

Fulfilling the Great Commission

v1.12

By Norman B. Willis

By Norman B. Willis
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May the name of Yahweh be glorified.

In Yeshua's name, amein.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 28:19-20
19 "Go therefore,
and make disciples of all the nations,
immersing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Set apart Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all things
that I have commanded you;
and behold, I am with you always,
even to the end of the age." Amen.

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Textual Notes (Preface)

People often ask me what version of Scripture I use. Normally I quote from the New King James Version (NKJV), basically because it is widely trusted and fairly easy to read I correct the names and terms to the Hebraic forms, however, for reasons I will explain in this book. When I feel it is helpful to clarify something, or to give additional information, I will place my words in brackets.

Unless noted otherwise, all Hebrew and Aramaic quotes from the Tanach (Old Testament) are from the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT). Unless noted otherwise, all quotes in Aramaic for the Renewed Covenant (New Testament) are from the Eastern Peshitta. For Greek I will normally quote from the BibleWorks Greek Text (BGT). If I quote anything else, I will try to let you know.

For historical reasons that are too complex to explain here, the Protestant world has come to believe that the apostles first wrote their epistles in Greek. This is not accurate. As we explain in this book, the church fathers tell us the epistles were written in a Semitic tongue (Hebrew and/or Aramaic). They were translated into Greek afterwards. However, the Hebrew and/or Aramaic originals are no longer with us, and there is evidence that some of the Greek texts are older than the Aramaic. For that reason, I sometimes use the Greek texts.

It is true that all of the texts we have today have been altered over time (including the so-called “original” Hebrew Masoretic Text). It is important to know this because anti-missionaries will oftentimes point to some

of the discrepancies between the Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Renewed Covenant texts, and then suggest that the Renewed Covenant is wrong because it does not agree with the Hebrew Masoretic text. Without getting into too much detail here, even the Hebrew Masoretic Text disagrees with itself in places, having been written by men. It is also important to realize that the Hebrew Masoretic Text dates back only to 900-1100 CE, and it is the result of an Orthodox Jewish attempt to “fix” or “standardize” the texts in keeping with Orthodox Jewish traditions (one of which is to reject Yeshua’s deity). This is not cause for despair. We simply have to realize that some changes and alterations have been made over the course of centuries, and then understand that Yahweh is faithful to give us what we need, when we need it—and that by careful scholarship we can deduce what has been changed and why.

I have chosen to use the Hebraic names and terms for reasons I hope will be clear by the time you finish reading this study. In many places, Yahweh (Jehovah) tells us that He is very zealous for His name, and He promises to reward those who know His name.

Tehillim (Psalms) 91:14

14 "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name."

How to pronounce the divine name is a subject of some discussion. I pronounce His name as Yahweh (or Yahuweh), and I will write “Yahweh” in this book. If you feel convicted of another pronunciation, simply substitute it as you read.

In Hebrew, the term for “God” is *Elohim*. I will try to use that term in this book because the word “God” is actually the name of a pagan deity, and we are told not to use the names of other deities (e.g., Exodus 23:13).

Because this book is a primer, and because many people will read it on the Internet, I will try to explain the names at the start of each chapter. The first time I write “Yahweh” I will put “(Jehovah)” after it, and the first time I write “Elohim” I will put “(God)” after it, and so on—then I will switch to the Hebraic terms for the rest of the chapter. I realize this can be a little tiresome if you are reading this as a printed book, but I ask your patience with this practice because when people stumble upon a web page through an internet search, or if they are sent a web page by a friend, it helps them a lot if the terms they are reading are explained.

We are all learning and growing together as Yahweh leads and guides us by His Spirit, and I am always looking to improve my studies, to make them more complete, and easier to read. If you have questions, or if you have constructive suggestions as to how we can make these studies better, please write me and let me know at servants@nazareneisrael.org.

May Yahweh bless you for proving all things.

Amein.

Israel’s History of Organization

Yahweh (Jehovah) wants Israel to organize, so that all things in His nation are done decently, and in order.

Qorintim Aleph (1 Corinthians) 14:40
40 Let all things be done decently, and in order.

The reason this has to be mentioned is that men don’t like organization. Each man is born with an innate desire to rule the world—and if he can find a way to avoid submitting to leadership and organization—even Yahweh’s leadership—his heart desires it.

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 17:9
9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

Yet Yahweh knows what is best for us much better than we do—and the reason Yahweh wants Israel to organize is that organization leads to great increases in efficiency—and from these increases in efficiency comes the ability to rule over other nations—and as we show in *Revelation and the End Times*, Yahweh’s will for end time Israel is that they rule over the nations with Yeshua’s rod of iron.

Daniel 7:27
27 “Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

Our choice, then, is to organize in accordance with the principles Elohim established for us in the Renewed Covenant (New Testament) so we can rule the nations, or to continue to rebel (and continue to be ruled).

Put another way, our choice is for each man to set aside his personal desire to be king, and embrace the leadership principles Yahweh has established for His people, so that they might be the head and not the tail.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 28:13

13 “And Yahweh will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.”

As we will show later in this book, Elohim established some special principles in the Renewed Covenant which, if followed, will lead to Yahweh’s divine favor—and with that divine favor will come rulership of the world, with His Son’s rod of iron. But to get there, we have to go beyond simple study of Elohim’s Scripture. We need to discipline ourselves, to put it into effect, so that we might receive His blessing.

From one perspective, Israel’s story is one of internal national governance, and how that governance is to be extended over the world. This book will show how we can establish this internal national leadership, so that Elohim can help us extend it.

As we study, we are going to see that while men dislike strong central leadership, it is Elohim’s key to survival, and success. It is what the scientific community might call, “best practices” for those who would rule. This is a most powerful principle, and we will see that its effects

are varied, far reaching, and unbeatable, when applied to Elohim’s purposes.

Let’s take a look at how strong central leadership has blessed Israel down through the ages. In earliest times, the patriarchs led their families—but patriarchal rule can only unify kinsmen as long as their oldest common ancestor remains alive. In the patriarchs’ day the oldest ancestor common to all the tribes was Jacob (Israel)—and it is therefore no coincidence that when Israel was old (and was about to die), the nation had to go down into Egypt. There Pharaoh would oppress them with harsh rule—but ironically Pharaoh’s oppression carried a blessing, for although Pharaoh oppressed Israel, he continued to rule them with a strong central authority, which meant that they remained one nation, united.

Yeshua tells us that any house which is divided against itself will fall.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 12:25

25 But Yeshua knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.”

America’s Founding Fathers echoed this message when they said things like, “United we stand, divided we fall,” and “Surely we must all hang together, or we will all hang separately.” They understood that it was unified action that would lead to survival, and ultimately to victory.

After 430 years, the Patriarchs had all died. Since the tribes did not have one single living ancestor to unite them, before Yahweh could bring Israel out of Egypt, first He had to raise up one single point of leadership,

so they could remain united. Therefore, Yahweh raised up a man named Moshe (Moses), who would lead the nation of Israel as an *anointed judge*.

As we explain in *Torah Government*, there are three basic types of leaders in Israel: the king, the priest, and the prophet. The *anointed judge* is someone who fulfills more than one role. For example, Moshe served both as the king (government leader) and as the prophet (while his brother Aharon served as the high priest). An anointed judge, then, is a “multipurpose leader” for the nation.

The primary qualification of an anointed judge is that he hears and obeys Yahweh’s voice. This is because his job is to set *halachah* for the nation. Done right, to set *halachah* is to let people know how Yahweh wants things done, as Moshe explains in Exodus 18:16.

Shemote (Exodus) 18:14-24

14 So when Moshe’s father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?"

15 And Moshe said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of Elohim.

16 When they have a difficulty, they come to me, and I judge between one and another; and I make known the statutes of Elohim and His laws."

The only way an anointed judge can let the people know what Yahweh wants done is by hearing Yahweh’s voice. As we explain in *Torah Government* (and in other places), to hear Yahweh’s voice is one of the two main forms of prophecy (foretelling and forthtelling), which is why anointed judges qualify as prophets.

Moshe’s father-in-law Yithro (Jethro) told Moshe that in order to do the job right, he needed to appoint help, so as to distribute the load. Yithro told Moshe to appoint Yahweh-fearing men to lead groups of tens, fifties, hundreds, and thousands. In short, Moshe had to set up a leadership structure, with organization, and a system of accountability. That way the nation would be more efficient (and hence more effective).

Shemote (Exodus) 18:14-24

17 So Moshe’s father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you do is not good.

18 Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself.

19 Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and Elohim will be with you: Stand before Elohim for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to Elohim.

20 And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.

21 Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear Elohim, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

22 And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.

23 If you do this thing, and Elohim so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace."

24 So Moshe heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.

Yahweh later commanded us to organize in this kind of fashion, right in the words of His Torah. He tells us (in plain language) to appoint judges and officers in all of our gates, so that our people will be judged with just judgment.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:18

18 "You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which Yahweh your Elohim gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment."

Yeshua tells us not to judge, although what He really means is not to condemn.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 7:1-2

1 "Judge not, that you be not judged.
2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

However, because Yeshua says not to judge, the word *judge* has a bad reputation in Judeo-Christian culture. What the word judge means in the Torah, however, is simply "to establish justice," and the Torah shows us that the establishment of justice is the primary function of leadership and governance—yet the Messianic world fails to establish justice in all of their gates, because they fail to organize according to Yahweh's Torah.

How can we claim to "keep" Torah if we fail to organize, as the Torah commands (and as the apostles did)?

Acts 6 shows us the apostles organized, and formed a full-time clergy. When a need to minister to the needs of the widows arose, the apostles said to appoint seven additional men to the task, as they needed to stay in prayer, and in the ministry of the word full time.

