I guess they're a band like the Grateful Dead. So before Jerry Garcia died, we would go on the Dead tour, the East coast Dead Tour in the spring, summer, and fall, on a big bus that we have, and we'd do our dancing out in the parking lots and do EMT stuff for free, you know, Emergency Medical stuff, and just a tremendous outreach to people doing that. Many many people we've counted have joined the communities for that, so for example, we have some people staying here now, there's a Phish tour going on now, and our bus is out on the Phish tour now. And they were down in Amherst just the other night for two nights, and we have two, three people here now that came here as a result of us going there. And another two, a couple I think, is coming on Friday night to visit for Friday night's celebration and maybe stay the weekend, so that kind of thing goes on all the time. It's ongoing. Visitors coming and going, you know. So Friday night is a real social event, a consistent and very high social event in the community.

HAVAH: I wonder if somebody could explain the Twelve Tribes to her so that she has a sense of our purpose?

Q: That would be great.

CHETS: Thank you. I'll see you.

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Q: Thanks a lot.

CHETS: Nice meeting you.

Q: Nice to meet you.

HAVAH: I was hoping before Deborah goes maybe we could take her up by the house and she could see a class in progress just to get a sense of what our training is like, and he's teaching music up there this afternoon.

Q: Oh, that would be great.

YAHCHEBED: Yes, as a matter of fact, they invited us up. [Unintelligible] invited us up because they were going over a song that someone has written recently.

RUHAMAH: Did he say a particular time, or . . . ?

YAHCHEBED: He said, I think, around 2: 30.

HAKAM: Can you explain, Yonah, the tribes and vision of God? Twenty-five words or less.

YONAH: The problem with twenty-five words or less is that you get it so condensed that . . . it's too fast.

HAVAH: It doesn't mean anything.

YONAH: You know how we talk about how we're not part of Christianity or Judaism, but our faith does go back to Abraham. And the whole idea behind Abraham being chosen by God was that since Abraham was a man who would totally give everything he had to God, not withhold his greatest affection, God chose him and brought forth eventually through Jacob the Twelve Sons of Israel, and David the patriarchs of each tribe. Those tribes never did succeed in being a national entity that really reflected God's character to all the rest of the world, but they themselves, they compromised with the law of God and were scattered. So now, in Messiah, there's a reconstitution of those tribes back as a spiritual nation, not a nation of physical descendancy, I guess the word descendancy? It's not necessarily of physical descendants because we don't know where most of those tribes even went historically, they were dispersed. In the Gospel that our Master proclaimed was an order to bring about a new social order on Earth, and that would be as a spiritual nation. That nation would have the same building blocks in it as what old Israel did in the past. That's why now we see that what our God is doing is establishing twelve tribes on the earth, and each tribe in a particular geographic location. Each tribe has a tribal identity and color to it, and these tribes are going to interact in such a way with one another on an economic basis as well as others, I suppose, that would express the unity of God to the rest of the earth. The unity that these people are able to maintain in continuing to sacrifice their own life for the cause of a greater whole, of a greater nation. Because we feel like our God really is interested in people. He wants them to be amazed by his name. He wants his name to be great on the earth, and it's not going to be done through heaven splitting open and angels proclaiming it, but through human beings doing something that is so unworldly, so unlike the world, something that the world cannot really imitate, you know, because of the bondage that the world lives in. You know, like we were talking about the alienation that people experience from sin and their inability to produce a social life that gives you a sense that this is what man was created for in the first place, that this is going to be a witness to the world, a representation, a dramatic representation of the character of God. And people because of that will do either of two things, it will either be a saver of life or it will be the stench of death. It will polarize

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the earth and how they view these people because it's a spirit by which these people live. Theirs is going to be judged by how they judge that spirit, the spirit of God. Like in the days of our Master, some called him the Son of God. Most called him the devil. So that's a . . .

Q: A synopsis.

HAKAM: Yeah. That's really the reason for the New Covenant. When Jesus came, he established a new covenant by his death on the cross. And that new covenant community was the early Church. Really what the early Church was supposed to be was a reconstitution of the twelve tribe nation that had really fallen away from God. The ten tribes were taken away in the Assyrian captivity, they totally lost their identity. Israel was not a twelve tribe nation when our Master was living on the earth. There was basically two tribes known as the Southern Kingdom living in Palestine. So when he came, he came to restore Israel, to bring about the restoration of that twelve tribe nation that would demonstrate to the world the life of the age to come, the kingdom. So when we talk about the new age or kingdom, we believe that the life of that New Age has to be demonstrated now, and that's what the church is. And the Church is that restored twelve tribe nation. You see? It's not like a denomination or what not, but it's a restored twelve tribe nation. It's a social order that demonstrates to some degree what is going to fill the earth in the next age. So when we talk about really wanting the New Age to come, we believe that what we're doing here is what will fill the earth in the next age, when the Messiah is ruling on the earth, actually literally ruling in the Earth. It will be in a far more complete way. We're doing it in a very limited way because we're living in a hostile world, but in the Kingdom age, when our Master [unintelligible] is ruling on the Earth, we won't be living in a hostile age. The Evil Prince that rules this world system now will be bound and there will be a thousand years of peace on the Earth. The nations will live in peace, and this life that we have will be the standard, it will be what rules the Earth, so that's really a sweeping . . . but that's basically what we're living for, we're living to be the witness of the kingdom that will bring the Messiah back and bring in the New Age. We don't think it's gonna come because the stars will line up in the right direction or because somebody has a magic number or something, but it's gonna come about when there is a reality to this twelve tribe nation that really produces the fruit, produces the life-giving fruit that convicts the world, really exposes and judges the world. Not by some military thing or through violence or something like that, but through love, you know, the world order is exposed to the literal order of love, and that's it. That's really what we're standing for.

HAVAH: The way that we believe we're going to be able to survive doing that, because even like our social structure or the way we live is very . . . we don't fit any of the forms of the world system out there [unintelligible], in terms of insurance or education of our children or going to doctors or all this stuff it's like, we just don't fit. By way of example, it took us twelve years in Vermont to get established with being legally acceptable for how we educate our children.

Q: Really?

HAVAH: Yes, it wasn't because they were saying we don't educate our children, but we didn't fit one of the boxes.

HAKAM: We're [unintelligible] category.

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Q: There isn't just a homeschooling category that you fit into?

HAVAH: No, because homeschooling means you teach your own children.

Q: Oh, right.

HAVAH: There's all different, you know what I mean?

Q: You guys are basically operating your own school.

HAVAH: Well, this is what I'm about to tell you. They wanted to say, so what you really are is a private school, and of course, if you're a private school, then you come into all kinds of rules and regulations of being a school. So we really had to take a stand and be recognized by the Department of Education. See, they wanted to call us a school and we said, no, we're not a school. We're a community.

HAKAM: We're the church.

HAVAH: We're the church, we're a community that educates our children. We knocked heads on it and knocked heads on it, and what we came to grips was we would give them the information that we believed they had a right to know and they put us in their school category. They call us a school, but they know that we don't call ourselves a school, and if something ever becomes an issue over that, we've been standing on that all along, that we're not a school.

HAKAM: So they really can't regulate us as a school.

Q: Right, yeah.

