



KINGDOM COMMUNITIES AND YOU

LESSON 6

Through the new birth experience, which is, at times, called being reborn again, not to be confused with the future regeneration in the last day, we were all "... by one Spirit baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13). What is in mind here is the salvation of man. You should have already studied how we are saved in previous lessons. When we are saved, we become a part of "...Christ's body, and individually members of it" (1 Cor. 12:27). The body of Ha Mashiach is a New Testament concept referring to the community with Ha Mashiach as head (Col 1:18). We become a congregation of faithful witnesses (John 15:16; Acts 4:4,32) joined together by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

The word translated "community" is ekklesia, which is derived from two Greek words: ek meaning "out" and kaleo meaning "to call". Therefore, it originally designated the assembly of citizens "called out" from their houses to the gathering place for the purpose of discussion of public business. The term then passed over into the New Testament documents and designated the assembly of those gathered for public worship. When Paul writes "... let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as in the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near" (Heb. 10:24-25, he has in mind the local/global community. The community idea goes beyond the local concept and can be also called universal, the whole body of the redeemed. This idea is well illustrated by Yahoshuah's own words. "... upon this rock I will build My community and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it" (Matt 16:18)

The mission of the community, an extension of Christ's work and ministry in the world, is then to work and worship. The work of the community involves evangelism (outreach), education and care of its membership, addressing social problems and helping the aged, widows, orphans, sick and other who are in need. Suffice it to say that the community's mission to the lost souls is of utmost importance but does not cancel out its other obligations. The other mission of the community is to fear YAH (Rev 14:7) and worship HIM, YAH in Spirit and in Truth (John 4:24)

To provide for the organization and equipment of the members of the body of Christ, YAH gave the community apostles, prophets, evangelist, teachers and pastors (synonymous with elders and bishops) and deacons (Eph 4:11; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8,12). The work of these officers must continue "... until we all attain to the unit of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of YAH, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ" (Eph 4:13).

1. When is the Kingdom ELOHIM coming? (Luke 17:20-21)

- a. **Lu 17:20** ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of ELOHIM should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of ELOHIM cometh not with observation:
Lu 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of ELOHIM is within you.

2. Upon whom is the community built? (Matt 16:18; Eph 2:20)

- a. **Matthew 16:18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my community; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- b. **Ephesians 2:20** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yahoshuah Ha Mashiach himself being the chief corner stone;

3. How else may we refer to the community? (1 Cor 12:27)

- a. **1 Corinthians 12:27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

4. How do we become members of the community? (Mark 16:16; John 3:3,5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 2:4,37-38)

- a. **Mark 16:16** He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
 - b. **John 3:3-5** Yahoshuah answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Yahoshuah answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 - c. **1 Corinthians 12:13** For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
 - d. **Acts 2:4** And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
 - e. **Acts 2:37-38** Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Yahoshuah Ha Mashiach for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 - f. **2Co 3:17** Now YAH is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the YAH is, there is liberty.
5. Does the Bible recognize the local community? (Matt 18:17; Acts 5:11; 8:1, 11:22,26; 14:23; 18:22; 20:17; 1 Cor 16:1)
- a. **Matthew 18:17** And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the community: but if he neglect to hear the community, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.
 - b. **Acts 5:11** And great fear came upon all the community, and upon as many as heard these things.
 - c. **Acts 8:1** And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the community which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.
 - d. **Acts 11:22-26** Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the community which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed

Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the community, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

- e. **Acts 14:23** And when they had ordained them elders in every community, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.
- f. **Acts 18:22** And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the community, he went down to Antioch.
- g. **Acts 20:17** And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the community.
- h. **1 Corinthians 16:1** Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the communities of Galatia, even so do ye.