Ma'asei (Acts) 6:1-4

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of Elohim and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Set apart Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

History confirms that the Apostle John wore special priesthood garb, including a *sacerdotal plate*.

Moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord [sic], and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. He fell asleep at Ephesus.

[Eusebius, Church History, Book V, Chapter 24. Translated by Arthur Cushman McGiffert. Excerpted from Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series Two, Volume 1.]

Why do so many Messianics reject organization, even though the apostles organized, and the Torah plainly commands it? The answer is none other than our evil

fleshly inclination, which will seek any excuse not to submit to Yahweh's order.

In the Torah, Korah the son of Izhar led a rebellion against Yahweh's chosen leader Moshe, claiming that he and Aharon should not "exalt themselves above the assembly of Yahweh," because "the entire assembly was set apart, every one of them."

Bemidbar (Numbers) 16:1-3

1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men;

2 and they rose up before Moshe with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown.

3 They gathered together against Moshe and Aharon, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is set apart, every one of them, and Yahweh is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of Yahweh?"

Yahweh's judgment was that Korah and his men had to die.

Korah was right in that in the entire camp of Israel was set apart—yet what he and his men failed to appreciate is that the tabernacle courtyard established an even higher level of set-apartness. Inside the courtyard was yet a third separation—the set-apart place, where only the priests could go. Then, inside the set-apart place was yet a fourth level of separation, the most set-apart place, where only the high priest could go—and even then only once a year (and not without blood).

Ivrim (Hebrews) 9:7

7 But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance....

While some might take offense at the idea, it takes a different level of calling to go from places of "normal" set-apartness (such as the courtyard) to places of more set-apartness (such as the Most Set-apart place)—and only those whom Elohim has chosen are allowed to do this.

But who is called to lead today? And how does He want us to organize? As we will see, it is not what we might think.

If you want to know how Yahweh wants us to organize today, so we can serve Him, then let us begin.

How the Disciples Serve the Believers

If we *believe* on Yeshua, and study the Torah, does that automatically make us *disciples*? No, it makes us *believers*—and if we believe it makes us *disciples* then we will misunderstand the Renewed Covenant, and we will not be able to walk it out.

In the first century, Yeshua had two different classes of followers. The first class was called the *believers*, and they were perhaps 99.7% of all those who followed Yeshua. In contrast, the *disciples* were only a tiny minority of those who followed Yeshua—something like 0.3%. In this study we will see that only a very few of the believers also qualified as disciples—and if we will understand what this means, and apply it to our daily walks, it will galvanize our movement, and bring us all together in Yeshua's unity, and in love.

Mark 8 says that about 4,000 *believers* came to see Yeshua. These believers were so devout that they stayed with Him for three days, even though they had nothing to eat. Perhaps because of their devotedness, Yeshua had compassion on them. He taught them, and healed their sicknesses. He even performed a miracle to feed them all—but then He sent the believers away, so as to make time to train His *disciples*.

Marqaus (Mark) 8:1-10

1 In those days, the multitude being very great and having nothing to eat, Yeshua called His disciples to Him and said to them,

2 "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat.

3 And if I send them away hungry to their own houses, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from afar."

4 Then His disciples answered Him, "How can one satisfy these people with bread here in the wilderness?"

5 He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."

6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and they set them before the multitude.

7 They also had a few small fish; and having blessed them, He said to set them also before them.

8 So they ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets of leftover fragments.

9 Now those who had eaten were about four thousand. And He sent them away,

10 immediately got into the boat with His disciples, and came to the region of Dalmanutha.

Two chapters earlier, in Mark 6, Yeshua did pretty much the same thing. About 5,000 *believers* came to Yeshua. He had compassion on them, as they were like sheep without a shepherd. He performed a miracle to feed them—but then He sent them away. As we will see, this was to make time to train His *disciples*.

Marqaus (Mark) 6:30-45

30 Then the apostles gathered to Yeshua and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.

31 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while."

For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

32 So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

33 But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him.

34 And Yeshua, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

35 When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late.

36 Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat."

37 But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"

38 But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."

39 Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass.

40 So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties.

41 And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.

42 So they all ate and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish.

44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away.

Verse 34 says that Yeshua had compassion on the believers because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Yeshua may have wanted to stay and tend His flock forever. However, He had to pull away and train His *disciples*, because He knew they would be the ones to shepherd His sheep in His absence, after He went back up to heaven—and that would take time.

In the last chapter we saw the Torah principles by which Yahweh wants us to organize His spiritual army. Moshe's father-in-law said to set leaders over 10's, 50's, 100's and 1,000's, to make it easier to lead the people. Later Yahweh told us to appoint judges and officers in all of our gates, so that we can judge the people with just judgment. We should note, then, that Yeshua said He did not come to do away with even the least part of the Torah—and that anyone who broke the least of these commandments (including organization) would be called "least" in the kingdom of heaven.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 5:17-20

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Torah till all is fulfilled.

19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall

be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

In verses 39 and 40 (above), Yeshua told His *disciples* to make the *believers* sit down in groups of 50 and 100. This is because Yeshua was obeying the command to organize. He was also training His disciples to be the “spiritual officer corps” of His Father’s spiritual army.

In John 6, Yeshua again trained His disciples to lead and serve the flock. Here they distributed the food, and gathered up the fragments, so that nothing was lost.

Yochanan (John) 6:11-13

11 And Yeshua took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."

13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

After feeding the sheep, Yeshua follows the same pattern, pulling away from the flock to spend time training up His shepherds—yet the believers did not understand Yeshua’s need to spend more time with the shepherds, so they got into boats and came after Him—and notice what Yeshua says, because it is of central importance.

Yochanan (John) 6:24-26

24 When the people therefore saw that Yeshua was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Yeshua.

25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

26 Yeshua answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."

What did Yeshua mean, the believers sought Him out “not because they saw the signs, but because they ate of the loaves and were filled”? We need to understand this, because it is central to understanding His goals.

Yeshua meant the believers did not seek Him because they were so impressed at the signs that they realized they should lay down their lives, and serve Him, as His disciples had. Rather, the believers only sought Him because they enjoyed “getting fed.”

While the believers may not have understood, Yeshua meant that they only wanted to “get spiritual food from Him,” rather than lay down their lives for Him—and that is the difference between a believer, and a disciple (even if they don’t understand the difference).

When you love someone, you learn what they like, and you try to give it to them. So what does our Husband want? He wants us not to be like children, thinking about how we can get fed. He wants us to think about how we can organize, and feed others.

It is not that Yeshua wants a kingdom for His own sake. Rather, He wants it so He can take better care of us all. He knows that in order for any flock to be well tended, it

has to be well ordered—and the shepherds also have to be well ordered amongst themselves. Thus, although He knew it would be harder on the flock in the short term, the only way His kingdom would grow in the long run would be for Him to teach His disciples how to order themselves, and His flock.

But how could Yeshua know who would be worthy to shepherd His sheep? Unworthy servants are legend—even a third of Yahweh’s messengers (angels) rebelled against Him and His rule! That is why Yeshua had to test His potential shepherds, asking them to lay down their lives in the material world. They had to show that they valued serving His sheep more than they valued their lives in the material world before He would trust them with the opportunity to be His disciple. That is why in Luke, Yeshua tells us that a *disciple* is someone who literally lays down his life in the world. He has to show His sincerity by trading his life and his material possessions for the privilege of serving His flock.

Luqa (Luke) 14:33

33 “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

This is the spiritual fulfillment of the Torah principle that the Levites could not have any inheritance.

Bemidbar (Numbers) 18:20-21

20 Then Yahweh said to Aharon: "You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 "Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting.”

The Levites needed the people’s tithes and offerings to support themselves and their families—but part of their set apart duties is to give the people an example of valuing their service to Yahweh more than they value the ability to leave an inheritance for their children. That is, part of their set apart trust is to treat all of His people Israel as their spiritual family (even valuing this over their physical family).

Mattityahu (Matthew) 12:48-50

48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"

49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!

50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

In later chapters we will see that just as the Levites formed a hierarchical servant order, Yeshua also had His disciples form a hierarchical servant order, called the Melchizedekian order. As we will see, the order of Melchizedek is not called an “order” for nothing. It is a spiritual servant hierarchy, just like the Levitical order. To lay down one’s life and one’s material possessions, and join a spiritual military hierarchy requires a huge leap of faith. This may be why the ratio of believers to disciples was something like 300 or 400 to 1.

$4,000 \div 12 = 333.33$ to 1 $5,000 \div 12 = 416.67$ to 1

For every 300 or 400 people who wanted to “get fed,” only one was willing to lay down his possessions in the material world, join the order of Melchizedek, and serve the flock—even though in Mark 8, Yeshua said that this

was the only way to overcome the material world, and not lose his soul.

Marqaus (Mark) 8:34-37

34 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me [i.e., to become like Me], let him deny himself, and take up his cross [or stake], and follow Me.

35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Good News will save it.

36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

But if the thought of organization was scary in the first century, it is triply scary today. Not only is Yeshua not physically here to lead us, but the people have been persecuted and lied to by an organized papacy. This was in fulfillment of Daniel 7, which said that the papacy would persecute the believers for some 1,260 years (and will likely persecute us again, in the 3-1/2 years of Jacob's Trouble).

Daniel 7:25

25 He [papacy] shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change [the festival] times and Torah. And the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

The church has lied to people, and as we explain in *Nazarene Israel* and in *Revelation and the End Times*,

we are commanded to "come out of" the church, so that we do not share in her sins, or receive of her plagues.

Hitgalut (Revelation) 18:4

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."