HAVAH: What we believe is that a lot of Christians or homeschoolers, they take exception to the state coming and looking at what they do, say, it's my business, keep your nose out of it, I'm going to file my form . . . , but what we say is, hey, you're welcome to come and look. You can come and look and see what we do, because we believe if you see what we're doing, you'll know it's good, you'll know our children are being trained, but you can't control it. You can't tell us what to do. And depending on who your school official is, some people can live with that and some people get offended, but that's where we draw our line. That's just one example, but it's that way with all the different ways that we have to intersect with government. We believe in state authority and governmental authority, even coming under that authority, but not that they can tell us what to do in terms of what we believe. If they actually know us and religious communities, they'll see that we're doing good, and we'll be recognized as not violent, not a threat, and they won't have to worry about us. So that's our basic philosophy. We cooperate as much as we can with a good conscience, but we don't come under that authority in a way that violates our God [??].

HAKAM: That's what the Scriptures teach, that they're our servants, the [??] authority, that's what they're put there for, that's what we have them for. They're there to bless those who do good and punish those who do evil, so if you're doing good, you don't have any reason to fear. And we trust, that's what we pray for, we pray for the authority that they'll be connected enough to their conscience to be able to view our life and see that we're doing good and praise us for it. And we've really seen officials do that, we've seen them even when we didn't fit into the letter of the law, then come and see that we fit into the spirit of the law, and that there would be a way to accommodate and it's marvelous. We find, we've found servants all the time, all over the place in government. We hear everybody complaining

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about the government, you know this and that, I guess you could complain about a lot, but we always find servants, some are there. We know the system is corrupt really, but there are servants in there that recognize good. But if we were not submissive to authority, if we didn't believe in authority in that kind of way, we would always be militant against people, we would always be rising up in all kinds of conflict with the government. But we don't believe there should be any conflict in that kind of way if they're a true servant of God that's placed in a position of authority in the state and what we're living according to the word of God, we should be able to get along, really.

Q: Yeah, absolutely. I would love to hear a little bit about your daily life and kind of how your beliefs are expressed in your daily life.

HAKAM: Oh, yeah, great.

YAHCHEBED: Well, we get up in the morning around five o'clock in the morning . . .

RUHAMAH: Somebody knocks on the door, "Good morning!"

YAHCHEBED: And someone knocks on the door, always sings to us. We have a little wake-us-up singing with guitar and some of our music. Then we come down and we gather at our gathering, which is we use Hebrew words, and so we call it our [unintelligible]. [unintelligible] means our sacrifice that we give to our God every morning. And we come together for about an hour, thirty minutes to an hour, and we share our hearts, what our God is speaking to us personally, and maybe read from the Scriptures some, sing some of our songs that we've written together and we do this in all of our households and all of our communities every morning at six o'clock in this community. Then we go about our day.

RUHAMAH: Dance.

YAHCHEBED: Sometimes we dance, yeah.

Q: Do the children join in this as well?

YAHCHEBED: The children do, yes, the children are there in the morning because we want them to become disciples and so that's a good way of becoming disciples. And then we start our day. The women, we've just recently begun a new way of doing our daily schedules with the women. Most of them remain in the home except for maybe a few might go into our store, maybe go to another house to teach the children, but the rest of the women are in the house, and they gather together for a short organizational type meeting in the morning to see what the day is going to be like, and we just delegate the authority, delegate the responsibilities of cooking and cleaning, and every woman has a laundry day for her family, and so, like if it's my laundry day, I wouldn't cook so much that day. It's really nice.

RUHAMAH: If someone's ill provisions are made.

W: That's right. If someone's ill, then we know that we might want to help take care of their children that day, and so all the responsibilities are kind of assigned at that point. We don't just talk about business, sometimes we have something on our heart that we want to discuss for a short time, and we really like it like this. So the women go about their day cooking the meals together, and we do work together on the meals. Like, all the women would be in the kitchen together making lunch and then maybe doing some preparations for the supper meal. The men at this place, at this community we have a farm, so the men have a farm meeting in the morning, especially in the summer and planting seasons they do this. And they talk about what they're going to do for the day, like the farmers would say, okay,

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today we're going to [unintelligible] in the field, and so it's pretty organizational. And then everybody eats together at noon in a common dining room and then finishes our day out. And then in the evening we also gather at a six o'clock to do the same thing that we did in the morning at six o'clock. We gather and we pray and sing and the children enter in. It's very, it's not like in a regular or like a Christian church you'd have a program and everything would be just, okay, gonna sing hymn number whatever, but that's not how we are. We are informal in that way, and it might be just different people that speak every time and different songs that we will sing.

RUHAMAH: One time we might sing five songs and another time we wouldn't even sing one song.

YAHCHEBED: Yeah. Just the other night my children, we do an hour before especially the evening gathering, we try to spend an hour with our families, our family unit, in preparation time for that gathering so the father of the family would gather his children and his wife together and maybe talk about their day and say, is there anything you want to talk about at this point or how are you doing with your sister or do you have peace, is everything worked out in you -- so that we would all have peace when we go to the gathering in the evening. Sometimes he might read Proverbs or just talk about whatever we'd like to. The other night I prepared a skit with my children. I have five children at home with me now, so we prepared a skit about the tower of Babel. And so we presented that during the gathering when we all came together at six o'clock. We really want to encourage our children to be a vital part of what we're doing so it's not just the adults that go and read Scripture, but we want them to totally enter into our life, so skits and music and dancing are a way that we can really do that, draw them into our life and what we're doing. So we enjoy doing that the other evening. So it's varied, it's not like a ... because we do this often. So that's pretty much our day. In the evenings sometimes the men at the farm here, they go back out and do a little bit of work here and there.

RUHAMAH: I would like to tell you what we do on a daily basis from a totally different point of view. I agree with everything she says, but when I lived in the world outside of the community, I had no idea what gifts had bequeathen [??], what talents, what abilities. And as I've reflected on this, it's just because I wasn't needed to do very much. I had many jobs, I had what the world would call a challenging career at one time, and things that I was suited to do. But a job, it seems, only takes a very small percentage of your personality and your abilities, your gifts. And how we function is we function in our giving. For example, Yahchebed here, she came and she spent a few minutes tidying up this room and picking the right table cloth ... and there's always situations that call for somebody's gift coming up in a day. For example, we mentioned illness today. Somebody in my house was sick. I took a few minutes to go and see what their needs were, I had other women I could consult with. I do herbs, I was able to see if there was something that she needed in the realm of herbs. There's constantly a need for the things that were put in us that deeply satisfy us when we get to do them because there are so many needs in a community you find out what's in you. Where I never knew about these things before I came here. I wasn't needed to do them. That's one of the most wonderful things about living in a community where people need each other. Because in the communes, everybody was pretty much doing their own thing or sharing somebody's dope. So you just didn't have a sense of what was in you. You would just exist. Then we have special events like evangelistic outreaches like we mentioned where we have a chance to talk to people, and some people's gift leads to there, Yonah and Yahchebed's gift leads definitely there. We have weddings, our weddings last a whole day and so when we have a wedding, it takes all the

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people who are really good at doing preparation to do this on a lavish scale, and the people who do this do it on a lavish scale. We write new dances and we write new music and everybody gets to use those deep things in them that really satisfy them. They get better at it as the years go by and they find other people that have those same gifts, and they talk together and it's wonderful. It's so wonderful to live like that.

