

## **Cooks' Meeting** (*Letter to Arthur from Marsha*)

Ruth spoke with us a little this morning about what you, Arthur, spoke to me about after the Montpelier meeting about the Cooks' Meeting. Elbert was very sad when he heard about it and I was also. I guess it is more disappointment than anything.

As we see from our forefathers in Israel, God's people are always falling away. As you read the Old Testament it is amazing sometimes how quickly they see need to turn away from their loving Creator. But in the New Testament (covenant) we have the solution to this constant, unconscious falling away process. That solution is the Life giving Spirit. We, His people, consumed by the zeal of that life giving Spirit, have a river of life flowing out of us. We are not slaves to empty form because we have abundant life, and everyone we meet everywhere we go tastes of that life from our life giving Spirit.

So it is so sad when we hear of a "dead meeting" in Island Pond that the Spirit-filled women of our Master Yahshua hate to attend. Elbert says, "Quit having the meeting!" It is certainly never meant to be a dead form, but rather a wonderful time of relaxed fellowship among the responsible members of the church, the living Body, to help in the co ordination of the Body. Communication is essential to good order. We must have order in the church. If that is not being accomplished in the cooks' meeting, then it is useless.

Ruth said she felt the problem was that the women there weren't exercising their spirit. They come to the meeting void of life and full of the evil spirit of intimidation. Those with strong opinions in the flesh take over the meeting. Those with spiritual gifts are tied and gagged by the Enemy. Yahshua's kingdom is crumbling. That is SAD, very sad!

Or perhaps the women who are sent as representatives from each household are the immature and dull ones who don't have anything better to do than to go to a silly cooks' meeting. (One meeting I went to, they had sent Blessing as the representative from the Maples — Linda, Grace, Jan, Hannah, Yerusha, and Eileen all had something better to do!) So those immature or lifeless members bring nothing to the meeting and take nothing home but a dull and lifeless list of announcements to the dull and lifeless household which made the decision to send such a one to the cooks' meeting.

Yes, it's better to have no meeting than to have one like that!

Originally, when Elbert had the idea, it was intended to be a warm, hospitable meeting around a cozy fire in the Maples living room with mature members of each household to discuss organizational problems in the household, recipes, women's wisdom, prayer for needs of other households, expressing their own household needs, and then communicating the heart of the women of the church to the elders' meeting for judgment. This was a very needed gap in communications that needed to be filled in the church. The cooks' meeting was the answer. But it was only the answer if it was Spirit filled members involved in the meeting. The Life Giver must be present at all of our meetings. Could Blessing (Beatrice) bring the Life giving Spirit to the meeting?

So, shall we revert back to a responsible sisters' meeting of Chattanooga fame? We all remember the fruit of those meetings.

Remember, we are first of all disciples. I asked Joy to please continue leading the cooks' meeting because I know she has wisdom and discernment. I know she doesn't have all the gifts, but she has enough to know when the Truth is being spoken and when someone is going off. She often has a hard time expressing herself, but this is because she is young and not confident. She will learn confidence in Yahshua as she "exercises her spirit." She will get no exercise at home in the laundry room by herself. Because we all hate exercise, we all prefer to occupy ourselves with things that lead to spiritual decay. This is the downfall of the church — no spiritual exercise.

We can cancel the cook's meeting, just like we canceled the prayer meeting — all signs of decay. So where is the Life of the Spirit?

Of course, Joy cannot be expected to try to revive a corpse every Tuesday afternoon. If there is no "wonderful fellowship one with another," Joy Martin is not the solution. If Judy Nunnally continues to come to the meeting and sits in silent dullness, under a pile of her own worries, then there is certainly nothing Joy can do about it. If Linda Painter feels so worthless and lost that she just can't open her mouth, what can Joy do? If Emily is sitting

there anxiously waiting for 3 o'clock to come so she can get home to her spinning, can Joy continue on? And if there are no problems, no recipes, no need for interchange of ideas, no burdens on anyone's heart, then they should all go home. It's just a waste of time to be there.

The women at that meeting are the deaconesses of the church, and perhaps a younger one with them who they are personally discipling and raising up to take their place. They are chosen representatives from their household, who are "zealous for Yahshua's House," not full of strong opinions, but judging themselves. So what really is the problem with the cooks' meeting, Arthur and Joy? Let's get to the root of it.

With much concern,

Marsha