

CALLED TO SERVE

By: Earl Walters

Approximately 3,500 years ago, Yahweh called a man to serve Him.

In Sh'mot (Exodus) chapter 3 Yahweh appeared to Moshe (Moses) and tells him that He has a job He wants Moshe to do.

After giving Yahweh all the reasons he was not qualified for the job, Moshe consented to Yahweh's command.

After bring us out of Egypt, Yahweh gave us His Torah and instructed us to be His ministers to all the world.

We said that we would do all He commanded and promptly failed in the task.

Because we as a people failed, Moshe felt he had to take on the whole job of leadership himself.

Finally Yahweh got Moshe's attention through the words of his father-in-law, Yitro.

He was instructed to pick men to help him serve the people.

Exod. 18:21-- "Moreover you shall select from all the people **able men** (capable: Hebrew = men of moral strength), **such as fear (reverence) Yahweh, 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. (NKJ)

- Rulers = judges, ministers, managers, leaders. Some had ability to be leaders of ten, fifty, hundred or several hundreds, and thousands. They were proven (tested) with ten, perhaps with one - themselves, their families, and then increased to lead others. **Ministry will be tested and proven.**
- **There is pressure that comes with ministry, and people need to be observed under pressure to see how they respond and if they can remain faithful during times of pressure and stress.**

Men of character. Num. 11:10-17 - "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel ..."

These were men that Yahweh then filled with the Ruach.

Holy men who were set apart.

Ladies and gentlemen, when Yahweh called you out of a life of sin and death, He was calling you to His ministry, **you are to be holy and willing to serve.**

Many people mistakenly believe that holiness is synonymous with "right-standing before Yahweh."

This is simply not the case.

When the deeds of our lives are compared with the Torah, we come up short (Romans 3:23).

We receive justification by faith, because of the abundant grace of the Master of the Universe, just as Abraham did (Genesis 15:6).

Though we are able to perform righteous acts by observing the commandments, the Torah was never intended to provide inner, spiritual righteousness for anyone.

In the world to come, will we see the ancient ones who served Yahweh: Moses, David, Elijah?

Of course.

Certainly they did not perfectly carry out every minute detail of the Torah.

It is only by grace that they achieved righteousness, having faith in the coming redemption, just as we believers in Yahshua the Messiah do today.

The Purpose of Torah

If the purpose of the Torah is not to provide righteousness, what is its purpose?

One purpose is to distinguish the *am segulah*, the treasured people of Yahweh, from the surrounding peoples and cultures.

Yahshua said in the gospel of Matthew, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

In obeying the commandments of the Torah we become different and separate from pagan society.

This special, unique quality is true holiness.

It is distinctness, not perfection.

The Torah is portrayed as a **ketubah**, a wedding covenant between Yahweh and His people.

In Biblical times, when a man betrothed a woman, he said, "You are consecrated to me," (Kiddushin 5b).

Literally, **"You are set apart (made holy) for me."**

In Hebrew/Aramaic, *kiddushin* is marriage, from the same root as *kadosh*.

In observing the Torah as a wedding covenant, we are therefore holy, sanctified to Him.

Be Sanctified=Observe Torah

The Torah speaks of our sanctification through observing the commandments.

Deuteronomy 28:9 says, "Yahweh will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim and walk in His ways."

Leviticus 20:7-8 also describes how observance of the commandments sets us apart from the nations: "Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am Yahweh your Elohim. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am Yahweh who sanctifies you."

We can see in this passage that sanctification is a two-part process: **Yahweh sanctifies us by giving us his statutes, and we are holy by performing them.**

Some would say that we humans are incapable of being holy by our own actions.

Yet this is directly commanded in Leviticus 19:2: "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I Yahweh your Elohim am holy.'"

This verse is followed by a list of instructions that help us to achieve this.

A person may suggest that such an instruction must only be for the earlier "dispensation."

However, I Peter 1:15-16 calls us to be obedient to the Torah and separate from the world, quoting that very passage: "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'"

Yahshua also speaks of sanctification.

John 17:17-19 says, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."

By the "word" and the "truth" Yahshua is referring to the Torah and its commandments. See Psalm 119:142, 151, 160.

There are certainly different levels of holiness.

In one sense, we are sanctified by Yahshua's blood when we become a part of the family of Yahweh.

But sanctification is also a process that we go through as believers, as we conform to the likeness of Yahshua by aligning ourselves with the teaching of the Torah.

Yahweh sanctifies us by giving us his commandments, and we are sanctified as we obey Him.

The phrase, "sanctifies us by His commandments" is not intended to convey all of the details of the process of sanctification.

In the Hebrew, it is a mouthful as it is, and it is repeated quite often.

But as it was shown from Scripture, it is an entirely accurate statement that applied to the children of Israel in ancient times and also applies to believers in Yahshua today.

None of you volunteered to give up your life of sin until He called you.

Even in the days of the apostles, no one came to the Father except those He called.

Acts 2:46-47 Continuing faithfully and with singleness of purpose to meet in the Temple courts daily, and breaking bread in their several homes, they shared their food in joy and simplicity of heart, praising Yahweh and having respect of all the people. And day after day Yahweh kept adding to them those who were being saved. CJB

All throughout history, Yahweh has called the ready, willing and able to serve Him but **He has also called the timid, the un-willing and those that felt they were unable.**

Yahshua, walking along the seashore, came upon Peter and Andrew, who were casting their fishing nets into the sea.

He called to them saying, "**Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.**"

In John 15:16 we read: "You did not choose me, I chose you; and I have commissioned you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that whatever you ask from the Father in my name he may give you."

Yahshua reminds the disciples that they had not chosen Him, but He had chosen and appointed them to bear much fruit.

These passages, along with others, reveal that Yahshua calls people to Himself and to service (or ministry as we more often refer to it.)

The two cannot be separated.

His call to follow Him includes the call to ministry.

Every Believer is called to ministry.

Ministry simply defined means "to serve" (ministry is spelled **w-o-r-k**)

I think we can all agree that there are several different functions and / or levels of ministry.

Sha'ul talks about the "5-fold" ministry. But not all are called to that level.

How do you know if you are called by Yahweh to a specific ministry?

Some people experience a deep assurance, a firm inner conviction that Yahweh has spoken to them, calling them to the work of ministry.

For most ministers, however, the sense of call is more ambiguous, more tentative.

Many ministers begin with only a vague notion that maybe they are called to ministry.

They take the first steps in preparing for ministry, seeking Yahweh's will and testing their sense of call all the way, finding their calling confirmed only as they navigate the river of exploration.

The Inner Call.

Many people who are called to the ministry say they felt an inward summons to ministry, a sense that Yahweh was speaking personally to them and guiding them toward the ministry.

This can be as strong as an overwhelming religious experience or as subtle as an intuition.

One does not become a minister to become a minister, one becomes a minister to do ministry.

Each believer is also specifically called and gifted by Yahweh for a distinctive part of His ministry.

The assumption is that if people discover their gift(s) they will get involved in ministry.

A second assumption is that gift(s) are always a lifetime possession.

This understanding of spiritual gifts has **caused a reversal** of the biblical paradigm of hearing the call, obeying it, and accepting the spiritual gifts that Yahweh graciously gives to accomplish it.

Yahweh will always provide any skills needed to do whatever task He assigns to us.

Yahshua called Peter and Andrew to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men.

He did not identify their gifts and tell them they would make good fishers of men.

He called.

They obeyed.

He gifted.

The seven who were chosen to serve tables in Acts 6 were placed into the position and then gifted to fulfill it.

Acts 6:3 -- "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of **good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom**, whom we may appoint over this business; (NKJ)

If a person will not live up to the requirements, and/or refuses to make changes in their lives to put them in a place of right standing, they are not disqualified by the leadership, but by **themselves**.

They are disqualified by the **choices** that **they** are making.

It is not the leadership's responsibility to carry this burden.

Their call came through the body, but it was no less Yahweh's call.

It is noteworthy that when the believers were deliberating over this issue the only qualifications mentioned were "**being full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.**"

They did not look for people who were gifted in serving tables.

The call was identified, not the gift(s).

For Stephen and Philip, two of the seven, obedience to this call opened the way for them to move into other ministry areas.

The gifting came as needed.