HAVAH: Something that I've seen on that topic she's talking about is how the contrast between out there and society and the world, everybody with their individual life keeps searching for their living, what they like to do, who they should be married to, what job they should have, where they should live, what courses should they take, should they go to graduate school or not, it's like you keep trying things, hoping to find the shoe that fits the best, but in the community, it's the answer to all those problems because what happens is when we lay down our life, we stop trying to figure it out and it actually liberates us to be who we were created to be. Like she said, our gifts come out, we serve each other as we serve each other and stop trying to get job qualifications or find the perfect job or find the right course and be disappointed -- we're just ourselves because we've given up our own agendas. It's actually how the Holy Spirit works to liberate each and every one of us to be who we were created to be. I have a particular desire in this realm and I know Ruhamah does too, and that is about women in particular and the women's movement. We oftentimes get scorned or disdained because we believe in our God's order, which is our Father, his Son, men, women, children, and so we're misunderstood a lot in that realm because we believe that as our Master's heart was submissive and our heart in following him is also submissive. So I say we're misunderstood a lot about women being submissive to men. Women are submissive to men, but everybody's submissive to our Father and our Master. And what that submission actually brings is life not death.

Q: Mm-hmm.

RUHAMAH: If you've never had someone that you could respect and honor, how would you ever know what it is to submit?

HAKAM: Some of the daily life in the community is really in everyone serving one another in love and doing whatever the most pressing need is. And being willing to do whatever. And through that, like they've been saying here, that's how a person's gift is really developed. It becomes obvious pretty soon who can cook and who can't, or who has a leaning towards, say, midwifery.

Q: Yeah.

HAKAM: And then of course, then the next step in that is to include your children and bring them along and bring them up in an educational program in a way where when they get to a certain age that you can begin to apprentice them. And this is the greatest challenge that we've ever had, is in being able to

Q: challenge has been.

HAKAM: The greatest challenge has been to capture the energy of our children as they become teenagers and channel them according to their gifts and interests. That's a tremendous challenge.

HAVAH: Sort of like water power, you gotta harness it.

RUHAMAH: Or they get frustrated.

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HAKAM: Yeah. So this is a tremendous challenge, but it's also very exciting. If you hear my son, in some instances our children are able to as they get older, they are able to travel to different communities, to do certain projects according to what their gift is. For instance, when he went to Europe, the community in France, he was [unintelligible] music scholarship over there for a year with the musicians in France. My eighteen year old son went also, and he was doing a carpentry project over there with this German craftsman. They live in an eighteenth century chateau over there. It's got some needs, it had some tremendous needs in the roof structure. They had a massive roof structure, they had to take the whole thing off and redo the whole thing and rebuild it and redesign it and fit it to our needs and engineer it toward community instead of some whatever used to live in it in the eighteenth century, you know? So my son was involved in that for a year. It was a tremendous learning experience. They traveled with like a portable cafe there, and they were doing this craft show, these big expositions where we sell our products. They got to meet people and go all over the place. So it was tremendous. But it is a great great challenge to bring all of our children, all of our youth into their giftings in those kinds of ways. But that's really where we're at and we believe that, really we believe that [unintelligible]. That that's where the rubber meets the road, because whether or not the actual germ of life that is in the first generation, or, in the parents, goes into these guys, and that's the measure of success or failure. I don't know if Tim told you about the conference in Israel?

Q: A little bit.

HAKAM: On the failure of the kibbutz [unintelligible]? We wrote a paper on it, I'd like to give you it. It's an interesting phenomena what came out of that conference is that the consensus is that community always fails because in the second generation, the children either leave or they change the vision and they make it different from what it was in the beginning. So to us, that's really what tests our substance is whether or not they actually take on what we have started and make it better, because they really have understanding of what they're building. Having the heart to do it.

Q: And are they? Are they taking it on? Because you do have some kids in their twenties, right?

HAKAM: Yeah, they are. As a matter of fact, the coordinators and the leaders of a lot of the communities are children now who came in in their teens, their parents came in, now they're in their thirties with their families, and they are running the communities. Now you've got like my son, this one here, he's right on the verge of like . . .

YAHCHEBED: Erupting [??].

YONAH: Grabbing some reins.

YAHCHEBED: He is the oldest, the firstborn.

HAKAM: Yeah, he's the oldest of the children that were born in the community.

YAHCHEBED: And we have an eighteen year old daughter, and she's one of the oldest girls, and she's presently in our community in England learning some of the things that his son learned when he was over in Europe, you know, just learning music and just learning how to go to these expositions and she's taking on a lot too.

RUHAMAH: This is how we have a common life, because, Luke for example, he went over as a young man, he came back and we listen to him in the realm of music. Yonah [??], he's been doing music in the

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community ever since the beginning, but what was in the mind of the people in Europe, in our communities there, was brought over by a twenty-year-old, we listen to him. We need him. We've prepared him to take on our mind in music, he did it, we look to him now. So he knows he's needed, it's not like he just went over there to vacation or something, but what he had was a value. It's really interesting because you would have to go spend a lot of money to get the education that he got. He studied under a German violinist who's everything that tradition in Germany produced in violinists and he passed it on into Luke, who's coming over here now to teach my children what he learned. And it's just so wonderful that these things are being preserved and carried on. You can look so much in society and see that things have stopped. There's no longer an understanding of things. It's been lost. But because we need these things, it's not been lost.

HAKAM: What he really liked was the Spanish guitars, you know? He loved the Spanish people, you know, we have a community in San Sebastian on the coast. He went down there and just fell in love with them. They would go out and do music in the streets in San Sebastian and he could get by in Spanish but just a little bit. He found himself down in the streets of San Sebastian one evening and they were down there playing music and he really could not communicate in Spanish but the people there were so friendly and they would just come up and they wanted to hear him so he was just playing and singing to this Spanish boy in English, just because he wanted to communicate. Anyway, that's . . .

HAVAH: So then he learned two songs in Spanish.

Q: That's great.

HAKAM: Brought that flavor back to us.

HAVAH: I don't know if anybody's touched on yet is how we, in a way, how we educate or pass on our faith and our vision is we don't watch T.V. and radio is pretty occasional, but what we do among the clans and the tribes is write letters. Letter writing among friends is a very basic fundamental of how we function because then people get letters and they share them with each other, so we all learn from each others' experiences, both the difficult ones and the blessed ones. And it's through each others' personal experience that we all advance, learn something to do with the child or not do with the child or something bad that happened with a couple in their first year of marriage and how to avoid that in the future. It's not like you bury your problems under a hat and just don't want anybody to see them because our life is so connected, that's how we do it. Another thing is that in educating our children, we rely heavily on oral communication. We do storytelling and I believe that's really something that makes our children develop their imagination and learn to be attentive and listen. In other words, they're not overstimulated by all the video games and T.V.s and toys of the world. It makes their human development much more enthusiastic. They don't get leveled by all that stuff. If you would be here for one of the morning or evening gatherings and you would hear the things that the children are thankful for, you know, they're thankful for milking the goat today or going for a walk in the snow or those kind of things. They don't have a superlative expectation of the "me me me me" . . .

HAKAM: In other words, they don't have to be on a snowboard or a Skidoo [??] to enjoy a walk in the snow. The simple things really have a graphic and rich meaning to them.

YAHCHEBED: And also, because there's not the emphasis on other pleasure seeking, fun seeking type things like T.V. or sports or all those things, they learn that the value of relationships is the most

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important thing that we have is learning to communicate what's in their soul to somebody else, and what's in their spirit, and little as they are, that it means more than anything else that we would be able to communicate what's in our own spirits to someone else. When they meet someone like someone that comes in from the outside or a guest or something, most of them are totally very eager to communicate. They're socially normal human beings and I say this because it seems like that's becoming a less and less prevalent thing in society today where children are able to just communicate and be able to verbalize what they're thinking and going through and just being friendly, just friendly. I was down in Florida recently visiting my sister who has two younger girls, very smart girls in school, and everything, but I spent a whole week in her house and I'm their aunt, and they communicated very little, just very very little with me, just because I think they were very into the T.V., into their own thing, just wrapped up in themselves. It's just so wonderful how our children are just always eager to meet people and find out who they are and what they do. We just had a couple visit their son here, he's a lawyer and his wife, and one of the remarks that the lawyer made before he left was, "You know what I really like about this place?" And I said, "No, tell me, what?" And he said, "I like that I could talk to people here. I really like that I could talk to people here." Our children spent a lot of time talking with him. He realized that he was away from the "rat race" of society. Even the pressures of his own life that he was able to just have peace and have a normal conversation without interference. That's what mattered to us. That was where the value was, and that's where the value is in our lives. It's on one another.

YONAH: Really, that's what the whole idea of community is about, of course, the relationships amongst people. I think it's ironic, we talk about this in this Woodstock Nation paper, which I hope we can give you a copy of. The whole movement of the Sixties, the desire for peace and love came forth from basically white middle-class Americans who were raised in Christian homes. Why they were leaving their Christian homes and questioning the values of their parents and leaving the Christian church looking for peace and love is something that I don't think the Christian Church can answer. But it should be able to say why were we not richly providing these very things for our children? Why would they rebel against the life that we have and which we said that the Prince of Peace expressed God's love to humanity, why did they depart from him in our presence, if you follow what I mean, to go establish something altogether on a different foundation, which is really what that generation tried to do. They found themselves spiritually bankrupt to depart to make a clean break from the society which they were trying to come away from. And the reason why is because it's a spiritual thing. It's something that has to do with a human being's own deficiency and self-centeredness. There's got to be a way to put that to death in order for true community to exist, for the walls to come down in every way, but so long as we're seeking for ourselves, even seeking community for ourselves, we're still living for our own motives. I was not at all looking for community. I came from a Christian home, and I had rebelled against it at a fairly early age and really didn't want to have anything more to do with it. I did not believe in the Jesus of Christianity because I saw the futility of being a life insurance salesman and dying someday and my life on the Earth had been spent just merely surviving and I didn't feel like that was enough. But like everyone else I was a self-seeking person. I had my own inclinations and goals and dreams and ambitions. I was in the South, which was really a latecomer to the whole hippie scene. Culturally it was not as, I guess you'd say "advanced," or as degraded, whatever you want to say. I'd heard of things that were going on. There wasn't really anything going on in a cultural sense in the circles that I moved in. I

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went into the Army. I went to Vietnam. I was not a protester, although I did feel like the whole war was on a bad foundation, bad reason for being there. When I came back, I was troubled by the whole . . . when I was over there, I looked back upon . . . we called it "the world," by the way. It was always called "the world."

HAKAM: Yes.

YONAH: "When I get back to the world."

HAVAH: Oh really?

YONAH: Yeah. Because where you were was you were in . . . civilization was what you really were talking about, "When I get back to civilization," because there was not civilization there except what the army had built around you and in your barbed wire. But our concept, I see now that I had such an inflated hope that when I got back I could continue on in my adolescent dream of I was a musician and it was my career, that I would just pick up whatever pieces had fallen to the wayside and go on with it, but when I came back I was so perplexed by everything that had happened that I just couldn't get it back together because I felt like the world was a floundering society. Things were going this way and things were going that way. I tried to be a hippie for a little while, but by the time my hair got down to my shoulders, the hippie movement had gone by. It had. There were still people walking around with long hair, but they may as well have been wearing spats, you know what I mean? Fur coats and doing the Charleston. It was gone. The dreams, the electricity.

HAVAH: It didn't take long.

YONAH: It didn't take long. It was gone. It had become a mass-marketing thing, you know?

YAHCHEBED: It blew in the wind.

YONAH: And love beads were in Woolworth's!

YAHCHEBED: It blew away in the wind.

HAVAH: The Beatles were [unintelligible].

HAKAM: I remember getting [unintelligible] just in the realm of drugs, like when I started smoking pot it was great because everybody liked to share their dope. Just a few years later you had to really be careful because of how people would rip you off.

YONAH: Yeah.

HAKAM: You know, just all the time, all the time. It's just a whole different spirit.

YONAH: Yeah.

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

HAKAM: And then, just in that one little tiny corner of what the movement was supposed to be about. I really got really disillusioned just by that, like, wow.

RUHAMAH: Well, for me, it was, here again, I'm oriented with plants, but it was the same thing. I read in TIME magazine just a little blurb, just a little paragraph that said that the flowers in the Golden Gate Park were being trampled. It was all they needed to say.

Q: Something we haven't talked about at all is sexual relationships.

YONAH: Oh, that was one aspect, I really liked the free love and all that stuff and I was doing drugs. But it didn't do anything other than just cheapen me. I wasn't a recreational drug user. I found myself every

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time I would have some sort of experience on drugs I'd say, "What are we doing? What are we doing here? How come we're here? What is there beyond . . . ?"

YAHCHEBED: I bet you did.

YONAH: Huh? Yeah. It was always, would somebody please lift the veil off of what's going on here so I can really know who I am and who you are and what we're doing? Because I don't know. But I acted like I did and so did you. And there was always that gnawing thing of something was, I couldn't grasp it, you know?

Q: Do you have a prohibition here against drug use?

HAKAM: Yeah.

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

HAVAH: Mm-hmm.

Q: You do?

HAKAM: Yeah, absolutely.

Q: Mm-hmm?

HAVAH: I mean, we barely use it . . .

YONAH: We're so clean we squeak.

HAVAH: Yeah, we're so clean we squeak. We barely use medicinal drugs, we're pretty preventative and holistic in our approach toward health that rarely if ever will an antibiotic cross the premises, you know what I mean? It's not prohibited but it's not hardly used, you know, it's up to the individual, but . . .

Q: Do you use any like herbal medicines?

HAVAH: Oh yes, oh yes, herbs . . .

RUHAMAH: They grow all around this farm, I mean . . .

YAHCHEBED: We have echinacea [??] growing on the property and other types of [unintelligible].

RUHAMAH: Goldenseal, ginseng, and just the indigenous ones here. There's quite a few.

HAVAH: No alcohol, no tobacco, hardly any caffeine.

YONAH: The point I was wanting to make was that I was not a person who was looking for community. I don't even know how much I would've been willing to admit how needy I was in any way. I don't know what I was. I didn't know then. I didn't know how to communicate. I had so many walls up, I probably had at least as many as everybody around me. Well, probably more.

Q: So how did you find this place?

YONAH: Well, I came into a restaurant.

Q: Is that the one in Tennessee?

YONAH: Uh-huh, the first one. Just a humble little place that was painted bright yellow and had barn wood.

RUHAMAH: The [unintelligible] Deli?

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YONAH: Yeah, the [unintelligible] Deli.

RUHAMAH: Same place I came, yeah.

YONAH: I can remember walking in, I felt like I'd entered some kind of time zone or something. I just felt just a sense that something was going on here that I just felt really good. I didn't know what it was. I asked them about it. I'd gotten into Eastern religion which it kind of goes without saying, being in that whole realm.

YAHCHEBED: I like that part of your story is that he had been raised in a Presbyterian Church, born into the church and everything, and he kept coming in to our little restaurant, little cafe there after he finished his drumming gig for the evening. He'd come in really late because it was open 24 hours a day and so he'd come in one or two in the morning and sit and drink coffee over in a little booth with a [unintelligible] light . . .