But what specifically is it about "the church" that we need to come out of? That is, "What makes the church the church?" Some believers see it as a large religious organization with a hierarchical system of leadership. Based on this, they conclude that "the church" is:

1. A large organization
2. That teaches false doctrine
3. Which has hierarchical leadership

Those who believe this might conclude that the best way to "come out of the church" is to:

1. Avoid becoming "too large"
2. Interpret Scripture for yourself (only)
3. Demonize (and avoid) organized leadership

Messianics who believe this way often meet in small groups. They study Scripture together, share a meal, and fellowship. It is fun, it is relaxing, and there are no tithes. They get to interpret Scripture however they see fit. The only problem is that it does not build a kingdom for Yeshua, and it does not fulfill the Great Commission (which as we will see is the command to make *disciples* [leaders] in all nations). And, by rejecting Elohim's leaders, they mimic Korah's rebellion, where Korah led the people to reject Yahweh's leaders, based on the logic that "all the congregation is set apart, every one of them...."

Bemidbar (Numbers) 16:1-3

1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men;

2 and they rose up before Moshe with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown.

3 They gathered together against Moshe and Aharon, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is set apart, every one of them, and Yahweh is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of Yahweh?"

If we don't see a difference between believers and disciples, we might think it is unnecessary to support a clergy, because "all of us are set apart, every one of us! Why would anyone therefore exalt himself above us?" But an organized, united kingdom is not built.

Churches can also be disorganized. It can still be a church if it rejects leadership. The "simple church" movement is the fastest growing movement in the church today—and it looks like the Messianic home fellowships. People gather together in homes, read Scripture, share meals, enjoy fellowship, and they do not tithe. There is no organization and no clergy—and yet these "simple churches" still teach Sunday, Christmas and Easter worship. They are "churches" in the truest sense of the word.

But some believers ask, "What is wrong with sitting and feasting on Yahweh's word with friends!? What more

could our Messiah possibly want, than for us to feast on His word of truth, and have fellowship together?!"

Yochanan (John) 6:26

26 Yeshua answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."

Well, what is wrong with just sitting and "getting fed" is that it sets up a substitute for the system Yeshua gave His disciples. It is a false priesthood. If we are willing to accept it, it is basically the modern-day version of "each man doing whatever seems right in his own eyes."

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:8-9

8 "You shall not at all do as we are doing here today — every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes —

9 for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you."

We have not yet come to the rest or the inheritance which Yahweh our Elohim promises us—we still have a big job to do. And while our forefathers had to leave the Catholic Church because of their filthy doctrines, they continued to understand the need for organization, and leadership. They still performed the Great Commission, which as we will see in the next chapter is the mission to raise up leadership in every nation of the world, and to bring all the believers together on one single foundation of apostles and prophets, so that Yeshua's kingdom might be one, as He is One.

Fulfilling the Great Commission

In the last chapter we saw how the Renewed Covenant tells us that *believers* and *disciples* are two different groups. *Believers* believe on Yeshua, but continue to live out their lives in the world. (That is, they add Yeshua to their existing lives.) In the first century, perhaps 99.7% of all Yeshua's followers fell into this category.

In contrast, *disciples* lay down their lives in the world, join the Melchizedekian order, and spend the rest of their lives working to further Yeshua's spiritual empire. This requires order, mutual submission, and discipline (which is why they are called *disciples*).

If we don't understand the difference between believers and disciples, we will not understand what the Great Commission is, or how to fulfill it. Some people think the Great Commission is when we share our faith with others—but that is *witnessing*—and while witnessing is good (and while we all need to witness), that is just a small part of the Great Commission overall.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 28:18-20

18 And Yeshua came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Set apart Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amein.

As we explain in *Torah Government*, there must always be a priesthood to stand and serve the people before Yahweh. The priesthood serves many functions, which include (but are not limited to):

1. Standing and serving before Yahweh
2. Interceding for the people
3. Bearing the people's guilt
4. Opposing those who are undisciplined, and
5. Giving the people an avenue to show their love and trust in Yahweh, by offerings

Depending on how we choose to classify them, there are either four or five priesthoods in Scripture, all of which have received recognition from Yahweh.

1. The order of Melchizedek
2. The order of the Firstborn (Exodus 13)
3. The order of Levi
4. The Rabbinical order (after the order of Levi)
5. Yeshua's priesthood (order of Melchizedek)

First there was the Melchizedekian order. This is the priesthood Avraham gave through.

B'reisheet (Genesis) 14:18-20

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of Elohim Most High.

19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Avram of Elohim Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be Elohim Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

And, while Scripture does not say so specifically, the Melchizedekian order is also likely the priesthood that Ya'akov gave through, when he promised to "surely give a tenth" of what Yahweh gave, back to Him.

B'reisheet (Genesis) 28:20-22

20 Then Ya'akov made a vow, saying, "If Elohim will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

21 so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then Yahweh shall be my Elohim.

22 And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be Elohim's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Avraham and Ya'akov likely offered through the order of Melchizedek because they did not host a tabernacle or temple of their own. However, when Israel was getting ready to enter the land (and would host their own tabernacle/temple), Elohim commanded them to establish the priesthood of the firstborn.

Shemote (Exodus) 13:11-13

11 "And it shall be, when YHWH brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you,

12 that you shall set apart to YHWH all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be YHWH's.

13 But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem."

The priesthood of the firstborn became defiled during the incident with the Golden Calf, and Elohim then chose the Levites, because they showed themselves willing to serve Yahweh, even when it meant opposing their brothers and sons.

Shemote (Exodus) 32:25-29

25 Now when Moshe saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aharon had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies),

26 then Moshe stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on Yahweh's side — come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

27 And he said to them, "Thus says Yahweh Elohim of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'"

28 So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moshe. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.

29 Then Moshe said, "Set yourselves apart today to Yahweh, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother."

It pleased Yahweh that the Levites were willing to put obedience to Him before family, and the Levitical order remained in effect until the exile to Babylon, when it was replaced by the rabbinical version of the Levitical order. Even though the rabbinical order was not necessarily made up 100% of Levites, Yahweh blessed them, and prophesied that their leader (Zerubbabel) would finish the temple, and do many wonderful things.

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 4:8-10

8 Moreover the word of Yahweh came to me, saying:

9 "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That Yahweh of hosts has sent Me to you.

10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of Yahweh, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

However, the rabbinical order defiled itself in the first century when they rejected Yeshua. This was done in order that the prophecy in the Psalms might be fulfilled, that the stone the builders rejected would become the chief cornerstone in a living spiritual temple.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 21:42-43

42 Yeshua said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was Yahweh's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of Elohim will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

Because the rabbis rejected Yeshua, the Jews would have to go back into exile—and outside the land they would have neither a cleansed tabernacle nor a temple. However, Yeshua would become the chief cornerstone of a living spiritual temple that would eventually be run by the Ephraimites—whom Yeshua generously calls a "nation bearing the fruits" of Elohim's Spirit.

Although there would be no physical temple, there was to be something much grander—a temple made of living stones in all nations, built on one singular foundation of apostles and prophets, with Messiah Yeshua serving as the chief cornerstone.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 2:19-22

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of Elohim,

20 having been built on the [single] foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yeshua Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a [i.e., one singular] set-apart temple in Yahweh,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of Elohim in the Spirit.

The disciples were to build a united priesthood in order to shepherd Yeshua's sheep, as they came out of the darkness, and into His marvelous light.

As we will see in coming chapters, the apostles and prophets mentioned in verse 20 were just two of the five classes of disciples that were to be raised up in every nation. They were to serve not only as the foundation of Yeshua's living temple, but also as the leadership and administrative "glue" that holds His temple together as one—like mortar holding stones together in a temple, or like the bones and connective tissue which gives structure and shape to Yeshua's body. And then one day there would be a great ingathering, when many who believed on Yeshua would come from east and west, out of every family, every nation, and every clan.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 8:11

11 “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Avraham, Yitzhak, and Ya’akov in the kingdom of heaven.”

But before any true Hebraic remnant could come out of all nations, first they would have to be raised up. Such a remnant was established worldwide in the first two centuries, but it slowly became defiled. And, since there must always be a priesthood to serve the people before Yahweh, it must be established again—and that is our job. Let us discuss how our Husband says we are to do it in the balance of this book.

The Unified Fivefold Ministry

In the last chapter we saw that there must always be a priesthood to stand before Elohim, and make offerings on behalf of the people. That is why, when the Levitical (rabbinical) order defiled itself by rejecting Yeshua, the anointing passed from the Levitical order to the order of Melchizedek, which stepped forward to take its place. However, because the Melchizedekian order does not offer animal sacrifices in a physical temple, the active set of instructions (torah) also had to change at that time.

Ivrim (Hebrews) 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the torah.

As we explain in *Torah Government*, the reason it is not a problem for the instructions (torah) to change is that both the Melchizedekian and the Levitical orders are part of the greater Torah of Moshe. The Torah of Moshe was not altered or impacted in any way when the Levitical order stepped down, and Melchizedekian order stepped up.

But if the Melchizedekian order operates by a different set of instructions than the Levitical order, then what are those instructions? We know how the Levitical order is supposed to organize and operate, but what about the Melchizedekian order?

As we will see, the torah for the Melchizedekian order is recorded in what is called the *Fivefold ministry* of Ephesians 4—and we are told that Elohim Himself is the one who gave these instructions (verse 11).

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah,

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah;

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Messiah —

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Some people accuse Shaul of making this passage up, but as this study progresses we will see that this is not correct, as the apostles kept this fivefold order before Shaul was ever saved. (Shaul merely wrote Elohim's torah down, to impart it to the Ephesians.)

Many people dislike what this passage says, because it calls for the disciples to organize and order themselves according to Melchizedekian principles—but if we love Yeshua, and truly want to serve Him, then why would we object to anything that He says? Why would we not trust that He knows better than we do (in our flesh)?