6. What is the responsibility of the community according to the following scriptures?

a. Matt 28:19; Luke 19:10; John 10:10

- i. **Matthew 28:19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
- ii. **Luke 19:10** For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
- iii. **John 10:10** The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

b. Matt 25:41-46; Jam 1:27; 2:15-17

- i. **Matthew 25:41-46** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying,

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

- ii. **James 1:27** Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
- iii. **James 2:15-17** If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

c. Matt 19:6; 21:12-13; 23:15

- i. **Matthew 19:6** Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
- ii. **Matthew 21:12-13** And Yahoshuah went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.
- iii. **Matthew 23:15** Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

d. 1 Pet. 2:2 5:2; John 21:15-17

- i. **1 Peter 2:2** As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:
- ii. **1 Peter 5:2** Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
- iii. **John 21:15-17** So when they had dined, Yahoshuah saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He

saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Yahoshuah saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

7. What does the Bible tell us about assembling ourselves? (Heb 10:23-25)

- a. **Hebrews 10:23-25** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

8. What are our responsibilities to members of the community?

- a. Rom 13:8; 1 Cor. 13:13; Eph 5:1,2

- i. **Romans 13:8** Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.
- ii. **1 Corinthians 13:13** And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.
- iii. **Ephesians 5:1-2** Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Ha Mashiach also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

- b. Eph 4:29

- i. **Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

- c. Gal 6:10

- i. **Galatians 6:10** As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

- d. 1 Peter 5:5

- i. **1 Peter 5:5** Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.
- 9. What officers or officials did YAH appoint and set in the community? (1 Cor. 12:28-31; Eph 4:7-11)
 - a. **1 Corinthians 12:28-31** And God hath set some in the community, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.
 - b. **Ephesians 4:7-11** But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The Five Core Leadership Functions

The book of Ephesians was written many years after I Corinthians. It would be hard to find a biblical scholar who doesn't believe the Apostle Paul wrote I Corinthians. Most mainline scholars doubt that Paul himself wrote Ephesians. I Corinthians is usually dated between 53 and 55 CE. Scholars believe Ephesians may have been written as late as 95 CE and certainly no earlier than 70 CE.

By the time Ephesians was written the kingdom community has moved from its early energetic, somewhat chaotic beginnings to an increased sense of order. While I Corinthians lists long lists of manifestations and gifts of the Spirit and roles and functions, by the time of the Book of Ephesians, the community has identified five key leadership roles. They are listed in Ephesians 4:11:

Apostles

Prophets

Evangelists

Pastors

Teachers

These are the core leadership functions and their purpose is to train and empower the members of the congregation for ministry. The work of ministry belongs to the people of the congregation. The function of the leadership is to equip the members to do their ministry to each other and in the world.

Read Ephesians 4:11-16 carefully:

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of YAH, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and from and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

The writer of Ephesians is pleading for the Communities of Ephesus to move beyond infatuation to a more mature level of commitment. Infatuation can be fickle. It can be erratic. It can be fragile. It can be jealous and volatile and defensive and easily threatened.

No, the writer of Ephesians says, it is time to live a steady, faithful life in Christ, to work in harmony with others toward a shared purpose so that the community will be strengthened.

Ephesians outlines five leadership functions that the community needs. I do not think he is saying that community yes, whether denominations or congregations, should have five offices – Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher. But I do think that each of these functions is important for either a denomination or a congregation and that these roles need to be fulfilled in order for a Kingdom community to thrive.

More importantly, as individual community citizens, it is critically important that all five of these functions be happening in our lives if we are both to be equipped for our ministries and to grow in Christ.

If we are to be effective in the ministry to which we are called and to grow in Christ, we must have a process, practice or person in our lives that fulfills the function of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.

Definition: Apostolic one who seeks to uphold or return to the teachings and practices of the first community and the apostles.

I also believe that the order of Ephesians listing is not insignificant. If the priority of these functions in our lives gets out of alignment, our Kingdom discipleship will run the risk of getting out of alignment as well.

Apostles

The word "apostle" was originally a secular word in Greek society that meant an ambassador or envoy, one who has the capacity to think in a way so attuned to the mind of an authority that he or she can embody her or his interests and concerns. Ambassadors and envoys can negotiate on behalf of a person in power. They can think with the mind of the king or president they represent.

The original Twelve Apostles were those who had been personally taught and trained by Yahoshuah. Therefore, they could think like him. They could think with the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16)

Paul called himself an apostle because Yahoshuah had revealed himself to Paul, on the road to Damascus after the stoning of Stephen. (Acts 9:1-9) "Am I not an apostle?" Paul asks in 1 Corinthians 9:1. His answer is "Have I not seen Yahoshuah our Lord?"