YONAH: [unintelligible]

YAHCHEBED: [unintelligible], or whatever, and he would talk to the people that were there serving him. He was just drawn to talk, just drawn to how people were friendly to him and just were kind and would just sit there and talk to him for hours. The thing was that he said later that he was drawn to the love and the friendship, but every time they'd bring up the word "Jesus," and who he was, he'd say, "Goodness, if they just wouldn't talk about that!"

YONAH: Well, it was even like in the realm of, when I asked, I said, "Are you people -- you have some kind of spiritual thing going on here?" [unintelligible], and said, "Oh yeah, we believe in Jesus Christ," and I went, "Oh, no." No, here's what I said, I said, "Oh, him." Because I related to being in the pews and I thought, "Man, these are such groovy people," you know?

YAHCHEBED: All he relate it to was his mother sticking him with a straight pin to wake him up in church on Sunday, and it's like, "Aaaah! If it was anything like that."

YONAH: Oh no, please don't do that . . . kick me, you could bet I was starting to sleep, too.

RUHAMAH: Hey, that gives me an idea for Elders' Meeting.

YONAH: She still does.

YAHCHEBED: Without the pin.

YONAH: But I had to come to a place of realizing the words that they were saying really affected me because they were speaking the things that were right there in the Scriptures, they were true and there was a life behind those things that really put the weight behind it, where I had to make a choice. It wasn't something that was pressed on me or anything, but I was groping for something. The point I wanted to make was that the community that we have, wherever we have it as community, it's not based upon community, this isn't the kernel of our life together, it's actually our Master. When I came to grips with him and I realized that I had to surrender to him, then I started coping or dealing with the issue of living with these people. It wasn't the cart before the horse. Because if you meet many of the people in the community, we come from such varied backgrounds, totally unlikely that most of us would dwell together, even on a philosophical basis. But we found this hero who just totally we couldn't turn away from him. We had to be with him, and really, that's the glue of our life as a people. We had to be with him.

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Q: Do you have any spiritual leaders in your community? Is there any sort of hierarchy? Do you have elders or anything like that?

HAVAH: Mm-hmm.

YAHCHEBED: Yes, yes.

HAKAM: Each community has its own group of elders and that particular community is governed by that body of elders. They work together in a plurality, you know what I mean?

YONAH: Men.

HAKAM: Yeah. That's how it is in each community. Then we have certain elders in every community that have more oversight in the overall tribe. This particular tribe here is New England, is in the geographical area of New England. There are all these different communities, there are local elderships in each community. Some of the leaders function together for the oversight of the whole tribe, like direction that we are taking tribally [??], that's it. But this group of people, they will really go in and start telling the local communities what to do with something like that. They might come in, if there's a need they'll come in with suggestions or with something to say about an issue, but it's up to the local governments to rule over the affairs of that community, to get together and in their own council decide what to do.

RUHAMAH: But Deborah, these men that he's referring to eat the same breakfast as we do, use the same kinds of toothpaste, get their shoes from the same place we do, spend their time the same way that everybody else does, and this is what . . .

HAKAM: Got the same problems.

RUHAMAH: This is what [unintelligible] to me, right before I came into the community I was in Far Eastern thought, just like Yonah was talking about, and I picked up a book one day about Far Eastern religion that was specifically talking about the particular part that I was interested in and it said that there was a clergy laity in that system. I closed the book and I thought to myself . . . because I had grown up with the clergy laity, I knew what that meant, and here this dream philosophy had the same thing. That was it, I was interested anymore. But when I came here I saw that really you would have trouble knowing who the eldership was if you followed the group around for the day, for a week. You might catch on by the end of the day that the ones who got the least amount of sleep and went through the most rigorous conditions, were most likely to miss the meal or only get to eat half of it or got interrupted by the phone the most just when they were trying to brush their teeth or whatever else . . .

YONAH: Talk to their children.

RUHAMAH: Talk to their children.

Q: They're servants.

RUHAMAH: Yes.

YAHCHEBED: Yeah.

RUHAMAH: That's it. And it's not just . . . we know that. We see what they go through and it makes us love them more, that they're willing to go without sleep for our sake. Because when we go to them, they have a comforting compassionate word for us, they've got time to listen. And sometimes, that time is four o'clock in the morning, but they're still there. I've had him fall asleep on me, but he'd wake right back up again! He knew where he was, but there was a toll on him, the hours were taking a toll, but it

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wasn't like he wanted to not listen, it was just, he was sitting down and it was kind of hard to keep his eyes open, but that's what friends are and it's only because of their gifting, come back to that word again, that they're the ones that do what they do. They're worthy of respect and honor, but they give themselves to their gifting as much as the cook, the one that's really got it in them to tell by the smell whether it's got enough salt in it or those kinds of things. So in a sense, they're not blown out of proportion in our respect for them because we know that they are giving themselves to their gifting, they are doing what they were created to do and it is worthy of honor, but everybody's [unintelligible].

Q: Do you also have business leaders as well, like someone who's in charge of the farm and in charge of the kitchen, things like that?

HAKAM: Yes.

YONAH: Mm-hmm.

HAKAM: Right.

HAVAH: In a household, there's a household head who's considered the spiritual overseer, and then there's coordinators who coordinates all the mechanics.

Q: Because I know a lot of communities have fallen apart over like work sharing squabbles.

HAKAM: Yeah. Oh sure.

Q: Do you ever have any difficulty with work sharing arrangements or do you seem to be able to get people to contribute their share?

YAHCHEBED: It's real simple, we have a real simple principle for that one. If you don't work, you don't eat.

RUHAMAH: Now, my mother came here and I think this, to me, exemplified the difference between the thought that we grew up in and the thought that's here. She came here and she had to wash the dishes, she chose to, she wanted to, for two meals in a row. She said, this isn't fair. But we don't think in that realm at all. If the dishes need to be washed, somebody's washing the dishes. If you don't have time, it might be because you're washing a baby's dirty diaper and can't get to the dishes, but we don't want a kitchen full of dirty dishes

Q: Sure.

RUHAMAH: Any more than we want the bathroom full of stinky diapers, so you got to do whatever you do, but they're all gonna get done because somebody else is going to do the other.

HAKAM: What you're talking about is rare because the foundation of the community is so certain. That's the whole thing is that our Master gave up his life for us. He came to earth and lived as a servant, he lived as a total servant, and that's how he demonstrated his love to the world. He gave up his life, he gave up his position as the son of God and he actually learned to obey his heavenly father all the way to the point of dying on the cross. He served to that degree of actually literally dying.

HAVAH: I think right there, that's where the common authority and the common standard is everything because what you're talking about is the dishes or the work schedule causes communities to fall apart. It's not that as individuals we don't deal with the same human emotions of being sick of it or tired of it

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or whatever, but the thing is, we can identify with each other in those feelings and realizing that the fact is we came in and we gave up our life so by calling each other to that standard, it's not like a holier than thou approach or "It's not fair." It's like surrendering all those kinds of arguments and saying, yeah, it's gonna hurt and I don't like it, but I want to do it, even though I don't like it.

HAKAM: That is the spiritual foundation.

HAVAH: That it, that's the gospel.

HAKAM: That is the spiritual center of the community. So if you want say the authority or leadership is raised up because our master loved that way, he commanded us to love each other that same way. So if people give up their life to serve each other, then through the examples of serving, people want to emulate that because really they're emulating our master when they do that. It's just like living like he lived, loving like he loved. So when it comes down to the issue of work to be done, you have an example of servants. The first guy out there on the truck is the leader. The greatest among you will be the servant of all. So that's the truth, it's the absolute truth. One interesting little story, we grew up maybe a hundred and fifty miles from The Farm at Summertown, the one that started in Chattanooga, so we got to know those folks over there, I would say somewhat from a distance, but we got to know them in their heyday, when they were booming, like, they had twelve hundred people there.

Q: Yeah.

HAKAM: I don't know if you were there or not.

Q: I visited, yeah.

HAKAM: Yeah, it was really an intense place, you know? All kinds of stuff going on. So we got interested with some communication with Ina May in the midwifery realm. Then we got connected to Joel Kuchinsky [??] who was the money administrator over there. He was a lawyer, he was in the job core on the Indian reservations with Stephen Gaskin. Stephen was the teacher and Joel was the administrator. Joel was a lawyer and a really neat guy, I really like him. So we got involved with them because they had a similar tax structure to us. I would go up and talk to Joel from time to time, we'd just talk about certain things. I remember telling him in the mid-Seventies, when they were booming, I told him, I said, "Joel, in all honesty, I believe the days gonna come when the community here is going to fall apart because I believe you're gonna find that if you don't have a spiritual center to really hold you together and the more you're together like this, you're gonna see the inroads of the things that . . . the glue's not here," you know what I mean? And a few years later, that's exactly what happened. The Farm just "(exploding noise)" the whole communal experience there just completely evaporated, you know?

HAVAH: Collective versus individual.

HAKAM: Yeah, they went to . . . and that's sort of how it is now. Anyway, I don't want to get into The Farm, we really like those people.

Q: Mm-hmm.

HAKAM: But I think that's an example of like, without that center, there's no way you can get . . . [unintelligible] is that center. That's what we believe will eventually distinguish this life from everything else because it will bear the fruit over a period of time, bear the test of time so that there won't be any

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doubt, you know? At some point, that he truly is the son of God. But without that fruit, people are free to think whatever they want to think.

HAVAH: It's like, I think in a lot of places it must be that the founders or the people with the most personality are the ones that had the most ability to lead, when those people either die or leave or lose their push, their drive, communities fall apart over it because there's no one to replace the leader or somebody moved away or whatever. But with us, it's the individuals that's not the proof and the life, it's not the individuals, but it's in what gets passed on from obedience to the gospel.

HAKAM: So we say among ourselves that if we're not true to our Master in the middle of our heart, then we're no different from anybody else. We see what happened to the Early Church. Their life left them and they became just a form. They became the form of the Roman Catholic church. The form remained but the life was gone. It had become an institution. We certainly don't think that we're above that in any way. We think that the proof has to continue to be lived out.

RUHAMAH: On a day to day, minute by minute commitment. And that was the one thing that was missing in the communes, there was no commitment from one person to another. There was no commitment to anything with any substance. Yeah, everybody says love peace and joy, but let's talk about the nitty-gritty about it. There was nothing to say. There was no commitment there.

HAVAH: Something else that people ask about sometimes is, well, don't you have a problem with whatever, freeloaders or people coming and just wanting to be here, it's so nice, but they don't carry their weight or they're not really into it or whatever? But the reality is that the spirit we live in is so real that people who aren't real won't last here. They get exposed and they want to leave because there's no fun in it if you're not for real, you know what I mean?

YAHCHEBED: That's right. We really face a lot of problems. It's not easy to put fifty people in the same house together. You might have x amount of bathrooms, not that many, so if you're living for yourself, community life is not the place to live. It's not the place. People have all these fantasies that living together like this is just like, "Oh, it's so easy what you're doing, you're just turning your back on the world."

HAKAM: "You're copping out," you know?

YAHCHEBED: Yeah, "You're copping out. It's so easy to just to live everybody together like that," and you know. But reality is, it's very difficult for us to do this. And we could not, absolutely could not do it without the glue that we're talking about, and that's our God's grace and his mercy toward us and the love that he gives us.

YONAH: We've had people visit us who think that they could never live this way because they have problems. They look at us and they think that we don't. Because we do have a love for one another, you know. There's social warmth [unintelligible]. But really, the reality is that we came here damaged and bleeding or hurting.

RUHAMAH: And we know each other's problems. When you live close together, you know everything.

YONAH: We know each other's problems real well. And we have to do something about it. We have to have a right perspective on our brother or sister's problems and not reject them because they're having problems. We've got to find a way, "love finds a way" to help that person to overcome whatever it is they're failing in or we have to overcome the things within us that keep us from receiving one another. When a person comes and says, hey, I want to talk to you a little bit about this problem, there's all these

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walls that want to go up like what we had in the world, just to keep ourselves from getting hurt and everything we had to erect of the false man. These things in the community where the holy spirit dwells, these things start coming down brick by brick, and it's a painful process. There's a lot of pain in the community. There's suffering here, just like there was suffering in the life of our Master, there's suffering in our life.

HAKAM: Because sin is a very deep problem. I mean, it's so deep that the longer we're here, the more we understand and believe and appreciate what our Master did in dying for our sins. Starting out, it was almost sacrilegious to talk about sins because we hear it in church and growing up and we hear it in society, and you don't want to hear it. You hear it until you don't want to hear it.

RUHAMAH: And you can't see your own sin.

HAKAM: Yeah. And living together you see the things that divide you and you understand that that's what sin is, the stuff that works inside of you and you see how deep and twisted it is within each person's personality. It literally takes a covenant with somebody to get to that level of actually getting each individual person to see it and admit it. There's a story in the New Testament about our Master walk into this room and there was a man with a withered hand and he's concealing it because he didn't want anybody to see his withered hand. The Master said, "Stretch forth your hand" we wrote it in a [unintelligible]. It's an incredible story, I don't know if you're familiar with it, but he wouldn't do it. He was very reluctant to do it and finally he did it, he trusted our Master enough. It was in front of a lot of people and he stuck forth his withered hand and as soon as he did it he was healed. It was just healed, totally restored, you know? And that's really the story of our lives. Our soul is withered from this alienation of sin. If we take it from right there to the whole world and that problem is really the problem of the whole world. So once you realize that our Master dealt with the problem, that is, the problem of the whole world, then you start dealing with it where it really needs to be dealt with it, right here in your own life, in your relationships and with your family and your friends. The pain is like being able to get down to how you really are and realize that you're forgiven and you're accepted and you're loved and you're not rejected because of these ways in you.

RUHAMAH: I'm fifty years old, and when one of those bricks goes down it's wonderful because no where else on the Earth could one of those bricks go down, and I could've died with all those bricks up and it's just so wonderful. One brick goes down and it makes it worth it what's happened to get that one down. Then I can't wait for the next one to come down. And little do you know, with just a little pain, it's good [??].

HAKAM: It's like having a baby, you know? Well, I've never had one, but what I understand, it's very intense, but once the baby's born, you don't remember the pain.

RUHAMAH: It's worth it.

Q: I have a couple more mundane questions. Do you take Hebrew names here?

YAHCHEBED: Yes, we do, but it's not just because we come in or upon baptism . . .

YONAH: Upon registering in the community.

RUHAMAH: It's not in ritual.

YAHCHEBED: Right, we still have some Loris and some Tims and Teds and different things like that. I think, just as our God speaks to us and we come to find out who we are, because a name is really who

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we are. [unintelligible] name, our Master's name, means literally "Yahweh's salvation" in Hebrew, and that's who he was. He was his salvation to man. So our names have a meaning to them because now in this day and time it's like names are just the latest song and the latest whatever and it's just like . . . I think some black people even make up the syllables to their names, it's just like nothing, it's like, (she snaps) whatever comes to them, but now we're so thankful that our name is like a real handle, when our babies are born we really pray about their names. We say, who is this person and we hope that we can really hear from our God prophetically to who that person might be. So it really encourages us when a person might get a new name. A person could be [unintelligible] for years and years and then finally have a name.

RUHAMAH: Did Melody get a new name?

YONAH: I heard "Zuma?"

HAKAM: Zuhamah [??], isn't it?

HAVAH: Melody, I think it means melody [??].

RUHAMAH: It seems like it would. She's been in the communities . . . oh, well, that was Samekh's [??] bride, remember? While we're back to her story, that was the woman that he married and she's had the name Melody, which is quite a wonderful name, for all these years, but . . .

Q: She felt called to choose a name?

RUHAMAH: No, I doubt that she chose it.

Q: Oh.

YAHCHEBED: Yeah.

HAVAH: It's usually given to her by somebody.

YONAH: Probably her husband.

YAHCHEBED: That's usually how it is. I mean, it might be that someone has it on their own heart as to who they are, but usually it is a name that's been given by someone else.

HAVAH: It's always clearer to other people who we are than to ourselves.

YONAH: You're right.

RUHAMAH: And this is reflected in many aspects of our lives, our names, what we do in our day, our gifting, other people see it before we see it.

HAKAM: ... always had a particular belief about hair. In the early days we just dressed in a contemporary way, whatever the style was, we wore whatever. When we started forming as a people, getting a sense of an identity as a people, we started thinking, so then where do we get our standard? What is our standard? Are we always going to change according to the way that society changes in our dress and whether we wear our hair long or not.

Q: Yeah.

HAKAM: So we started looking to the scriptures to see if there are any clues there and what we've come to see is that in the law of God, in the Old Testament law, is the most comprehensive piece of social legislation that's ever been written because really, in there you could find an instruction in there on every aspect of everything. It's amazing what's in there. We always used to just relate it to some

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legalistic principles that didn't really matter. We come to see that there's a richness there. We see these communities and ourselves as a priesthood, like, all these women are priests. There's no problem with that because we're all a holy nation of royal priesthood. There's no clergy laity, we're all a priesthood. So we go back into the Old Testament and in the Old Testament only the men were priests, or were in the priesthood, but they had a particular way that they wore their hair as priests, basically, they tied it back. They didn't let it grow long in the back, but they didn't clip it. There's all kinds of stuff in the Bible about how they were clipping their hair. For men, they clipped their hair goes back to pagan worship and all kinds of mystery Babylon [??] religions and whatnot. The Jews, their priests would wear their hair just pulled back, tied back and they grew their beards, but they didn't grow them just really outrageously, just kind of natural. So that's what we've tried to maintain. That's why we all, the men you'll find all the men will pull their hair back, but they keep it short. We call our hair "short," and we would call styled hair "cropped."

Q: Mm-hmm, yeah.

HAKAM: But we believe that this is what the definition of short hair is, that men will wear their hair "short" like this. This is "long."

HAVAH: Men wouldn't wear long hair.

RUHAMAH: This is long.

HAKAM: Men wouldn't wear long hair, right? Men in the community wouldn't wear long hair, it would be a shame for men to wear long hair. But by society's standards, our hair is long. And their hair is really long.

YONAH: But our hair would not be considered long by society's standards back in the Seventies.

HAVAH: I know, I was going to say that, that standard changes.

YONAH: Because the society just goes up, down, changes, sideways . . .

RUHAMAH: Or two hundred years ago in this country.

YONAH: Yeah, exactly.

HAKAM: Yeah.

Q: Do women not cut their hair?

RUHAMAH: We trim it.

YAHCHEBED: We trim it.

HAVAH: We trim it. Yeah.

YAHCHEBED: Like, your hair in today's society would be considered really long, because the style of women's hair is as short as men, if not shorter in some ways, so it's really interesting.

Q: Mm-hmm.

YONAH: And these things do have spiritual basis and consequence.

HAVAH: You know, it talks about "a woman's hair is her glory," and we used to wear, we'd wear head coverings on our heads. We used to wear them all the time, but in the last about five years, we just wear them when we gather at our morning and evening sacrifices because it almost seemed like a religious thing, you know, like nuns wear habits all the time. What we do a lot of times is do something that

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somebody believes our Father is speaking to them about and see whether it pleases our God or not. So that's what we did about five years ago with head coverings, we stopped wearing them all the time and we just wear them when we gather and pray and we're in the assembly. We didn't want our head coverings to just become a common thing that you wear all the time when you're, you know, cleaning the toilet and scrubbing the floor and all these things and that the true test of whether or not we were being godly women would be reflected in our spirit. It wouldn't have to be that someone would know whether we were women in the community by whether we had a head covering on our heads or not. I've noticed that a lot because I go out there a lot, I'm a lawyer, and a lot of people just think I'm not in the community anymore because I don't have my head covering on and then people who know me want to know why it is I'm not wearing it anymore, and people find it very interesting, I guess, about that.

Q: Yeah. Do men all wear beards?

YONAH: Yes.

Q: Is it just married men, or?

HAKAM: No, all men.

HAVAH: Just if they're old enough to have one.

HAKAM: If they can grow one.

RUHAMAH: But his son's not there yet, if Luke was here . . .

HAKAM: I think people have the tendency to think that our life is rigid, so that's why it's hard for them when they see the women not wearing head coverings all the time, it doesn't compute because sometimes the thought people have who don't know us is that our life is very rigid and it doesn't change, so when they see change like that it's hard for them to relate to because they don't really understand.

HAVAH: Right. We always used to wear dresses, women always used to wear dresses, and then around the same time, about five years ago, we just discovered these pants, we call them "Souce [??] pants" because they were first made in our community in Souce, France. They're just loose and not tight fitting and they're comfortable and practical . . .

YAHCHEBED: Modest.

HAVAH: . . . and modest and all these things, so we wear pants now. Like, some people say, "You wear pants! You didn't used to wear pants!," You know?

Q: Mm-hmm.

HAVAH: Those kinds of things. Everything in our life, everything in our life in response to what my husband was saying about rigidity, everything in our life is voluntary. People from the outside that observe say, "Well, you can't do this," and "You can't do that." It's hard for people to get that you could make hard choices, that you could choose to make choices of not doing what you want.

YAHCHEBED: Mm-hmm.

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Interviewer: Deborah Altus

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Q: Mm-hmm. One of the things that you mentioned before that we never really talked about was your view towards sexuality. Could you talk about that a little bit?

HAVAH: I was hoping you were going to be able to get on this topic with Luke, but he couldn't be here long enough, on the topic of virginity, because I thought you probably would've found it interesting to hear what his take on virginity is at age twenty in this day and age. I mean, I hesitate to speak for him, but I know from knowing him that where he's at is he believes that it's absolutely essential and it's totally the test of his life to uphold that standard. But as he experiences life in the community and sees what he sees of the world out there, I know that he has no doubt in him that he wants to be married to one woman who's the love of his life and of whom he's the love of her life and have that relationship be a pure one. He really sees the damage of sexual relationships outside of marriage even though the physiological desire is there, he's got the insight and maturity and spiritual development to know that the pleasure of it isn't worth the price you pay for it. It's something that he hasn't come by . . . he hasn't come to that place automatically. He hasn't come to that place automatically by being raised in the community and just saying, well that's how it is, because you know, you have to live through your own emotions and his own reality.

HAKAM: His own support.