Verse 11 says that the disciples are called to fill five different roles, which address specific needs that the body of Messiah has. Some are called to be apostles, while others are called as prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...

The apostles are essentially the leaders. Elohim calls them to perform a mission for Him, and they then step out in faith, and set about doing their work—and Elohim calls others to help them in it, both financially, and with time helps. By responding to Elohim's call, they provide a direction and a work that others who love Elohim can join, and plug themselves into. This is the kind of Spirit-led *volunteerism* that Elohim loves.

If we are willing to accept it, apostles are basically the anointed judges of the Renewed Covenant—and they exercise the same kind of authority to lead by example (and to establish direction) that anointed judges in the Tanach ("Old Covenant") had. Their role is to hear Yahweh's voice, to do what Elohim is telling them to do, and to establish right-ruling among His people. The only issue is that since there is more than one apostle in Renewed Covenant times, they must submit one to another in the Spirit, and allow the Spirit to establish the right order among them, with the greatest servants serving the most, and everyone else helping them to do what Yahweh has called them to do. As we will see, in the first century Shaul was an apostle to the gentiles, while Kepha was an apostle to the Jews—but they both had to defer to Ya'akov, so there would be order.

Like apostles, *prophets* also hear Yahweh's voice. The difference is that they have not been called to step out in a leadership role. However, because they can hear Yahweh's voice, they can tell if Yahweh's will is being done, or not being done—and that is why they serve alongside the apostles in the *foundation of apostles and prophets*, which ensures Yeshua's priesthood is doing Yahweh's will.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 2:19-22

19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of Elohim,

20 having been built on the [single] foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yeshua Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a [i.e., one singular] set-apart temple in Yahweh,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of Elohim in the Spirit.

Evangelists are “mouthpieces” for the body. Their job is to preach the Good News, and win people to the truth. Most of the “teachers” in the Hebrew Roots movement are actually evangelists who do not understand the need to operate on Yeshua's foundation of apostles and prophets.

An evangelist is not unlike a combat medic. His job is to rescue those whom the enemy has wounded, and to deliver them to the pastors (i.e., shepherds)—and then it is the pastors who help the people get healed, and teach them to become more like Yeshua (who is the picture of spiritual health).

Just like any father must maintain order and discipline in his own house, apostles and prophets have the job of maintaining order and discipline in the body. This means that if they are doing their jobs, apostles and prophets are not always popular with the people. In contrast, evangelists are usually very popular with the people, because their job is not to maintain discipline, but only to be popular, and thereby win as many people as possible to the message. One of the ways they do this is to focus on “milk” messages—and another way is to avoid controversial issues. This can work, but only so long as they remember to operate on the foundation of apostles and prophets, so that the difficult issues eventually get dealt with.

The primary reason there is no unity in the Messianic movement today (2013) is that the evangelists have forgotten (or perhaps ignore) the requirement to work on the foundation of apostles and prophets. Instead, they strike out on their own—and as such, the body has become divided. Sadly, this is more the rule than the exception in the Messianic movement today.

Rather than operating as free agents, the evangelists are supposed to act more like combat medics—they reach out to those the Adversary has wounded, and deliver them to the pastors, whose job it is to help them get healed. The pastor will also involve them in local outreach and witnessing, and mentor them, helping them to develop more of Yeshua's character. A *pastor* is a “shepherd,” and while pastors can lead congregations, they are not limited to that role. A pastor can shepherd any flock. For example, the seven men who were chosen to serve the needs of the Hellenic widows fulfilled a pastoral role. (That is, they tended the needs of that flock.)

Ma'asei (Acts) 6:2-4

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of Elohim and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Set apart Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

While the apostles could have done this, they knew it would be better for the body if they remained focused on apostolic matters, while those with a pastoral calling focused on tending the widows. Thus, a good division of labor is very much a part of a well-ordered body.

Pastors are essentially spiritual fathers, and along with their wives, they serve as spiritual parents to the flock. They help the people to develop Yeshua's character (which in reality is far more important than just learning knowledge). This cannot be done via the television, or over the internet—but this must be done at the local level. It is not glamorous, and it is not always fun, but this needs to be the focus of the movement.

Pastors can often teach, but not everyone with the gift of a pastor also has the gift of a teacher. *Teachers*, not surprisingly, have a gift for teaching various subjects, and they work with the pastors to help the flock under their care not just learn and grow in knowledge, but to become more like Yeshua—and the vehicle for this is

to conduct outreach at the local level. We will talk about that in more detail in later chapters.

These five ministerial gifts correspond to the five basic needs that any organization has. Any organization must meet these five needs, if it is to grow and thrive. Every organization needs leaders (apostles), managers and quality control personnel (prophets). It must talk with those outside (evangelists), and care for those who are inside (pastors). It must also train its people (teachers). Even when organizations are forced to go underground, these five roles still apply, because they are "best practices" that take care of all of the needs of the body.

Gift/Role	Need/Rule
Apostle	Leadership, direction
Prophet	Quality control, management
Evangelist	Communicates the Good News
Pastor	Tends the needs of a flock
Teacher	Teaches knowledge

Ephesians tells us that if the disciples will organize according to these five roles, and build upon one single foundation of apostles and prophets (with Yeshua Messiah as the chief cornerstone), then the saints will be equipped for the work of ministry, and will be able to edify Yeshua's body the way He wants it to be edified.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah...

Verse 13 shows us that this fivefold torah still applies to us today. The fivefold is to last "until we all come to the unity of the faith," and become perfect men. Since we are clearly not perfect, and since we have nothing but

division today (2013), we have not graduated from this torah yet. This is the torah that we need to follow today.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah...

The Melchizedekian torah remains in effect as long as we are in the dispersion (and do not have a temple, or a Levitical order). Sometimes people say that these fivefold ministry gifts are not for today—but later we will see that they are. In fact, the reason the Catholic Church embraced heresy is because they abandoned these principles. Had the church been led by apostles and prophets who obeyed Yahweh's voice, they would not have embraced false doctrine—and that is one of many reasons why we need to stay together on the *foundation of apostles and prophets*—it is Yahweh's system of "checks and balances."

While it may be difficult for the Messianic leaders to lay down their possessions, and come together on one foundation of apostles and prophets, verse 14 tells us that if we will organize according to Yeshua's torah, then we will no longer be "spiritual children," tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, and by the trickery of men.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

14 that we should no longer be [spiritual] children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...

What does verse 14 mean, that we should no longer be spiritual children? Let us consider how children grow up in the home.

As babies, we are born selfish. We do not think about anyone else's needs—we just want what we want—and we may not even realize that the other members of the family have needs. However, as we grow, our parents encourage us to think about others' needs, and to start helping out around the home. Then, when conflicts arise our parents teach us to give up some of what we want, so that each member of the family can get what he needs. Ideally we learn to look out for each and every member of the family, as well as the family as a unit.

This same kind of growth and maturation process should take place at the assembly, under the care of the pastor and his wife (as well as the congregational elders, whom we will talk about in later chapters). When evangelists and others bring spiritually hurt and wounded people to the congregation, they are like unto spiritual babes. Just like a baby needs to be fed and changed, and is unable to take care of itself, the pastor and his team should just take care of the spiritual babe. However, if he grows in his love for the Messiah, he will want to start contributing to his Messiah's work, which means he will want to begin helping out around the assembly, and contributing to the works that Yahweh has going on around the world, no matter whether he directly benefits from them, or not. As he continues to grow into a loving bride, it will be enough for him to know that his contributions please his Husband, and help to expand His spiritual empire.

As we grow from spiritual babes into spiritual adults, the focus becomes less and less about us, and more

and more about what we can do for Yeshua, and His body. This is the message of Yochanan HaMatbil (John the Immerser), whom Yeshua said came in the spirit of Eliyahu (Elijah).

Yochanan (John) 3:30

30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

In the Messianic movement today, it is all about sitting around in circles, and “getting fed” on Yahweh’s word. It is all about learning, rather than doing. And, perhaps if we are still spiritual infants, it is alright for us to learn, and not do. However, as we grow and become more spiritually mature, let us not be surprised if our Father asks us to start helping out around His house—and let us not be surprised if He wants us either to lay down our lives in the world, so as to do His work, or to help and support those who are. If we love Him, this will not be a burden, but a joy.

And if we are willing to receive it, Ephesians also tells us why it is necessary for Yahweh’s ministers to be supported by the tithe, rather than by book sales. When ministers support themselves by book sales (rather than by the tithe) there is no need for them to come together on one single foundation of the apostles and prophets. There is no need for them to submit one to another in His Spirit, and then pray and supplicate until they all agree with Him about what He wants them to teach His people—yet this process is the quintessence of leading the flock together in unity. When Yahweh’s leaders and teachers humble themselves and do this, then their theological differences disappear. They all come to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, and thus they all speak the same thing—and because they are all perfectly joined together, and speak the same thing, then the people

are all shepherded the same way—and the result is the kind of true fivefold unity that Yeshua desires.

Qorintim Aleph (1 Corinthians) 1:10

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Adon Yeshua Messiah, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

When the leaders are all perfectly joined together in Him, then the people are no longer be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine—yet this will not happen until the Messianic leaders realize that they need to start doing things Yeshua’s way.

Verse 15 tells us that if we do this, we will “grow up (spiritually) into Him who is the Head—Messiah.” If we can imagine that Yeshua’s head is suspended up in the heavens, our job as His body is to “pull ourselves up by our boot straps” (so to speak), so that we “grow up” into His head, thereby connecting with Him.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Messiah —

Now notice how much humility verse 15 calls for. Verse 15 does not say to *avoid* speaking the truth (so that we don’t hurt anyone’s feelings). Rather, it says to *speak* the truth in love—and it also means being willing to *listen* when someone else speaks the truth to us in love, and make difficult changes, if need be. So why is this so hard for the Ephraimites, who break fellowship with anyone who disagrees with them?

