



## HONORING THE MAN OF YAHWEH

by Matt German

We are living in exciting times of restoration. Yahweh, our heavenly Father, has restored a number of truths that were lost or neglected by the *ekklesia* for centuries. One principle that must be restored but that is rarely discussed – particularly within the ‘Messianic community’ – is the concept of honoring the man of Yahweh. That is the subject of this article.

To understand this concept, we must first recognize that Yahweh sets each one of us in the local Body as it pleases Him:

**1 Cor. 12:18, 28-29** But now Yahweh has **set** the members, **each one** of them, in the Body as it has pleased Him... <sup>28</sup> Yahweh has **set** some in the assembly: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers,... <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets?...

Obviously, it is Yahweh who does the ‘setting’. It is His choice, His decision. Equally obvious from this passage is the fact that He sets individuals into distinctive ministry positions in the assembly; we are not all prophets, or apostles, or teachers; not every one is called to a leadership position. Earlier in this chapter Paul also made clear that there are distinctions in the spiritual gifts and in individual callings within the Body (see v5-12). We find additional insight in his letter to the Ephesians:

**Eph. 4:7-12** But to each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. <sup>8</sup> Therefore He says, “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and **gave gifts (domáta) to men.**” <sup>9</sup> Now this, “He ascended,” what is it but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the same also who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. <sup>11</sup> **He gave some** to be **apostles**; and some, **prophets**; and some, **evangelists**; and some, **shepherds** and **teachers**; <sup>12</sup> **for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of serving, to the building up of the body of Messiah.**

When Yahshua ascended to heaven, He gave gifts of and to men. These gifts that He gave were apostles, prophets,

evangelists, pastors (shepherds), and teachers – what are commonly known as the “5-fold ministry” gifts. They are also sometimes referred to as “ascension” gifts because they were given at His ascension. The key word here is “gifts”.

Most modern believers have never really been taught to look at these anointed leaders as literal gifts from Yahweh. And yet they are. They were specifically given for the purpose of the perfecting of the saints – in other words, to aid believers in becoming mature, perfected servants of the Kingdom.

How should we regard those that Yahweh gives us? Should we be indifferent or even callous, or should we revere them and honor them because of Who they represent? Yahweh expects us to receive those He gave to us – not because they’re somehow “better” than us, but because He has appointed them and sent them to us for a purpose.

Yahshua gave some interesting and thought-provoking instructions regarding the receiving of those He sends:

**Matt. 10:1, 5-15** [Yahshua] called to himself His twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness... <sup>5</sup> Yahshua sent these twelve forth, and charged them, saying, “Don’t go among the Gentiles, and don’t enter into any city of the Samaritans. <sup>6</sup> Rather, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, preach, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.’ <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. Freely you received, so freely give. <sup>9</sup> Don’t take any gold, nor silver, nor brass in your money belts. <sup>10</sup> Take no bag for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer (workman) is worthy (deserving) of his food (hire). <sup>11</sup> Into whatever city or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy; and stay there until you go on. <sup>12</sup> As you enter into the household, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the household is worthy, let your peace come on it, but if it isn’t worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> Whoever doesn’t receive you, nor hear your words, as you go forth out of that house or that city, shake off the dust from your feet. <sup>15</sup> Most assuredly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Yahshua stated that they had freely received and were to freely give, but He also said that the laborer is worthy (deserving) of his hire. He expected His disciples to be received and provided for by those to whom they ministered. The word ‘receive’ in verse 14 is translated from the Greek *déchomai*, which means ‘to take with the hand, take hold of, to receive or grant access to, and to receive into one’s family’. That definition carries much more weight than the English word

'receive'. Yahshua further emphasized the importance of this concept at the end of the chapter:

**Matt. 10:40-41** He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me. <sup>41</sup> He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward: and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. (see also John 13:20)

### The Prophet's Reward

One of the best examples of the concept of honoring the man of Yahweh and receiving the "prophet's reward" can be found in 2 Kings 4, where a Shunammite woman receives Elisha:

**2 Kings 4:8-17** It fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. So it was, that as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat bread. <sup>9</sup> She said to her husband, See now, I perceive that this is a holy man of Elohim ['God'], that passes by us continually. <sup>10</sup> Let us make, Please, a little chamber on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a seat, and a lamp stand: and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he shall turn in there. <sup>11</sup> It fell on a day, that he came there, and he turned into the chamber and lay there. <sup>12</sup> He said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. When he had called her, she stood before him. <sup>13</sup> He said to him, Say now to her, Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for you? would you be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? She answered, I dwell among my own people. <sup>14</sup> He said, What then is to be done for her? Gehazi answered, Most assuredly she has no son, and her husband is old. <sup>15</sup> He said, Call her. When he had called her, she stood in the door. <sup>16</sup> He said, At this season, when the time comes round, you shall embrace a son. She said, No, my lord, you man of God, do not lie to your handmaid. <sup>17</sup> The woman conceived, and bore a son at that season, when the time came round, as Elisha had said to her.