The role of the apostle is to have seen the mind and heart of YAH in Yahoshuah Ha Mashiach so as to understand the intentions and purposes of YAH in creation and history. An apostle is someone who has a grasp, even if only partial, of the big picture. What is YAH doing in the world? Where is

history headed? How does YAH intend for us to live? What transcends my time and place in the world? What is the greater meaning of existence?

While I believe there are persons who fill the apostolic role and have known people I consider to be apostles, I do not believe that the significance here is on the individual but on this need for apostolic insight being fulfilled in our Kingdom lives and in our Kingdom communities. I would not suggest that anyone of us go searching out a modern-day apostle but we do need a process, practice or person in our lives that helps us grasp an apostolic vision.

Each of us needs a process, practice or person that fulfills our need for apostolic understanding. The most important issue of our lives is how we can align our lives with what YAH is doing across the span of existence. There is no more important question than this.

In various issues that the community is facing today, when friends and colleagues are deliberating about how to position themselves in the debates and struggles, my advice to them again and again is to not position themselves on the wrong side of history. And by this I do not mean history in the short term but history in the scope of eternity, history in the scope of the vision of Revelation, of a New Jerusalem come down from heaven.

It is a fact that all of our dysfunctions in life could be cured by aligning our lives with YAH's will and by aligning our hearts and mind with YAH's heart and mind? All of us need processes and practices, time and space to pursue an understanding of what YAH is doing in the world.

This function is so central for communities that without it as the priority and context for all of the other functions, they will be at risk of backfiring.

Prophets

Sometimes we think of prophets as seers or fortune-tellers. Other times we think of prophets as social critics who condemn the injustices of society. Both understandings are partly right; but only partly.

The most basic definition of the Greek word we translate "prophet" is "one who speaks for YAH and interprets YAH's will." Prophets speak the word of YAH or announce a word from YAH.

Prophets apply the apostolic understanding to the situation in which we find ourselves here and now. They speak a word from YAH that honors what YAH has done to bring us to where we are and calls forth new possibilities to move us to a new place. When we have become frozen in patterns and habits that are merely repeats of the past, the prophetic word unfreezes us so that we might move again. We all become stuck. The prophetic word set us free.

In his discussion of spiritual gifts in I Corinthians, Paul says something very interesting. He says: "You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak." (I Cor. 12: 2) The difference between YAH and idols is that YAH can speak. To say that YAH can speak is to say that YAH has creative power. To speak is not just to say something but to bring a new reality into being.

In Genesis 1, YAH created the universe by speaking. Every act of creation begins with the words: "YAH said..."

Then YAH said, "Let there be light and there was light..." (Gen. 1:3)

And YAH said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters ... (Gen. 1:6)

And YAH said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together ..." (Gen 1:9)

Then YAH said, "Let the earth bring forth vegetation ..." (Gen. 1:11)

YAH speaking is not just YAH talking. When YAH speaks what YAH says comes to be.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

So when a prophet speaks a word of YAH, he or she is not just talking. It is an act of creation. It is an announcement of the future that, rather than merely predicting the future, creates the future. It is a proclamation of a change to come that allows the change to be born.

The function of prophecy is to announce a new creation so that, in speaking it, it comes into being.

Again, the focus here is not so much on individuals who are prophets, but on our need for processes and practices in our lives that expose us to prophetic words. All community citizens need ways that we can hear a fresh word from YAH that stretches our assumptions, revives our imagination and energizes us for new life.

It is critically important that prophetic processes and practices are within the context of apostolic understanding. Otherwise prophecy runs the risk of being merely random, doing things in our own way, or even self interested. On the other hand, an apostolic vision without prophecy is at risk of being merely abstract, impersonal and philosophical.

Evangelists

Our image of evangelists is largely shaped by recent assumptions and understandings, especially here in America which has a tradition for the past couple of centuries of evangelistic associations. In our mind, an evangelist is someone like Billy Graham who hold crusades and proclaims the gospel and invites people to commit their lives to Yahoshuah Christ. This is not the New Testament understanding.