RUHAMAH: I don't know if you've ever experienced this, but if you've ever seen two virgins that have just married, you'll know there's no more beautiful sight. Because they've bonded together. You can't find it under any other circumstances than to see two virgins who have just married. There's something there that's more precious than anything else. You can't make it happen any other way. And our children have seen that. We've seen that. We came from damaged lives, we've seen what was missed, what we missed. We can never capture it.

YAHCHEBED: What's so wonderful too, is that in this sexuality, in this life that we have is that you know how in our society, you search around like you're searching around for the perfect man. It's up to you, it's like, which one, which fish in the sea, or whatever. It's just so difficult to find how you know who the person would be compatible for you to spend the rest of your life with. What a weighty thing, that you could come to that decision. So it's so wonderful in the life that we have is that we have a protection for these young people by having what we call a "waiting period." A time of a coming to see whether two people who express their love or their interest, even, of one another that they possibly might be compatible for marriage is that they would go on a time of waiting that's to be judged by the whole community that they're in, first by the elders, by going to them and saying, we would like to see whether what we have in our hearts for one another is going to be for marriage. So they go on this time and they don't touch one another at all, they don't hold hands, they don't kiss, they don't do anything. It's not like an engagement period in the world at all in that it's just a time of really seeing [??] it and spending time together that's a protected time. It really gives them a good conscience, it gives the community a good conscience and after a period of time, and it could be within weeks, it could be within months, it could be even longer than that, but it seems to fall within months' time, but it becomes evident whether those two people are really compatible for marriage. Then in themselves they have an agreement in themselves, first, that they love each other and then the people around them in the community also have that same . . . we say "Amen," in other words, let it be, or yes, this is it. So then they're to be married and then that's the first kiss is when she kisses him at the wedding.

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Q: Oh, that's wonderful.

YAHCHEBED: It's so wonderful. And then, if it doesn't work out, which many times it hasn't, you know, they're not compatible, then they go away being friends and they haven't had that . . .

RUHAMAH: Before they get married!

YAHCHEBED: Before they, yeah . . .

YONAH: When it's decided that they're not going to get married.

YAHCHEBED: That they're not, I'm sorry, thank you very much, that they're not going to be married, and they go away being friends and from the relationship, and it's just really protective and it's so healthy.

YONAH: And they're still pure.

YAHCHEBED: And they're still pure.

HAKAM: I think that what we've come to realize is that the marriage covenant that the Bible talk about is amazing. It's the key to restoration between man and woman, is the marriage covenant. In a weak kind of community, I don't know anybody that's ever come into the community that really had any understanding, really truly understanding of what the marriage covenant really is. It's basically this, that the man, he makes a covenant with the woman to lay his life down for her, to love her absolutely all the days of his life, to love her like the Messiah loved the Church and everything that that means. In other words, to live in a way to be vulnerable to the extent that he would actually give his life up for her and in daily ongoing situations and circumstances every day. And her . . .

RUHAMAH: It's 2: 30.

Q: Oh.

HAKAM: We gotta git. And her covenant is that she totally surrenders to him. Totally. She submits to him, she surrenders to him because of his love. That dynamic right there, that relationship is the most powerful, most healing, most incredible thing on the face of the Earth. That's what we believe in. We don't believe in any other sexual orientation or any other places for sexual relationships. Basically, we've seen the devastation of every other philosophy, every other belief about sexual orientation, you'll find it from people's past [unintelligible].

HAVAH: I remember hearing at a teaching on sexuality how if you had relationships outside marriage, you could never recover from the damage, and I was new in the community and I thought it was a little overstated, you know what I mean?

Q: Yeah.

HAVAH: I got the gist of it, but felt in my reasoning that it was a little overstated, but I see that it wasn't overstated at all. That's absolutely the truth. We married five years ago, both having grown up in the Sixties and been . . . he was married before, I lived with somebody before, lots of relationships, whatever, and we've gotten married in the covenant. It's just amazing to both of us to, how would you say, recognize the ailments if you want to call it, the ailments in our life and how they're connected to things we did in the past and see how it really is true, because that damage takes the consequence. I mean, we're being healed and restored but you can't pretend that the damage isn't there, in terms of intimacy and all kinds of things. When you've given yourself to other things it's like you can't pretend

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you didn't. One of the things that's really an ultimate challenge for us as parents now is for the us now to be raising the "hims," the "Lukes."

Q: Yes.

HAVAH: And to be trying to lead these guys through, "Well, believe us, it's right. No, we didn't do it, but it's good for you." Like having wisdom for how to do this.

HAKAM: We were the most promiscuous people that ever lived, you know? Probably, I mean, our generation, you know? So then here we have our children and it's a pretty awesome thing, we're thankful that we have this covenant to bring them into, to really give them understanding. They see the fruit of it, they see the fruit of their [unintelligible] for getting married in this kind of relationships and really being fulfilling.

Q: Mm-hmm.

HAVAH: It's really an amazing thing. We marry within the community, you know?

Q: Oh, you do?

HAVAH: Yeah, we do, and you'd think it would lead to, you know, hopeless people and not too many marriages, but it doesn't. It works.

Q: Well, you're big enough that I guess that's how it works.

HAVAH: Yeah, it works somehow. We find our matches.

Q: Yeah.

YAHCHEBED: This is my daughter, Shuah [??].

Q: Hi, Shuah.

YAHCHEBED: She's eight and a half years old. I have two daughters and four sons and she made you a card.

Q: Oh, how wonderful.

YAHCHEBED: And we have a card for Tim, if you could pass it on to him also.

Q: Oh, I'd love to.

HAKAM: [unintelligible] for the music, huh?

YAHCHEBED: Yeah. At 2:45 he wanted you there, so you're doing good.

SHUAH: These are otters [??] and that's a fish.

Q: Uh-huh? Oh, that's wonderful!

YAHCHEBED: Yeah, that's it. Actually, it's some fish but he colored them over, you can't see it now.

SHUAH: No, these are the fish.

YAHCHEBED: Those are the fish.

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Q: Okay, yeah, I can tell they're fish, yeah.

YAHCHEBED: Good, good. That's for Tim. We thought Tim was gonna come, she thought Tim was gonna come, so [unintelligible].

Q: Great. Oh, that's so pretty!

YONAH: Is that your old missing Bible [??]?

HAKAM: No, this is my big [unintelligible].

Q: Oh, that's so sweet! He's going to love this.

YAHCHEBED: He likes it a lot. [unintelligible] I think Deborah means bees.

Q: It does. Yes, that's right.

YAHCHEBED: She didn't know that, I said, "Do you know that's what her name means?"

HAKAM: It means what?

YAHCHEBED: It means "bee." She happened to draw a bee on Deborah's card. I thought that was kind of funny.

HAVAH: Oh, oh, Deborah's?

YAHCHEBED: Deborah means "bee."

HAVAH: Really? I didn't know that.

YAHCHEBED: Yeah. I remember that because [unintelligible].

Q: Oh, thank you so much, that's really lovely.

YAHCHEBED: These are a couple of things that we make at our farm here. These are things we're starting to develop and we wanted you to have these things.

Q: Oh, thank you.

YAHCHEBED: [unintelligible] tomatoes [??].

Q: Oh, wonderful.

YAHCHEBED: We're just starting to develop this as our cottage industry, that's how we make our living, through cottage industries.

Q: Oh, thank you very much.

YAHCHEBED: Our children help work on them, and our cottage industries Hakam can tell you more about that later on.

HAVAH: We really enjoyed talking to you.

Q: Yes, thank you so much.

YAHCHEBED: You asked such nice questions, you [unintelligible] just keep us going all day