Rather than expending effort and energy into discovering our gifts, we need to listen intently to Yahweh.

Remaining cognizant of the fact that every Believer is called to ministry and that each is called to a specific aspect of the ministry is foundational to being alert and attentive to Yahweh's call.

His call may be spoken directly to our hearts or indirectly by His speaking through other means, such as Believer leaders (pastors, teachers, mentors, elections, appointments) or situations.

There have been times when someone has said that they are involved in a specific ministry because no one else would do it.

Could it be that this was the "means" through which Yahweh called that person to that precise ministry?

A good example is our prison ministry here at Mayim Hayim.

Many of us that are currently serving in that ministry did not really want to be involved.

We did not feel that we could contribute; however, we did not want to leave Leonard with the whole task.

After we became involved, Yahweh has given us some of the greatest spiritual blessing of our lives, through this ministry.

Some Believers neglect ministry because their ears are deaf to Yahweh's call.

Others are not involved because they are working so hard to discover their gift(s) that they miss Yahweh's call.

Still others are paralyzed by their unwillingness to obey their call, thinking they are not gifted and unable to do what Yahweh has called them to do.

Knowing what one's gift is does not motivate obedience.

His call requires decisive action - obey or disobey.

It is clear that Yahweh gifts us to fulfill a call.

Yahweh never intended us to be pew warmers!

Get involved!

Therefore dear friend, let us listen carefully, obey and humbly accept Yahweh's grace gifts.

The thrill and joy of being used by Yahweh in ministry awaits us!

To complete the above task we are empowered by the Holy Spirit which is summarized in 2 Timothy 1:7-2:3:

For Yahweh did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. [Yahweh] Who has saved us and called us to a holy life; not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Messiah Yahshua... keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Messiah Yahshua. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you; guard it with the help of the Ruach HaKodesh who lives in us... You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Messiah Yahshua. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to

reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Messiah Yahshua. (NIV)

- Ministry must be rooted in the Ruach HaKodesh, who is the giver of life and the provider of power.
- Ministry must be conducted by Yahweh's profound Grace. We can do nothing by ourselves.
- **Ministry must always point away from ourselves and toward Messiah Yahshua our Master.**
- **Ministry must be based on sound biblical teaching.**
- Ministry must be a life-giving task (Ephesians 4:1-16) building and equipping the people of Yahweh for Kingdom service as Yahshua is made a reality in the world.

Titus 1:5-9

- 5 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** (rebellion).
- 7 For a bishop must be **blameless, as a man of Yahweh, 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, holy, 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. (NKJ)

1 Tim 3:1-13

- 1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop (overseer, pastor), he desires a good work.
- 2 A bishop 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** (leads, manages, indicating care and diligence) **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 Yahweh?);
- 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.
- 8 Likewise **deacons** (servants, helps ministry) **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 deacons,**

being found blameless.

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

In summary all ministry is conducted under the Leadership of Messiah working through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit).

As our Messiah is sent, so we too (ministers and the people of Yahweh) are sent to fulfill Yahweh's mission in the world with the help and guidance of the Ruach HaKodesh.

This mission may be accomplished by means of the ministry where mission/evangelism (outward expression) and the maintenance/edification (inward expression) of the ministry is held in creative tension as we communicate the Gospel of Messiah Yahshua to each other, and the world.

Having a passion for Yahshua will accomplish our task.

Today we want to acknowledge a couple that is accepting the call to some specific ministry.

Jim & Connie would you join me please?

Leonard & Gladys

Jim and Connie acknowledge that Yahweh is leading them to additional responsibilities.

They come offering themselves for examination of their lives through the function of licensing for the ministry.

After a period of time and examination of the fruit of their lives, Mayim Hayim must determine if there is a need to ordain Jim and Connie in accordance with scriptural command.

As a called out assembly, it is your responsibility to examine those desiring to be sent out and anoint them for the task if the Ruach so directs.

We will challenge Jim and Connie just as we have challenged Leonard and Gladys to allow Yahweh to guide them in every daily activity.

Jim & Connie, just as Yahshua was examined in His ministry, so will you be.

Will you join me here at the front as we anoint Jim and Connie in this first step of a long and exciting journey.

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