When I was in the army, I tried to get along with the other officers. We were not all friends, and sometimes we had differences, but we all knew we were there to do a job—and if we did not get the job done, the enemy would divide and conquer our camp (as the Enemy has divided and conquered the Messianics). For this reason we put our differences aside, and worked together to accomplish the mission—and we were not even saved.

Friend, don't we have a job to do? Hasn't our King told us to lay down our lives in the world, go into all nations, and raise up more disciples for Him? And doesn't He want us to join them together into a unified priesthood, and shepherd His believers worldwide?

Mattityahu (Matthew) 28:18-20

18 And Yeshua came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Set apart Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amein.

If we have His Spirit, why aren't we doing this?

Yahweh gives us an opportunity to show Him how much we love Him, by laying down the life He gives us, in order to build a kingdom for His Son. And when we lay down our lives, and when we willingly give of "our" time and "our" money to help build His spiritual empire, then we are showing Him that we love Him, in deed (and not just in word).

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Sometimes people say that they *would* be joyful to tithe *if* there was a temple—but since there is no standing temple, they don't want to give anything. I think they miss the whole point. Are they saying they *would* make money for a barbecue with their Dad, but they *won't* make money to build His Son's kingdom?

One reason the priests have no inheritance is so that the monies go to the work, and not to anyone's pocket—but His priests still need support. As we saw in the last chapter, one of the functions of the priesthood is to provide the people with an opportunity to give their tithes and offerings back to Yahweh, to *show* their love for Him—and *those* are the set-apart monies the priests are to use, to spread the Good News of Yeshua.

Apostolic Unity in Action

Earlier we saw how Yeshua told His disciples to go into every nation, raise up other fivefold ministers, and bring them together on one single foundation of apostles and prophets. To understand what this should look like today, let's start at Matthew 10, and work forward to Acts 15 and the Jerusalem Council.

Matthew 10 is where Yeshua first sent His disciples out. In verse 1 they were called *disciples*, but in verse 2 they began to be called *apostles*.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 10:1-4

1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

In Hebrew, an apostle is a *shaliach* (שליח). This word is derived from the word "shelach, (שלח), which means, "to send." In context, it refers to someone who is sent out to accomplish a specific mission (which in this case was the Good News). Once disciples were sent out, they were thenceforth called *apostles*.

There are at least 22 apostles mentioned in the Renewed Covenant. The original 12 apostles are called *pre-ascension* apostles (because they were called to be apostles before Yeshua ascended to heaven). Those called as apostles after Yeshua ascended are called *post-ascension* apostles. These included Shaul (Paul), Timothy, Bar Naba (Barnabas), Silvanus, Titus, and others. For example, Shaul, Silvanus and Timothy co-authored the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

Thessaloniqim (1 Thessalonians) 1:1

1 Shaul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the assembly of the Thessalonians in Elohim the Father and the Adon Yeshua Messiah: Favor to you and peace from Elohim our Father and the Adon Yeshua Messiah.

Verse 2:6 identifies them all as apostles.

Thessaloniqim Aleph (1 Thessalonians) 2:6

6 Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Messiah.

Some people question Shaul's election as an apostle. However, as we explain in "About Shaul's Ministry" (in *Nazarene Scripture Studies, Volume 2*), Yahweh said Shaul was a "chosen vessel" of His, to bear His name before the gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

Ma'asei (Acts) 9:15-16

15 But Yahweh said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

In *Nazarene Israel* we explain how Cornelius was the first non-Jew to be brought into the covenant. Kepha (Peter) was sent to minister to Cornelius—and as he was speaking to Cornelius, the Set-apart Spirit fell on Cornelius and his entire house, and they all began to speak in tongues.

Ma'asei (Acts) 10:44-47

44 While Kepha was still speaking these words, the Set-apart Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Kepha, because the gift of the Set apart Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify Elohim. Then Kepha answered,

47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be immersed who have received the Set apart Spirit just as we have?"

Verse 45 says that certain men of *the circumcision who believed* had come with Kepha. These were Pharisees who believed on Yeshua—and this same group will be called “the *Pharisees* who believed” in Acts 15. The reason they are called “the circumcision” here is that they believed (as our Pharisee [Orthodox] brothers believe today) that all gentile converts not only had to become physically circumcised, but that they had to become circumcised *in keeping with rabbinic custom and tradition*. In Acts 15, the rabbinic custom will be called the *custom of Moshe* (which is very different from the Torah of Moshe). Submission to rabbinical authority was very important to them.

The Orthodox/Pharisees are a very tradition-oriented people. The procedure today is based on ancient

traditions—and the first step today is for converts to rabbinic Judaism to take classes, and then pass tests, to show one knows how the rabbis say to keep Torah (which is different than what Torah says). Then, after the convert has passed tests, the rabbis allow him to become physically circumcised—and they believe this crowning achievement of circumcision means he is now saved, because he has followed their procedure.

As we explain in *Nazarene Israel*, the Nazarenes believed that anyone who was not already physically circumcised did have to become circumcised—but not in order to become saved. Rather, they believed we are saved by Elohim’s favor (grace) through faith—but that once we are saved, then we should obey the Torah of Moshe in order to please our Husband—and the Torah requires all males to become physically circumcised. (For more details, see *Nazarene Israel*.)

B’reisheet (Genesis) 17:10-14

10 “This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised....”

In Acts 10:47 (above), Kepha asks those of the circumcision, “Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be immersed, who have received the Set-apart Spirit, just as we have?” Normally a believer received the Spirit only after he had been immersed, and circumcised, etc.—but since Yahweh had shown that He already accepted Cornelius and his household by pouring out the Spirit on them, Kepha asked if anyone could object to their being immersed.

Of course, no one could object—but when Kepha got back to Jerusalem, the rest of the *circumcision who*

believed objected that he went against rabbinical authority and tradition (verse 2, below), which calls for not eating with uncircumcised men—so Kepha had to explain how Yahweh was the One who had sent him.

Ma'asei (Acts) 11:1-18

1 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of Elohim.

2 And when Kepha came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him,

3 saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

4 But Kepha explained it to them in order from the beginning, saying:

5 "I was in the city of Yaffo (Joppa) praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object descending like a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came to me.

6 When I observed it intently and considered, I saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Kepha; kill and eat.'

8 But I said, 'Not so, Adon! For nothing common or unclean has at any time entered my mouth.'

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, 'What Elohim has cleansed you must not call common.'

10 Now this was done three times, and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 At that very moment, three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent to me from Caesarea.

12 Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren [of

the believing circumcision] accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.

13 And he told us how he had seen a messenger standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Yaffo, and call for Shimon whose surname is Kepha,

14 who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.'

15 And as I began to speak, the Set apart Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.

16 Then I remembered the word of the Adon, how He said, 'Yochanan indeed immersed with water, but you shall be immersed with the Set apart Spirit.'

17 If therefore Elohim gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Adon Yeshua Messiah, who was I that I could withstand Elohim?"

18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified Elohim, saying, "Then Elohim has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

In verse 17, Kepha asks, if Elohim gave the gentile Ephraimites the same Spirit as they had received, then why should he not eat with them?

In verse 18, the *circumcision who believed* realized that Kepha had done the right thing—but this did not mean that the rabbinites would not demand that the gentiles submit to rabbinic authority anymore. The *circumcision who believed* will turn up again in Acts 15, where they will be called the *Pharisees who believed*—and they will again demand that the gentiles submit to their authority—but before we go there, let's get some more background.

As we explain in *Nazarene Israel*, at first the disciples preached the Good News only to *Jews* (Pharisees)—but then some disciples came to Antioch, and they shared Yeshua with some Hellenized Jews—Jews who had adopted Hellenic/Greek ways—and a great many of the Hellenized/Greek Jews also believed.

Ma'asei (Acts) 11:19-21

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Adon Yeshua.

21 And the hand of the Adon was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Adon.

Two chapters later, certain prophets and teachers heard Yahweh say to separate Shaul and Bar Naba for service—so they fasted and prayed, laid hands on the both of them, and sent them out. As we explained earlier in this chapter, the act of sending them out on mission established them as “sent ones”—or *apostles*.

Ma'asei (Acts) 13:1-4

1 Now in the assembly that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Shaul.

2 As they ministered to Yahweh and fasted, the Set-apart Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Bar Naba and Shaul for the work to which I have called them."

3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So, being sent out by the Set-apart Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Much later Shaul and Bar Naba return to Antioch—and this is when “certain men” of the *circumcision who believe* insist that the Hellenized/Greek believers must submit to the rabbinic authorities, and their procedure for circumcision (here called the *custom of Moshe*), or else they cannot be saved.

Ma'asei (Acts) 15:1-2

1 And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moshe, you cannot be saved."

2 Therefore, when Shaul and Bar Naba had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Shaul and Bar Naba and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

Shaul was raised at the feet of Gamli'el (Gamaliel), and some believe he had been a contender for the high priest's position—so if anyone stood to benefit from the imposition of rabbinical authority, it would have been him. Yet even though it would have been very much in his favor to argue for rabbinical authority, he argued strongly against it (and as we shall see, with good reason).

Why did Shaul argue against rabbinic authority and tradition? There are many reasons. One is that rabbinic authorities typically add “fence laws” to the Torah—and these “fence laws” typically add (and sometimes take

away) from Yahweh's Torah, which Yahweh strictly forbids.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 4:2

2 "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim, which I command you."

Another issue is that the rabbinical order arose from the order of Levi (when Judah went into captivity in Babylon), while Yeshua's priesthood is Melchizedekian. Therefore, when the *circumcision who believed* went to assert rabbinic authority, they were asserting Levitical (rabbinical) authority inside the Melchizedekian order. This is clearly out of order, for Hebrews tells us that the Melchizedekian order is greater than the Levitical (and hence, rabbinical) order.

Ivrim (Hebrews) 7:4-10

4 Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.

5 And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham;

6 but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

7 Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better.

8 Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives.

9 Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak,

10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

In *Nazarene Israel* we see yet another reason—that our father Avraham was saved by faith while he was yet in an uncircumcised state—so it makes no sense to argue that one must become physically circumcised before one can be saved—and there is no precedent for the imposition of the rabbinical custom of Moshe.

The good thing is that when Shaul and Bar Naba deadlocked with the Pharisees who believed, they all agreed to go up to Jerusalem, to let the apostles and elders decide. In other words, they all agreed to go to a higher authority, so they might be in doctrinal unity. This was absolutely essential, or else the body of Messiah would have divided right then and there.

Ma'asei (Acts) 15:4-6

4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the ecclesia and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that Elohim had done with them.

5 But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them [first], and [then] to command them to keep the Torah of Moshe."

6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

This is a critical passage, so let's dig a little deeper. It is easy to misread this passage as saying that the Pharisees wanted all new converts to be circumcised, and start keeping Yahweh's Torah right away. The only

problem is that this would be inconsistent with what the rabbinical Pharisees teach and believe.

The Nazarenes believe Yahweh gave Moshe His Torah (and that we should take care not to deviate from it). In contrast, the rabbis believe that Yahweh gave Moshe the authority to establish Torah for his generation—and that this alleged authority to dictate Torah then passed to Joshua, and then to the judges, and so on, until it finally came to rest on the rabbinical order. This is essentially the oldest mistake (read: sin) in the world—that of mistaking our thoughts for Yahweh's will.

B'reisheet (Genesis) 3:1-6

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which Yahweh Elohim had made. And he said to the woman, "Has Elohim indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, Elohim has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

5 For Elohim knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like Elohim, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Apostles and prophets are the two classes of fivefold ministers who hear Yahweh's voice. That is why, when

Ephesians 2:19-22 tells us that Yeshua's priesthood is to be founded on a single foundation of apostles and prophets, it is speaking of the need for the priesthood to be founded upon a core of leadership which hears and obeys Yahweh's voice. They should also be very knowledgeable in the word, but head knowledge is not a substitute for hearing and obeying Yahweh's voice—and this is why Ephesians 2 speaks of a foundation of apostles and prophets—not a foundation of rabbis who have read a lot of books, and hold a lot of intellectual opinions that contradict Yahweh's word (as the rabbis often do).

So what really happened in Acts 15? The *Pharisees who believed* argued that the returning gentile converts had to follow their rabbinic tradition—first to take classes, then to pass tests, and then finally to become physically circumcised—and then they would keep the Torah in accordance with rabbinic interpretation. This would imply a continued need for rabbinic authority—which would also mean that Yeshua's priesthood would be united on a foundation of rabbis, rather than a foundation of apostles and prophets. This is the order implied in Acts 15:5 (above).

Men argue most energetically when their power and position is at stake—and after there had been *much* dispute, Kepha stood up, and reminded everyone that Elohim had chosen to pour out His Spirit on the gentile Ephraimites (even though they were not circumcised), just as He had with the Jews—so why place rabbinic customs (i.e., a yoke) on the necks of the Ephraimites?

Ma'asei (Acts) 15:7-11

7 And when there had been much dispute, Kepha rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago Elohim chose among

us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Good News and believe.

8 So Elohim, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Set apart Spirit, just as He did to us,

9 and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore, why do you test Elohim by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Adon Yeshua Messiah we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

Then Ya'akov (James) said they should not trouble the returning Ephraimites (by making them obey rabbinic dogma). Rather, they should have them start by abstaining from idolatry, sexual immorality, strangled (and unclean) meats, and from blood—and then they could enter the assemblies. In this fashion, they would hear the Torah being read each week, and they would also receive the counseling and leadership of the other Melchizedekian ministers (evangelists, pastors, and teachers), who would lead and guide them into the right pathway gently, over time.

Ma'asei (Acts) 15:19-21

19 Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are [re]turning to Elohim,

20 but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moshe has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

As we explain in *Nazarene Israel* (and in other places), new converts do not need to be circumcised in order to enter the assemblies—they only need to be physically circumcised before they can eat the Passover (Exodus 12:48)—so the rabbinic custom was out of order.

Yet much to their credit, the Pharisees who believed understood the need for unity. Rather than just dividing (which Ephraimites seem to think nothing of), they knew it was important to take the matter to the apostles and elders, so that those who heard Yahweh's voice could resolve the issue for everyone (and hence, keep Yeshua's body united). They understood that Yeshua's body must not be divided. This point is not understood by most Ephraimites today—and in fact, the Ephraimites seem to prefer division.

If we can imagine tying Yeshua's limbs to four horses, and drawing and quartering Him, that is essentially what we are doing when the leadership fails to come together, to work out their differences of interpretation in Him. We are dividing His body.

When Yeshua's priests come together to "hear" a matter, their goal is to hear the answer from Elohim. It is not about what *they* think, it is about hearing what the Spirit says, and submitting to that—for unless we agree with Elohim, we cannot walk together with Him.

Amos 3:3

3 "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?"

When we all agree with Elohim, we must all agree with each other (as happened in Acts 15). That is why we are not allowed to have differences of interpretation—because no Scripture is of any *private* interpretation.

There is one interpretation—Elohim’s—and our job is to seek His face together, so that we might hear it, and obey it together. That is how we are all to speak the same thing, so that we can be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

Qorintim Aleph (1 Corinthians) 1:10

10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Adon Yeshua Messiah, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

We who are called to serve must do as the apostles and elders did in Acts 15. We must heal the division in Yeshua’s body by coming together as one, submitting one to another in His Spirit, and then hearing what He wants us to think, speak, and do. We are not to do as we are doing here today, with each leader and teacher teaching whatever seems right in his own eyes.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:8

8 "You shall not at all do as we are doing here today — every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes...."

It is not easy to submit one to another in His Spirit. It costs money, and it costs time. It is also hard on the fragile male ego, which wants to be king of the world (rather than servant of all). Yet if we as leaders fail to make these sacrifices (as we are failing to do today), then how are we different from those whom Shaul warned the Romans about, who by their words cause divisions and offenses, because they are only worried about their own independent ministries?

Romim (Romans) 16:17-18

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

18 For those who are such do not serve our Adon Yeshua Messiah, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

If we as leaders do not come together as the apostles and elders did in Acts 15, to submit one to another in Yahweh, to hear and obey His voice, and to heal all divisions and offenses, then how can we say we love Yeshua? It should be clear that no bride who truly loves her Husband is content to sit idly by, while her Husband’s body is torn into pieces by those who think only of themselves, and their independent ministries.

He who has ears, let him hear.

About Congregational Elders

Earlier we saw how the disciples laid down their lives in the world, to established Yeshua's fivefold priesthood—but who were the *elders*? And why did the apostles include them in their discussions in Acts 15 and 21?

Ma'asei (Acts) 15:6

6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

In order to understand what a congregational *elder* is, let us take a closer look at how the Great Commission operates. The first thing we need to understand is that all apostles must submit one to another. For example, Kepha served as an apostle to the Pharisees, while Shaul served as an apostle to the gentile Ephraimites.

Galatim (Galatians) 2:7-10

7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised [Pharisees] was to Kepha

8 (for He who worked effectively in Kepha for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles),

9 and when Ya'akov, Kepha, and Yochanan, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the favor that had been given to me, they gave me and Bar Naba the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised [Pharisees].

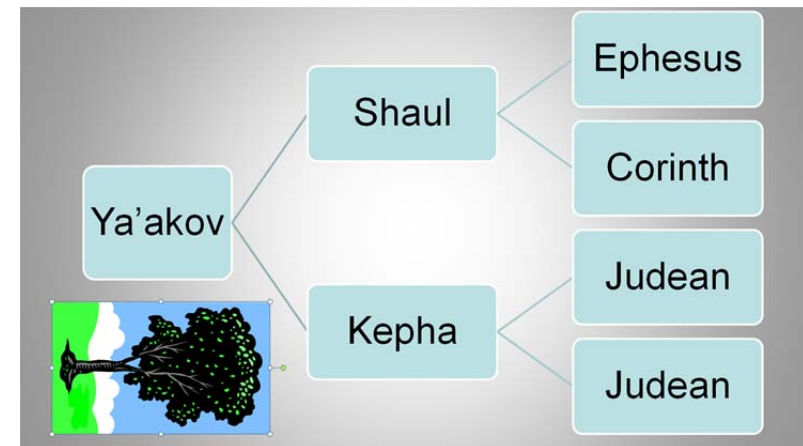
10 They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

In earlier chapters we saw that there must always be one single point of servant-leadership in Israel. That is why, when Shaul came up to Jerusalem in Acts 21, they all went in “to” Ya'akov (James) (who served as the single point of servant-leadership at that time).

Ma'asei (Acts) 21:18

18 On the following day Shaul went in with us to Ya'akov, and all the elders were present.

Although Kepha and Shaul were apostles, they had to submit one to another, and also to Ya'akov. We can perhaps picture this kind of “organizational flow chart” as if a tree was lying on its side.



In prophecies and in visions, trees can also depict men. For example, the man Yeshua healed in Bethsaida saw men like trees, walking.

Marqaus (Mark) 8:24

24 And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking."

Remembering that in Hebrew the word “stick” is “etz” (עץ), we also see that in Ezekiel 37, it is not the *stick of Ephraim* and the *stick of Judah*, but the *tree of Ephraim* and the *tree of Judah*. These are references to the Ephraimite people, and the Jewish people.

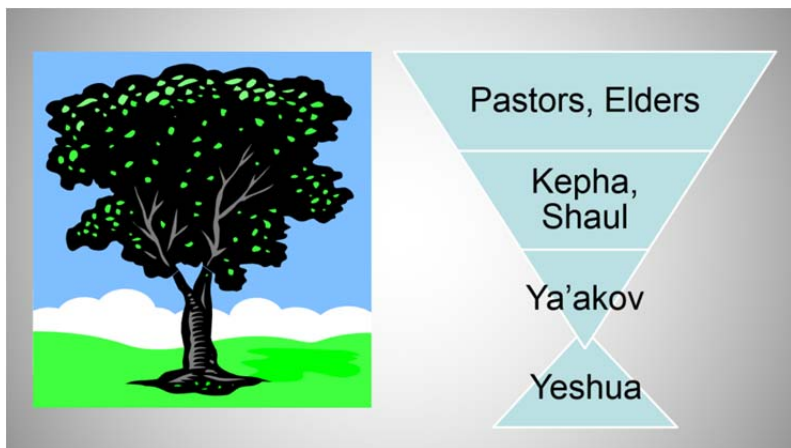
Yehezqel (Ezekiel) 37:15-17

15 Again the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

16 "As for you, son of man, take a tree/stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another tree/stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the tree/stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.'

17 Then join them one to another for yourself into one tree/stick, and they will become one in your hand.

Now let us visualize the *tree of Ephraim* standing up in the first century, with Yeshua as its root, Ya’akov as its trunk, Kepha and Shaul as its branches, and the small branches being the pastors and elders who serve out in the assemblies, supporting the leaves (the people).



This “tree” structure is very robust, and applies to all situations throughout Israel’s long history. If we wanted to, we could swap in Yahweh for Yeshua, Moshe for Ya’akov, “judges and officers” (and/or the 70 elders) for Kepha and Shaul, and the leaders over 10’s, 50’s, 100’s, and 1,000’s for the pastors and elders. Or we could swap in Aharon (Aaron) as the trunk, the priests as the main branches, the Levites as the small branches, and the leaves as the people. The living tree structure remains identical.

In order for a tree to be healthy and thrive, all parts of the tree must take their Yahweh-given places. They must submit one to another, and perform their Yahweh-given functions. Each part of the tree gets something of value from the other parts, and each part of the tree also must also give as it can. There is no substitute for this. In this analogy, the Root (Yeshua) pulls moisture and nutrients from the ground. The trunk (the lead apostle) provides stability, and passes nutrients. The main branches (apostles) support the assemblies. All small branches and twigs transport sap (teachings and doctrine) out to the leaves (people). For their part, the leaves (people) conduct photosynthesis, which in this analogy represents their loving gifts of time helps, and financial support. When all parties give as they can, then the tree is healthy, and thrives—but when any part of the tree holds back, that branch becomes withered, and the vinedresser cuts it out of the tree.

Yochanan (John) 15:1-2

15 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

If we do not give according to the call He has placed on our lives, we are cast out as branches, and are thrown into the fire, and are burned. This is particularly scary for the Protestants and Messianics, because it often happens in Protestantism and Messianism that people fool themselves into thinking that just because the leaves (people) are in contact with the wind (the Spirit), they don't need the rest of the tree—but when leaves and branches disconnect from the tree, they die.

To use the analogy of a body, each part of the body must help all the other parts, according to the effective working by which each part does its share.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

In our own physical bodies, each part must do all it can to contribute to the health of our body as a whole, or else our body will not be healthy.

Qorintim Aleph (1 Corinthians) 12:12-16

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is [the body of] Messiah.

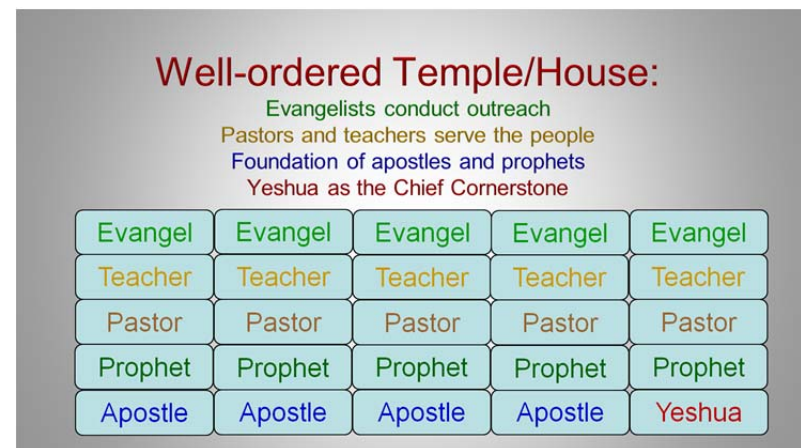
13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

In the analogy of a temple, each of the stones must rest upon the foundation of apostles and prophets (with Yeshua Messiah as the chief cornerstone).



If our house is built on a wrong foundation (not on the foundation of apostles and prophets, with Yeshua Messiah as the chief cornerstone), it will not be able to withstand the coming storm of the coming tribulation—and great will be the fall of it.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 7:26-27

26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

So many Protestants and Messianics believe they do not need to fulfill their role in the tree, the body, and the living temple. Instead, they idealize each man doing what seems good in his own eyes—but the result is that the movement is disorganized. This doesn't work. Can congregations worship together in a pile of stones lying in a heap? How does that provide for real unity?



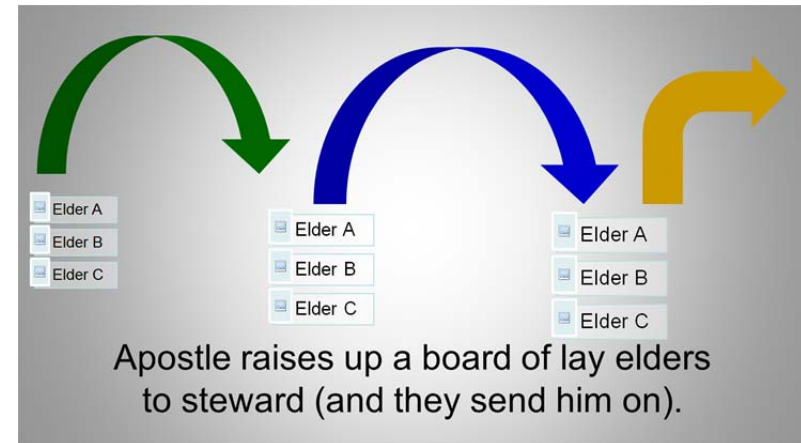
In order for us to establish a well-ordered temple, first we need to understand that there is more than one type of assembly. So long as we all follow fivefold principles, and we all give as we can, variations can work.

Kepha's ministry was to those in the synagogues—and Shaul also went into the synagogues, on occasion. In the first century, Jewish synagogues were often led by a rabbi who served as the “ruler of the congregation.”

Ma'asei (Acts) 18:8

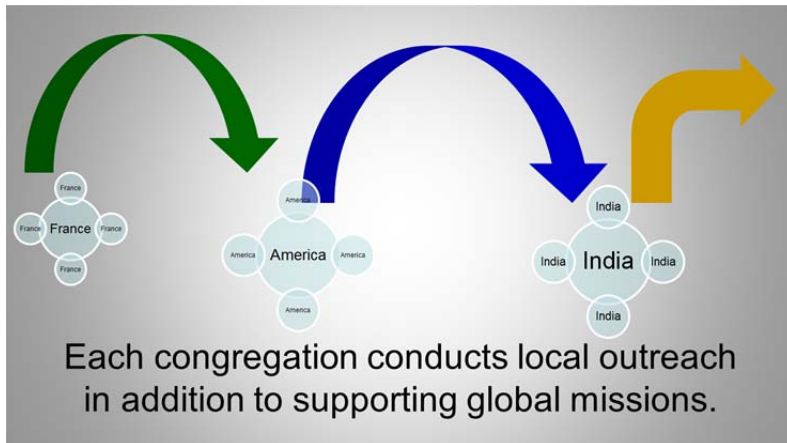
8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on Yahweh with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were immersed.

Ideally the ruler of the synagogue accepted Yeshua—but if he rejected Yeshua (or if there was no assembly) then the apostles could establish a new assembly in town, to be headed by a board of elders.



The Hebrew for elder is *zakan* (זקן). The word means, “bearded one.” A *zakan* can serve various functions, but typically he provides servant leadership in a local assembly. His job is to build up the people, and lead the people in outreach in his local area as best he can. In this way the Good News spreads in his local area.

Because he is not a disciple, a *zakan* can have outside sources of income. He can own houses and lands, and pass an inheritance along to his children. He should be paid a living wage, as the Levites had their material needs taken care of, so they could focus on working for Yahweh full time. However, if he is rich and can donate his time then so much the better, because there is always more need for support of widows and orphans, outreach for the poor, missions, etc.—and it does not make sense for congregational elders to draw a huge salary when the disciples all take a vow of poverty.



Elders are appointed by the apostles. Shaul gives Titus a list of criteria, but basically it boils down to loving the people, and giving them a good example. Ideally there should be two or three in every city/assembly.

Titus 1:5-9

1 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you —

6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.

7 For an elder must be blameless, as a steward of Elohim, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, set-apart, self-controlled,

9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

Sometimes elders are called *bishops*, or *overseers*— and their job is to see that the other families in their assembly grow come up in the faith in the right way. While they can have any combination of spiritual gifts, they should at least be able to teach.

TimaTheus Aleph (1 Timothy) 3:1-7

1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of an elder, he desires a good work.