There are two persons specifically identified as an evangelist in the New Testament. The second letter to Timothy (probably not written by the Apostle Paul) instructs Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist." (II Tim. 4:5) However, the writer also instructs Timothy to "convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching." (II Tim. 4:2) It is hard to tell from reading II Timothy what the writer actually had in mind when he instructed Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist."

The Book of Acts is more helpful. It identifies Philip specifically as an evangelist. Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, is describing his journey when he is accompanying the Apostle Paul. He writes: "The next day we left [Tyre] and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven and stayed with him." (Acts 21:8)

Philip is our sole biblical example of an evangelist. This is what we know from the Book of Acts about Philip: He was not Philip the Apostle mentioned in the Gospels. (Only a very, very few scholars suppose that the same person could have been an apostle and a deacon.) He was one of the seven deacons chosen by the first Kingdom community to manage the distribution of food to widows when a conflict arose because Greek-speaking members of the community thought Hebrew widows were receiving preferential treatment. (Acts 6:1-7)

When the Jerusalem community was scattered due to persecution, Philip moved to Samarian where he proclaimed the gospel, cast out demons and healed. Many Samaritans believed and were baptized, including a magician named Simon. It was apparently necessary, however, for two apostles -- Peter and John-- to travel to Samaria to lay hands on the newly baptized Samaritans in order for them to receive the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:14-17) So the evangelist Philip's work seemed to include proclamation, casting out demons, healing and baptizing.

Perhaps the most illuminating story about Philip as an evangelist is the story of the Ethiopian eunuch which seems especially told to illustrate the work of

an evangelist. Philip is told in a dream to go to a certain place where he discovers an eunuch, a court official from Ethiopia, reading the prophet Isaiah. Philip used this opening to tell the Ethiopian about Yahoshuah and then baptized him. (Acts 8:26-40)

The evangelist guides people into the practices that both characterize and nurture the Kingdom life. An evangelist shows people how to practice the Kingdom faith, including being part of a Kingdom community, participating in spiritual disciplines and the means of grace, and living out faith in our lives in the world. For some of us, our parents were our primary evangelists. Sunday school teachers and confirmation mentors often serve the function of the evangelist. Throughout our lives, as our faith deepens and grows, we will need people, processes and practices that serve this function of introducing us to new depths of Kingdom faith and practice.

Because as we become citizens in the community it is not merely a matter of joining a certain congregation or even a certain denomination, it is important that the function of the evangelist take place within the context of an apostolic vision. William Abraham rightly insists that to become a follower of Yahoshuah is not merely to join a community but to live concerned with death, judgment, and the final destiny of the soul and of humankind in the Kingdom of YAH.

Pastors

We have come to call persons who lead congregations pastors. We even call some pastors the Senior Pastor. This is unfortunate because it overemphasizes one function of leadership the community needs out of proportion to the others.

The word "pastor" is based on the Latin word for "shepherd." The Greek word translated "pastor" in Ephesians 4:11 means "shepherd" and is actually translated more often in English translations of the New Testament into the word "shepherd" than "pastor." The emphasis is on tending and care-giving.

The clearest description of the pastor-shepherd is John's description of Yahoshuah, the Good Shepherd, in the Gospel of John. Yahoshuah says: "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father." (John 10:14-15a) Yahoshuah says: "The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." (John 10:3) Yahoshuah says: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (John 10:11)

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

1 Samuel 17:32 And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

33 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou *art* but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

37 David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the

paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

John 10:13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

The shepherd-pastor knows your name. He or she knows what is happening in your life, your struggles, your fears, your hopes and successes. The shepherd-pastor spends time with you and gives him or herself to you. Pastoral care is being visited in the hospital when we are scared and needy and being comforted in our grief. A shepherd-pastor is someone who focuses on the needs of the members his flock and who helps people endure pain and feel better.

One of the questions I think we should be asking about our pastor is "Does he, have a pastor's heart?" The pastoral function is focused on personal caring and meeting the needs of people.

Caring and being cared for is critically important in the life of community citizens but there are two provisos. The first is that caring belongs to the community and not just to the clergy or community staff. The second is that the purpose of caring is to support people as they become stronger, not to keep them needy so that we can care for them. The third is that caring needs to take place within an apostolic vision.