Notice that this Shunammite woman's desire to receive and honor Elisha was directly related to her understanding that He was a man of Yahweh (v9-10). This resulted in a tangible demonstration of that honor – she prepared a guest chamber for him. This is the essence of *déchomai* – receiving into one's family. And because of her faithfulness in receiving Elisha, she received the prophet's reward, a son (v12-17).

The apostle Paul also spoke about this concept:

**Phil. 2:25-30** But I counted it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need; <sup>26</sup> since he longed for you all, and was very troubled, because you had heard that

he was sick. <sup>27</sup> For indeed he was sick, nearly to death, but Yahweh had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow on sorrow. <sup>28</sup> I have sent him therefore the more diligently, that, when you see him again, you may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. <sup>29</sup> Receive him therefore in the Lord with all joy, and hold such in honor, <sup>30</sup> because for the work of Messiah he came near to death, risking his life to supply that which was lacking in your service toward me.

This exemplifies a vital truth. True servants of Yahweh lay down their lives, symbolically if not literally, to serve the Body. We need to recognize and honor the sacrifice they're making.

**Phm 1:12-17** I am sending him (Onesimus) back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, <sup>13</sup> whom I wanted to keep with me, that in your behalf he might minister to me in the bonds of the gospel. <sup>14</sup> But I was willing to do nothing without your consent, that your goodness would not be as of necessity, but of free will. <sup>15</sup> For perhaps he was therefore separated from you for a while, that you would have him forever, <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, specially to me, but how much rather to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. <sup>17</sup> If then you count me a partner, receive him as you would receive me.

Here Paul entreats believers to receive Onesimus, a spiritual son, just as they would receive Paul himself. This echoes what Yahshua said: "He who receives you receives Me..."

The Bible makes clear that those in leadership positions are held to the highest standard of conduct. Even the great men of Scripture, however – from Moses, Elijah, and Elisha to Peter, James, John, and Paul – were imperfect and made mistakes. While we must never condone sin, we should not expect perfection from those in positions of spiritual leadership today. Honoring the man of Yahweh does not presume that he is flawless or infallible.

### Honor in Word and in Deed

Now that we have established the overall Biblical concept of honoring the man of Yahweh, how do we do it? What is the practice application? The first step is recognizing him and the fact that what he does is highly valuable.

**1 Thess. 5:12-13** We entreat you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in Yahweh, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

The key to honoring the man of Yahweh is respecting the position or office to which he has been called. In respecting that office, we never want to do anything to dishonor the man

or his vision. This includes the words we speak. We honor in word by speaking positively and edifyingly. Conversely, we avoid speaking negatively. Murmuring, gossip, complaining, backstabbing, etc., have no place in the local assembly, and certainly not against the established leadership. Issues, concerns, and disagreements should be addressed in private.

In addition, we demonstrate honor through consistency – in attendance, in attitude, and in attentiveness. Listening is essential. Part of receiving the man of Yahweh is receiving the Word that he brings. If he has truly been sent by the Father and is bringing His Word, then we need to receive it as such.

**Jer. 23:9** "...I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome, because of Yahweh, and because of His holy words" (KJV: "the words of His holiness")

How do we receive His holy words? In particular, when we hear them preached by the man of Yahweh, do we receive them with a sense of awe? Do they shake us to our core as "the words of His holiness", or do we just receive them as "common words"? No matter how anointed the preacher and how much truth he actually preaches, if we receive his words as those of a mere man, then we will tend to feel free to take or leave them as just so much good advice. It is when we receive them as "the oracles of Yahweh" (1 Pet. 4:11), as a living thing, that they produce life in us. When we look at the man of Yahweh as "just a man", we also inhibit our ability to receive from the anointing under which he operates. We certainly should not put anyone up on a pedestal, but we should "render honor to whom honor is due" (Rom. 13:7).

As believers we are to submit to one another, and particularly to those in spiritual authority. We need to respect their authority, not just give lip-service to it. In fact, we can talk about how we love and respect the man of Yahweh, but if we disregard or ignore his advice or counsel, what does that say?

**Hebr. 13:7, 17** "Remember your leaders, men who spoke to you the word of Yahweh, and considering the results of their conduct, imitate their faith... <sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch on behalf of your souls, as those who will give account, that they may do this with joy, and not with groaning, for that would be unprofitable for you."

High-maintenance people are the bane of a successful ministry. We should do everything in our power to "minimize the drama" for those charged with our spiritual oversight. We should also strive to do things for ourselves, not burdening them with all the "petty" stuff. Many leaders in the Messianic community are bi-vocational, working a secular job (and often raising a family) in addition to doing the work of the ministry. Their plates are full enough – we don't want to be an albatross or weight around their necks. We need to respect their time.

**1 Tim. 5:17-20** Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. <sup>18</sup> For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox when he treads out the grain." And, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." <sup>19</sup> Don't receive an accusation against an elder, except at the word of two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup> Those who sin, reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear.

Those who rule well – especially those who minister and teach the Word – are worthy of double honor (v17). One obvious way of doing this is through finances. This concept has certainly been abused by many modern ministries, but that doesn't change or invalidate the overarching Biblical principle.

**1 Cor. 9:9-14** For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox when he treads out the corn." Is it for the oxen that God cares, <sup>10</sup> or does He say it assuredly for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because he who plows ought to plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should partake of his hope. <sup>11</sup> If we sowed to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your fleshly things? <sup>12</sup> If others partake of this right over you, don't we yet more? Nevertheless we did not use this right, but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Messiah. <sup>13</sup> Don't you know that those who serve around sacred things eat from the things of the temple, and those who wait on the altar have their portion with the altar? <sup>14</sup> Even so did Yahweh ordain that those who proclaim the gospel should live from the gospel.

If someone has truly sown into our lives spiritually, is it a great thing – is it too much to expect – that we ought to support them financially? Yahweh ordained that those who proclaim the gospel should live from the gospel. Sadly, the Messianic community in particular seems to have a hard time with this principle. The simple reality is that a ministry cannot survive for very long without faithful, consistent financial support. How much do we really value those "gifts of men"? Yahshua said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). The converse is also true: where our heart is, there will our treasure be, also.

Finally, we need to pray and undergird those He sends. In the battle against the Amalekites, Aaron and Hur held up Moses' arms and provided support for him. We ought to support the vision of the man of Yahweh by looking for ways to help out.

Honoring the man of Yahweh is the right thing to do. We ought to honor him for the sake of honor, not because we're trying to get something. However, the reality is that Yahweh always rewards heartfelt obedience. "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet receives a prophet's reward" (Matt. 10:41). When we truly honor the man of Yahweh, He will reward us – sometimes in ways we never expected.

## Recent Sermons

- Milestones, Millstones, and Touchstones (10/29/11)
- Our 'Light' Affliction (9/24/11)
- Yahweh's Fall Festivals – An Overview (9/16/11)
- The Crucible (7/30/11)

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## Recommended Tool of the Month

**Called to Be God's Leader:** Lessons from the Life of Joshua by Henry & Richard Blackaby.

“What did God have in mind when He saw Joshua as a young slave in Egypt? How did He mold and shape Joshua to prepare him for service? Through Joshua and numerous examples from their own lives, the authors create a picture of God's ways, offering deep insight that readers can apply to their own lives. Purpose, Obedience, Faith, Character, and Influence are among the themes that are included in this book.”

Available at [Christianbook.com](http://Christianbook.com) (hard cover).

## Yahweh's Feast Calendar – 2012

We understand that people have different understandings of Yahweh's calendar. These are the feast dates for 2012 as observed by Lion of Judah Family Worship Center:

Passover*	Apr. 5 <sup>th</sup> (Thu.)
Days of Unleavened Bread	Apr. 6 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> (Fri. – Thu.)
Pentecost	May 27 <sup>th</sup> (Sun.)
Trumpets	Sep. 16 <sup>th</sup> (Su.)
Day of Atonement	Sep. 25 <sup>th</sup> (Tue.)
Feast of Tabernacles	Sep. 30 <sup>th</sup> – Oct. 6 <sup>th</sup> (Su. – Sab.)
Last Great Day	October 7 <sup>th</sup> (Su.)

\* observed the evening before

*Bear in mind that the Biblical day begins at sunset the night before.*

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### Contact us:

**(PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW MAILING ADDRESS)**

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