2 An elder then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;

4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the assembly of Elohim?);

6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Apart from elders there are also *servants*, sometimes called *deacons*. These aid both fivefold priests and the elders with pretty much anything that needs to be done.

TimaTheus Aleph (1 Timothy) 3:8-13

8 Likewise servants must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,

9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as servants, being found blameless.

11 Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

12 Let servants be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For those who have served well as servants obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Messiah Yeshua.

In Hebrew a servant is a “shammesh” (שמש). He is also effectively a leader, and therefore must provide a good example to the flock. If he works full time he can also be paid (although again it should not be excessive, so that monies can be freed up for missions, schools, outreach, the poor, etc.).

The key to making the Melchizedekian order work is that each one needs to give as he can—joyfully. There is just as much need for funding in the Melchizedekian system as in the Levitical system—just that the tithes and offerings are 100% voluntary—and should come from a heart that is thrilled to take part of a team that is building a kingdom for our Husband.

There will always be people whose focus is selfish, and who do not want to give. We shouldn't worry about them. We should just love them, and realize that when it is Yahweh's time for them to love their Husband, then they will get it, and want to contribute. And in the meantime, those of us who do love Yeshua above our own lives just need to begin working as a team.

Back in ancient times, people understood that they had to decrease, in order for Yeshua's body to increase.

Yochanan (John) 3:30

30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Each person had to submit to all of the others in their society, and then find their place in Yeshua's body. This was not just lip service, but it was their “reason for being.” This is why there was such genuine community back in ancient times, is that they were all held together as one, because they were all part of His body.

After the Protestant Reformation, Yeshua's body broke up into multiple parts. People forgot what real unity was. This was made much worse by the fact that the Protestant ministers forsook their vow of poverty, and began keeping more and more of the tithe money for themselves, at the expense of outreach and missions. Ministry was no longer a means of sacrifice, but of personal gain.

The Messianics have no concept of a united body. The closest they come is a system of free market enterprise in which venture capitalist “teachers” mass market books and tapes to an unsuspecting flock. They teach the people *about* Yeshua, without ever teaching them how to find their place in His unified body—or finding their own place (themselves). Worse, whatever monies they make go straight to their own pockets, rather than being used to edify and grow the body overall.

Things are incredibly fragmented in Messianism—and yet there is still a way to set things right.

Restoring the Original Priesthood

In the first chapter we saw that Israel has always been organized. Then in the second chapter we saw the difference between *disciples* (which lay down their lives in the world) and *believers* (who add Yeshua to their lives). Yeshua told His disciples to go into all nations, make more disciples, and form a single Melchizedekian priesthood. We also saw that the disciples obeyed Yeshua in this, forming a full-time clergy (complete with a sacerdotal plate).

Moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord [sic], and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. He fell asleep at Ephesus.
[Eusebius, Church History, Book V, Chapter 24.
Translated by Arthur Cushman McGiffert.
Excerpted from Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,
Series Two, Volume 1.]

We also saw that Yeshua's priests must come together on one single foundation of apostles and prophets, with Messiah Yeshua being the chief cornerstone.

Ephesim (Ephesians) 2:20
20 having been built on the [single] foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yeshua Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone....

The reason it is so essential for the priesthood to come together on one single foundation of apostles and prophets is so that Yeshua's shepherds can come to doctrinal unity. This is an absolute necessity, and it is not optional. If the body is to remain united, then the

shepherds must all be of the same mind, so that they all speak the same thing, so they can lead the people in the same direction. This is the only way to avoid divisions in the body of Messiah.

Qorintim Aleph (1 Corinthians) 1:10
10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Adon Yeshua Messiah, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

The papacy did form a united priesthood, but Yeshua Messiah was not their chief cornerstone. While the Catholic priesthood was able to achieve doctrinal unity by the sword, it was not achieved by submission to Elohim's Spirit (as the apostles had achieved it)—and because the Catholics did not submit to Elohim's Spirit they did not agree with Him on doctrine. While the Catholics walked together with each other, they did not walk together with Elohim.

Amos 3:3
3 "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?"

When the Protestants realized that the pope was the anti-Messiah they broke away from the united Catholic priesthood and its false doctrines—but for a variety of reasons they ended up stopping short of a complete restoration of the original priesthood. For one thing, they forgot that there is only supposed to be one united priesthood—and for another thing, they forgot that the priesthood is to be made up of disciples (who lay down their lives in the world) rather than believers (who add Yeshua to their existing lives).

Because the Protestants forgot that the priesthood had to be made up *disciples*, and that the priesthood had to be *united*, the fragmentation within Protestantism got worse and worse. Today things are so distorted that many Protestants believe there should not even be a priesthood—but that the believers should all sit around in a circle, and do whatever seems right in their own eyes—and then they cannot understand why there is no unity or tranquility in their assemblies.

Mishle (Proverbs) 14:12

12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

In the Messianic movement, the people pretend to be “united in the Spirit” even though they have no unified doctrine—but that is absurd. If the Messianics were truly united in His Spirit then they would take pains to establish the same doctrine, as the apostles did in Acts 15. They would also rejoice at the thought of uniting the priesthood, like their Husband said He wants.

It is also instructive to see what the various groups do with their money. While the Catholic *doctrine* is awful, their *structure* is actually close to that of the apostles. The Catholics also use their funds the way Scripture says—while the Protestants and Messianics treat Yahweh’s work like a for-profit business opportunity.

We would not mention the Catholic structure, except that it closely resembles what Scripture says to do. The Catholics have two different classes of priests. One is called *secular* or *diocesan* priests. These are the rough equivalent of the lay elders we read about in the last chapter.

A *diocesan* priest leads a local parish, much like an elder leads an assembly. The Catholic Church requires them to hold advanced degrees, and the complexities of the job are great. Many of them work long hours, and they are paid about \$40-50,000 a year, plus room and board. This allows them to support a family, and also to focus on their leadership duties full time. They could probably make more money on the outside, but they may keep any money they do not spend, as well as any monies they might inherit. They may also pass along an inheritance to their children. While their doctrine is wrong, they nonetheless fulfill the same role as the elders did in the first century.

In addition to diocesan priests, the Catholics also have *religious* or *order* priests. These correspond to the Melchizedekian priesthood we read about in the last chapter. Order priests must take a vow of poverty. They receive free room and board, and also have an annual stipend of about \$20,000. However, because of their vow of poverty they are not allowed to keep anything at the end of the year. They may not inherit or accumulate wealth, and any gifts, royalties, or book sales monies they receive must be turned over to their respective religious order (so that it may be used to benefit everyone). In spite of their wrong doctrine, they fulfill the same role as the fivefold ministers we read about in the last chapter.

In contrast with the Catholics, the Protestants pay their priests very well. Compensation in the mainstream Protestant churches average about \$85,000 a year, while the upper echelons make packages in the low-to-mid six figures. Most Protestant churches also allow their priests to keep any sales, royalties, inheritances, or other monies they receive.

When we discuss the Messianic movement, things get even worse. Similar to the Protestants, many of the Messianics take home salaries in the six-figure range. All of this destroys unity in the body.

The way the fivefold works is that those who lead the assemblies and ministries take only as much as they need to live comfortably, and then they pass along the rest of the funds, so that there is enough money to support activities which can never pay their own way (such as caring for the poor, widows, orphans, missions, schools, outreach, etc.). The reason the Catholics do more of this than the Protestants and the Messianics is that their priesthood does not keep an inheritance.

The free-market capitalism practiced in the Messianic movement also undercuts the tithe. Why should the people pay tithes and offerings to support priests who keep six figures? But without the tithe, how can the whole body be joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which each part does its share, causing growth in the body for the edifying of itself in love?

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:11-16

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

The fivefold is the very catalyst of unity—but because the Messianic evangelists and pastors keep all of the funds for themselves, there is no possibility of unifying the body, on a foundation of apostles and prophets—and hence there is no “quality control.” Any teacher can

market any doctrine he wants. As a result, the people are all led in different directions, and are tossed to and fro, and are carried about by various winds of doctrine. This is what Shaul called the “trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”

Ephesim (Ephesians) 4:14

14 that we should no longer be [spiritual] children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...

Ironically, some things have gotten better since the Protestant Reformation, while other things have gotten worse. When the Protestants realized something was wrong with the Catholic doctrine they broke away from the Catholics—and when the Messianics realized something was wrong with Protestant doctrine, they broke away from the Protestants—but while today’s Messianics have a wealth of knowledge, they don’t want to organize to fulfill the Great Commission. To them, “worship” is not about doing what Yeshua has asked, it is all about sitting in a circle, and learning.



It is good to learn about what Yeshua wants us to do—but if all we ever do is just learn about what He wants us to do, then we are like children who never graduate school. We are like servants who eat our Master's food, but never do any work for Him.

Yeshua does not just want us to learn what He says—He wants us to do it—and if we do not do what He asks, then we do not love Him.

Yochanan (John) 14:15
15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Yeshua is the antitype of the tabernacle—and Yahweh told Moshe to build everything according to the pattern he was shown on the mountain.

Shemote (Exodus) 25:9
9 "According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it."

We are Yeshua's living temple—and we are to build His temple according to all that Scripture says. Yeshua's priests are to lay down their lives in the world, and serve His people without thought for themselves—and His people are to take care of the priesthood's physical needs, so the priesthood can focus on working for Him full time. Why should the Catholics be the only ones to obey Him in this?

Probably only a remnant of the Messianics will respond to the truths printed here—so don't wait for others to accept this message before you do. Historically, only a remnant accepts the truth—better if you are among that remnant.

Yahweh wants you to go beyond the church. He wants you to do more than just learn about His words—He wants you to join me in walking them out.

Let us answer His call. We will be glad we did.

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