

## Set Apart Ministries Seven Fold Messianic Community Goals

*As prepared by the Set Apart Ministries Community and Undershepherd*

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As we have more fully grown into our vision of an equipping community over these last ten years we have seen the importance of an integrated understanding of how we are to walk out Torah in our lives. The mechanics of exactly how that works together are a work in progress. Through the study of His Word and our ongoing commitment to Him and to one another, we have seen that structure develop and are pleased to share it in the joyful hope that it will be helpful to others who pursue Messiah with every intent to grow up into Him Who alone is our Head.

Beginning from the point of need for personal recovery of those coming out of occult backgrounds we came together and began to develop as a community. Scripture study and discipleship were integral to personal restoration and as we had been studying from a Hebraic viewpoint it also became clear that the traditional Christian lifestyle patterns and practices we ourselves had been in were not free of pagan influences either. We saw that all of us have had painful experiences that have left their mark on our ability to be more like Messiah. Early on we could see that it would be more of an integrated process and less of a “helper-help-ee” professional relationship process, though how much that would be true has been a gradual realization.

Several years ago, while working on our teaching about *The Importance of Echad in Messianic Community* we brainstormed together to develop the accompanying definition of our Messianic community. Each word and concept has been carefully chosen as we described both our vision and our reality. We are very aware that we are still “**on the way**” to fullness and completion yet celebrate what Messiah has accomplished within and among us. This description forms a base for our Messiah-centered community, as it is shown at the base of the menorah.

A need to further understand the work of the seven fold Spirit for that same teaching led to the discovery of *The Creation Gospel* study by Dr. Hollisa Alewine. As we have worked with her materials, and grown in our individual and corporate understanding through thematic study of the Word, the PaRDeS levels and ancient Hebrew language study we have been blessed with a greater depth and joy as the Scriptures come alive for us. It was again in the context of community review that several members realized that our established goals “fit” within the Torah picture of the seven spirits of YHWH resting on Messiah Yeshua. The definition describes more of the structure while each candle on the lampstand is more concerned with the process.

We have been joyfully blessed to understand that there is a strong connection between the seven spirits, their creative work, the Feast Days of our Messiah, our preparation for His return and our daily personal and community walk. *If you are not familiar with these concepts, you can find Dr. Alewine's video presentations on the subject at God's Learning Channel online or you may go to our main website, [www.set-apart-ministries.org](http://www.set-apart-ministries.org), Creation Gospel information page, and download the audio files of the teleconferences we have had with this study.* For those who have already begun *The Creation Gospel* study, it will be clear what is meant in the realization that "walking in the Spirit" involves each of these concepts and that this is a much more clear understanding than most have had in a traditional Christian setting. We could see why we have been unable to narrow our range of goals as each one is essential to the overall completeness.

As we walk in His wisdom, building and categorizing His understanding into our lives through wise counsel, we are receiving the Ruach's power, knowledge and rest, which in turn, leads us right back to His wisdom. We see this as a circular path an individual walks over the course of the annual moedim as well as the corporate path we walk together. We see this as an annual cyclical course for individuals and communities as we draw ever closer to the time of Messiah's return.

We do actively seek His wisdom through our daily personal and weekly corporate study of Torah. Though we have leadership, all are encouraged and many have developed study skills that allow them to be active participants in parsing out the meanings of Scripture. Visitors have commented on the interactive style as an unusual blessing. We agree! It has become especially clear that His wisdom is so different from what the "world" regards as wisdom, really more a matter of His revelation and Who He is. We were recently blessed to see Andre Roosma's work on the deeper meanings of the Hebrew word "*chokmah*" for wisdom, which can be found at his newest website in English at <http://www.hallelu-yah.nl/Wisdom.pdf> In a nutshell, according to the pictographic message embedded in the word "*chokmah*" wisdom can be understood as: *"the awareness and celebration of the limitations of human power."*

We are both spiritual and physical beings and welcome awareness of how He has designed us to function in our mind, will and emotions. We are a Life Model™ community, and use the concepts of the development of maturity—spiritually, developmentally, personally and relationally-- on a regular basis. Study of these aspects of personal recovery and maturity are primarily held outside of our weekly gatherings but will come up occasionally during our Shabbat fellowship times. This aspect of our community has been difficult at times but as we practice maturity, eldership, parenting, accountability and so forth, we are seeing the growth of the peaceable fruits of righteousness among us. We grow strong in Him, and more confident of Him in one another as well.

Relying on His wisdom and understanding leads us inevitably to the provision of counsel for our local body as well as those we encounter elsewhere. We understand that maturity and character are basic foundations which must be in place in order to correctly interpret and understand His Word. When this foundation is missing, distortions all too easily occur in teachings and in relationships. Our calling to the Body of Messiah is rather like that of the helpmeet, the *Ezer Knegdo*, speaking as a deliverer both for what is right and against what is detrimental for the growth and development of His Bride. Sometimes this is through informal relationships, both “upstream” and “downstream” of each individual as each of us is both encouraged by those who are ahead of us in maturity and encourage those who are coming along behind us, not necessarily based on chronological age so much as attained maturity. Sometimes that counsel is provided in a more formal coaching or mentoring role for individuals or leaders in other communities.

As the Ruach is the central force and heart of the Seven fold Spirits resting on Messiah, so do we understand that our commitment and dedication to training up an army of worshippers is a central aspect and indeed, even the reason we still exist as a community despite all of the intensity of the restoration process for those having come through ritualistic abuse. Though we recognize that there is an aspect of worship when all of life is ordered around the Living Torah, Messiah Yeshua, we also maintain that attention to time presenting ourselves to Him, our Husband and King, as a living sacrifice of praise is the mainspring of our strength and ability to persevere. We are careful to maintain our awareness that we are a fellowship through our desire to honor and be in relationship with Messiah, and not simply a “social-ship” of people who enjoy one another’s company. (See article: Do You Know the Difference between Fellowship and “Social-ship?” [http://www.set-apart-ministries.org/SetApartMinistries/Articles/Fellowship\\_vs\\_socialship.pdf](http://www.set-apart-ministries.org/SetApartMinistries/Articles/Fellowship_vs_socialship.pdf) )

Therefore, we remain committed to including some time of praise and worship in all of our activities, as well as a weekly Shabbat gathering that begins with the shofar call and with an extended time specifically focused on Him through music, song, Hebraic dance, banners and flags with attention to the spiritual significance of color, and corporate prayer led by a different person each week. Beginning our time together with concentration on praise and worship of our Messiah has been instrumental in clearing the way for us to leave behind the cares of the world and for greater understanding of the study of the Word. Our focus has been on group participation, rather than pageantry or soloists, encouraging all to participate in the ways they are able and led to do so. Though we encourage each one to express themselves as they feel comfortable to do so, whether that be by singing or dancing or quietly meditating, we also emphasize that praise and worship is not a “spectator sport.” The very act of joining together in coordinated worship movement is in itself as aspect of individual developmental restoration of brain function within our mind, will and emotions as well as an opportunity for us to develop

*echad* both horizontally with other participants and vertically with YHWH. This time of praise and intimate worship of our soon coming King has been a discipline that has grown as we have practiced it. It does require a measure of understanding and willingness to lay aside personal thoughts, conversation, needs, and concerns for several hours which do not always come easily. As we learn to give ourselves more fully to Him in this setting, we are strengthened and encouraged, knowing that we must decrease as He increases. Being accustomed to actively resting in Him in praise and worship has given us greater understanding of the pairing of His high praise in our mouths and His sword in our hands.

These aspects of our community life together provide a basis for our recognition and acceptance of the power of the Ruach working in and through us as individuals and as a corporate body. It is His power and authority, and our relationship in and through Him that we acknowledge as the means of restoration for the common daily painful experiences of life as well as those that were severely traumatic. It is in relationship with Him, and through our increasing ability to perceive His presence in every moment of our lives, that we find peace and strength to speak these truths to the world, sometimes one person at a time and sometimes corporately.

Having been formed through the process of walking in the Spirit of His wisdom, understanding, and counsel, we understand that we are filled with His power for restoration and deeper intimate knowledge of His intentions toward us. As a community begun in recognition of the need for personal restoration we have also joyfully accepted the enlarging of our borders to teach and encourage the restoration of all things through a return to the ancient paths of His ways, keeping the *moedim*, gathering the lost sheep of *Ephraim* and joyfully anticipating the joining of the two sticks to be as one in our Father's Hand. Personal and corporate restoration inform one another and are inseparable.

All of these things are firmly set in the awareness that our choice to be set apart in YHWH's purpose and plan is the pre-requisite for entering into His rest and our place at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. Anything done as part of Set Apart community must have both root and fruit in awe and reverence for all that He is or it will come to nothing.

*I pray that the fellowship based on your commitment will produce full understanding of every good thing that is ours in union with the Messiah.*

Philemon 1:6 CJB