We who are followers of Ha Mashiach are called to live our lives on behalf of a greater purpose. We find our personal fulfillment in participating in what YAH is doing in creation and history. We believe that true blessedness and happiness comes not from having our needs met but from participating in what YAH is doing to transform the world into a kingdom of inclusion and justice. An overemphasis on caring ministries can lead to a focus on self that makes us the center of attention rather than YAH.

All of us need other peoples of faith in our lives who care for us personally. And we need people who we will care for personally. All of us need extra care during time of illness and grief. The pastoral function in the life of the Kingdom community is important or Kingdom communities run the risk of

becoming impersonal and businesslike. This is why small groups are important. This is also why teams trained to provide pastoral care are very important. And it is also important that care happens within the context of an apostolic vision that keeps us always aware that our focus is not on ourselves but on YAH.

Teachers

Many of the functions we think of as the work of teachers within the Kingdom communities are really the work of evangelists – initiating people into the life of the Kingdom. This example of the contrast between the work of an evangelist and a teacher might be helpful: It is part of the work of the evangelist to guide and teach people how to read the Bible as part of their Kingdom life. It is part of the work of a teacher to tell people what it says in the Bible. In real life, the lines between all of these roles and functions get blurred, but it is good to have clarity about the people, processes and practices we need in our lives to grow as people of faith.

Teacher is a title used frequently for Yahoshuah in the four Gospels. John 1:38 makes it clear that the Greek word we translate "teacher" is sometimes, perhaps often, used in the Gospels as a synonym for "rabbi."

When Yahoshuah turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" (John 1:38)

The Gospels also suggest that Yahoshuah' teaching was different from the type of teaching people were used to at the time. Matthew reports: "Now when Yahoshuah had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." (Matt. 7:28-29) Scribes, like rabbis, were considered authoritative teachers and judges of Jewish law and custom.

While Yahoshuah was recognized as different from the scribes, still his listeners understood Yahoshuah' teaching in terms of the teaching done by rabbis and scribes at the time. It was their job to teach and interpret Torah and the body of commentary that had developed throughout the centuries about the Torah.

It is this function that the New Testament identifies with the role of teacher in the early community. The teacher communicates and interprets the meaning of Scripture and tradition. The writer of Hebrews, for example, is trying to explain to the Hebrews the concept of how Yahoshuah' obedience

to YAH achieved salvation for those who believe in him. Then he scolds his readers because they lack understanding of YAH's word. He writes:

About this we have much to say that is hard to explain, since you have become dull in understanding. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of YAH. You need milk, not solid food; for everyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb. 5:11-14)

Therefore, the work of the teacher is to understand, interpret and explain the biblical teachings.

The Books of First and second Timothy describe the Apostle Paul as a teacher of the Gentiles. (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11) Paul's role was to take the scope of biblical history and teach Gentiles how it applied to their lives and included them. Paul does this again and again as he uses Scripture to explain how YAH's plan from the very beginning was to include Gentiles. (For example, Rom. 4:9; Gal. 1:16)

Like all of the functions of leadership and ministry within the Kingdom community, it is important that the teaching function take place within an apostolic vision and mission. Otherwise there is no principle to put scattered verses into the context of the bigger picture and specific teachings or rules may actually be contrary to the movement of YAH in creation and history. The apostolic vision, however, always needs to be grounded and based in the biblical story, so the work of teachers is also important to apostles.

There was not a uniform list of leadership or ministry functions within the New Testament community. I would argue, however, that the five functions of Ephesians 4:11 – Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher – are the basic, essential and perhaps minimal listing of functions needed in order for Kingdom communities to thrive and for Kingdom people to grow in grace, faithfulness and peace.

10. What should be the qualifications for each of these offices? (1 Tim 3:1-13)

- a. **1 Timothy 3:1-13** This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the community of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are

without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Ha Mashiach Yahoshuah.

11. Why were these officer or officials placed within the community? (Eph 4:12-16)

- a. **Ephesians 4:12-16** For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

12. What does the Bible teach members of the community to do regarding the leaders of the communities?

a. 1 Thes. 5:12-13

- i. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

b. Heb 13:17

- i. **Hebrews 13:17** Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Include what disqualifies one from office: