

# TWELVE PILLARS

## A Foundation for Tikkun Congregations & Ministries

by Daniel C. Juster

Since the formation of Tikkun as a restoration-oriented Messianic Jewish network in 1984, our Lord has graciously granted greater understanding of our walk together. This compilation of "Twelve Pillars" provides an understanding of those things biblical that bind us together in a common vision and commitment. My desire is that they become convictions of our leaders and people – convictions that they will maintain by continued vigilance.

### ***Pillar One: The Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom<sup>1</sup>***

Much confusion exists in the Church and Messianic Jewish worlds because there is not a clear understanding of the Good News. Many have been taught that the Good News is a message about how to get to heaven. It is summarized this way: "Because we have sinned, we are not qualified for heaven. Jesus died for our sins, and if we believe in his death and resurrection, we will go to heaven." At its worst, it has been taught that no life change is necessary for going to heaven. It is said that to require any life change is works-salvation that nullifies faith. This is contrary to classic presentations of the Gospel which taught that one is saved by receiving the grace that transforms. In conversion of the spirit (the process of being "born again"), one receives Yeshua (Jesus) as Savior and Lord because God enables us, through grace, to make a decision for him. Grace is not merely unmerited favor, but the power that transforms. To receive Yeshua as Savior and reject Him as Lord is not saving faith. Indeed, "believing" in the New Covenant Scriptures is a relational act of entrusting our life to Yeshua, but even this is not a sufficient correction, for the Gospel is more than a mere message about going to heaven. Now far be it from me to disparage, in any way, the hope of heaven or of life after this one. Indeed, the hope of heaven is based on the atoning death and resurrection of Yeshua, but the Good News is much more than the hope of eternal life.

We can understand the fuller message of the Good News if we understand that a concern for going to heaven was not the issue in first century Jewish context of the Gospels. Most Jews were quite convinced that they were headed for heaven after death so long as they were faithful to the covenant that God made with Abraham. They were justified in their assumption because prior to Yeshua's sacrifice, the Mosaic Covenant was the sole way in which the Abrahamic Covenant was administered. There was, however, a great Jewish concern that can be expressed in the question: "Where is the Kingdom of God that was

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<sup>1</sup> Believing in the reality of the Kingdom in the present does not mean that we agree with the radical "Kingdom now" view where it is taught that the followers of Yeshua will more and more take over the whole world and then rule it without the return of the Lord. Tikkun believes and teaches that history is moving toward a climactic battle of the Kingdom of Light and the Kingdom of Darkness, not a take-over of the world without the return of Yeshua.

promised by the prophets?" Indeed, the great hope of the prophets was that Israel and the nations would come under the rule of the Messiah, the Son of David. Israel would be delivered from all her enemies in such a mighty intervention by God, that the nations would stream into God's Kingdom. As we read in Isaiah 2, swords would be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Nations would no longer go to war. The word of the Lord would go forth from Zion. Even nature itself would be transformed for, as we read in Isaiah 11, the lion would eat straw like an ox. The wolf would lie down with the lamb. The earth would be full of the knowledge of the Lord and, as we read in Zechariah 14, the Lord would be one and his Name one in all the earth.

First century questions had more to do with the when and how of the Kingdom than with its form. The religious parties other than the Sadducees sought to discover a way to move history to the climax of the coming of the Kingdom. "Pharisee-ism" was largely a program of applying the purity laws that were given to the priests to the people as a whole. The thought was that if we can get enough people to be as pure as the priests and the land to be as pure as the Temple, the Messiah will come and bring deliverance. It was a "last day's" program to effect world redemption.

The Essenes thought in a similar fashion. However, they saw the Pharisees as compromisers with a corrupt Temple and priesthood. Indeed, the High Priest was a political appointee and no longer a legitimate descendant of Zadok to whom the priestly succession was given. The Essenes therefore sought a purity that was stricter than that of the Pharisees. Some joined monastic-like communities that practiced daily bathings and strict ritual purity. Their hope was not the salvation of the whole nation of Israel, but only of a faithful remnant that would fight in the wars of the sons of light against the sons of darkness as authored by the Essenes in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Zealots looked upon such ritual extensions as foolish diversions. Faith was understood by them as raising a revolt against the Romans. When a sufficient number were in revolt, the Messiah would arise and lead Israel to victory. Instead, the Zealots led our ancestors to the disastrous rebellion against Rome that resulted in the Temple's destruction in 70 AD.

When Yeshua began his ministry, it was with an announcement that astonished our people. He announced: "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel*" (Mark 1:15). "*At hand*" is a Hebrew euphemism which means available to you. In Yeshua, the Kingdom of God had come in a way that it could be embraced and entered into. The life, ministry, and teachings of Yeshua were an exposition of the meaning of the Kingdom that was now available. It was an answer to the first century Jewish question: "Where is the Kingdom?" Yeshua needed to show that the Kingdom really had appeared and was available, even though its final fullness, established over all the earth, would await a future intervention.

Where is the Kingdom of God? It is wherever the rule of God is established. To the extent that his rule is established in any sphere of human life, we can say: "There is the Kingdom!" However, the Kingdom can only be established by his power; we in our

human weakness and sin do not have the ability to establish it. Therefore, Yeshua comes with the power to establish his rule, beginning with his rule in our hearts. All the dimensions of Yeshua's ministry show the reality of the Kingdom He offers. The power of the Kingdom delivers from disease and demonic oppression which is Satan's disorder – not God's order. Yeshua and his disciples heal. The power of the Kingdom in Yeshua can even overcome the dangers of natural disaster. God's Kingdom power enables us to live according to the teaching of Yeshua. This teaching brings *Torah* to its highest application. Hatred is removed from our hearts. Murder becomes impossible. We love our enemies. We not only avoid literal adultery, but we have freedom from lust in our hearts. We are honest in our words and true to our promises. We are free from religious pride and pray with sincerity. We are free from material greed and material worry, for if we seek first the Kingdom of God, we shall have all things added to us (Matthew 6:33).

The parables of Yeshua show the nature of the Kingdom He offers. It spreads by the "seed" of the Word of God and finds reception in willing "soils" (hearts). It grows from a small beginning, a mustard seed, into a large tree. It is the treasure that supersedes all else (Matthew 13).

The disciples did not realize that the Kingdom that was offered in Yeshua would not immediately lead to its fulfillment. They did not understand that his death and resurrection were necessary to more fully establish the Kingdom. Indeed, the arrival of the Spirit at the feast of *Shavuot* was the key to the availability of the Kingdom to all peoples. Before that *Shavuot*, the Kingdom was limited to those connected to Yeshua's earthly life. It was therefore expedient that He go away and that the Spirit come.

The message of the Good News is that the Kingdom of God is available. If we come to the Father on the basis of the death and resurrection of Yeshua, our sins are forgiven, and we enter the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom message is the promise that God will put all things in our lives into right order – Kingdom order – *Torah* in the New Covenant. The Kingdom message is the promise for our personal lives, families, communities, businesses, artistry, and so much more. It is best pictured in the great parable of the prodigal son. The son returns to his father's house and submits to his rule and, in so doing, everything in his life is put into right order.

The Good News of the Kingdom includes everlasting life. This becomes a greater concern in the preaching to the Gentiles in the first century. Invitation to the Kingdom is only possible because Yeshua died for our sins. It is because our sins can be forgiven in Him that we can be invited. The invitation is, however, limited by the necessity of our remaining in this physical world for the time being while being given access to the Kingdom of God by the Spirit's power that is in us – power that now affects every dimension of our lives. Once we understand the Gospel of the Kingdom in this way, it immediately leads us to embrace the quest for establishing God's Kingdom order in every sphere. We seek first his Kingdom, a relationship with the King, the establishing of his right order, and the extension of the Kingdom through evangelism. It leads to a quest for his power to obey all his commandments beginning with loving Him and our neighbor. When we understand that the Gospel is the invitation to enter, live in, and embrace his

Kingdom, any debate concerning whether we can reject Yeshua's Lordship and yet be saved is seen for the foolishness it truly is.

This presentation of the Good News is most relevant to Jewish people who ask: "If Yeshua is the Messiah, then why is the world such a mess?" The answer is that it is not a mess everywhere; it is in order where the Kingdom has been embraced. Like Nathaniel, we are given an invitation to come and see ([John 2](#)). Our families, congregations, work places, modes of education, power demonstrations, and more, show that the Kingdom has come and is available.

The other eleven Pillars that follow simply flow from this one – from understanding the Good News of God's Kingdom, and the importance of fully coming into Kingdom order by The Holy Spirit's power at work in us.

## ***Pillar Two: The Kingdom is Expressed in Worship***

In [Matthew 6:33](#), we are told that we are to, "Seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness." The first step in seeking his Kingdom is to seek our relationship with the King, to seek Him! Seeking Him begins with worship. The Kingdom that is available to us is founded upon honoring and worshipping the King. We begin "Messiah's Prayer" and the *Kaddish* with the same orientation: "*Hallowed be your name.*" and "*Glorified and sanctified be God's great name.*" We glorify Him in many ways, but first of all in worship. All the dimensions of Kingdom attainment flow from worship. The Moravians under Nikolaus von Zinzendorf well knew this. Their communities were 24-hour centers of worship; a worship which especially emphasized their gratitude for the suffering Messiah. In [John 4:22-24](#), we read these words of Yeshua to the Samaritan woman:

*"You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."*

Let us take the last matter first. Individually and corporately, we must worship God in truth. This means that the content of our worship must be according to what is true and sincere. Sometimes contemporary worship is very empty of good content. God is to be extolled as Creator, the Infinite One who is merciful, loving and just. He must be extolled as the one who intervenes in human history to bring about his good purposes. We think of how the exodus from Egypt and other historical events permeate the content of the Psalms. However, Yeshua is distinguishing a difference here between the Mosaic order and the New Covenant order. Of the new order, He said that the least in the Kingdom is greater than John the Immerser. "*Yet a time is coming and has now come...*" said Yeshua ([John 4:23](#)). In this New and "better covenant," the center of our worship is God in Messiah, reconciling the World to Himself. Our worship now centers on Him and all He has done (and will do) for us – his crucifixion, his mercy, his ministry, his

resurrection, his ascension, his rule from heaven, and his future return and reign. Sometimes this becomes a problem in Messianic Judaism as some seek to make our people comfortable by making our congregations more like the Synagogue. I have nothing against using synagogue forms. I am for it. My concern is the content. Our worship content must be full of the reality of Yeshua – full of New Covenant content.

In a familiar double *entendre*, Yeshua says, “*But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself*” (John 12:32). This sentence has an intended double meaning. First, it refers to his crucifixion. It is in his being lifted on the cross that He draws all to himself. The cross is the place of power release. Such power and love is released in his crucifixion, that it must lead to resurrection. Here is where justice and mercy meet. Here is the fullest expression of the love of God and the revelation of his suffering with all the pain of humanity. “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...*” (John 3:16). For those who know the truth about Yeshua, their worship must center on this reality. I believe that to not center on New Covenant realities is displeasing to God, and that the lack of such centering in Messianic Jewish worship leads to a diminishing of his presence. I am happy when I see New Covenant content being expressed in different ways, e.g. classical forms, and modern guitar and drums. Of course, I desire that our forms be recognizably Jewish, yet we must have this New Covenant content. The worshipper must sincerely be committed to the worship content that he or she expresses. This sincerity and concentrated intention in worship is part of worshipping in truth and is the opposite of hypocrisy. This is a bridge to worshipping in spirit.

Worship in spirit connotes a fervor of spirit. As Jonathan Edwards so well argued in his *magnum opus* “*The Religious Affections*,” our relationship to the Father, Son and Spirit is an affectionate relationship that must include emotion. The type of affection that is acceptable to God is now, by the Holy Spirit, within us. He kindles this affection. I am not here arguing that there is only one way to show emotions. Those from one tradition will find it difficult to relate to how others from another tradition show their passion for the Lord. Is it in warm feelings quietly expressed but deeply felt, or is it in the physical emotional exuberance of many of our youth? God is pleased with both, and both should be valued. It is in that intimate sense of worship in the second person, the “I-Thou” (to quote Martin Buber), that we most experience the reality of our life in Him.

We should also note that Yeshua (in John 4) anticipates the time when the presence of God will be manifest not primarily in the Jerusalem Temple, but rather in congregations and temples that will exist all over the world. On the day of *Shavuot*, in Acts 2, we read of the great day of the outpouring of the Spirit. Their sons and daughters prophesied in fulfillment of Joel 2:28. This occurred as the disciples of Yeshua, the one hundred twenty, gathered in the Temple court – not in the upper room, for there was no crowd to hear in the vicinity of the upper room, nor sufficient space to gather to hear Peter. The new temple whom we now are (1 Corinthians 3:16), was birthed out of the old Temple:

*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”*

Temple reality would now be experienced by each individual believer whose body has become the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) but, even more so, in the gathered worshipping community. In this new temple reality, we experience his presence, his gifts, and his Spirit manifestations, and we go forth from there to the marketplace where signs and wonders confirm the Word of God. In the New Covenant order, we are called to strive for the manifest presence of the Spirit in our midst, and a worship that is fervent and sincere. Wonderfully, this worship can take place both individually and wherever there is a committed believing community.

### ***Pillar Three: The Kingdom is Expressed in Community***

The Spirit is poured out and the truth of Yeshua is confirmed to the hearts of people. What happens next? If it is real, they are drawn to form what I call community. This is quite different than much of what is called church or congregation in the world at large.

In Matthew 16:18 Yeshua says,

*“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my ἐκκλησίαν (congregation), and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (NIV).*

What many have built in this world (things that look successful) is not according to the pattern of Scripture; it is worldly. Worldliness is conforming to the systems of this world.

Sociologists have taken notice of the nature of something that is being built by many today. In December 2001, a “USA Today” newspaper article documented it, and the great sociologist-pollster George Barna has documented it – Modern Christians are building a consumer style of Christianity wherein individuals in congregations buy into the product of groups of leaders. These groups usually consist of a paid clergy with a handful of volunteers (unusually committed) who promote a religious product. The most prominent product is the Sunday morning service. For today’s consumers it must be a brief service, an hour to an hour-and-a-half maximum. It must be upbeat. The message must be short and encouraging. For growth, it should be seeker sensitive. This last term is a misnomer, for true seekers are willing to go through “hell and high water” to find the truth. I think the better term for this is “visitor friendly.” It is said that people should feel good when leaving, not tired after the service. They should feel burdens lifted. If there is multimedia, it is all to the better. The preacher should be truly entertaining; good jokes are a must.

During the service, there must be child care. God knows that today’s world does not want to be sitting with children. There should be a really entertaining program for children, and something for the teens, for singles, and for specialized groups (e.g. widows, widowers, single moms, and perhaps different professional groups) as well. Now there is value to this, but note how much the group is stratified and not integrated.

So along comes the consumer believer. He looks for the best program to “meet his needs.” He goes shopping and when he finds, he joins (membership is no longer to be expected in some circles). If, after several years he tires of the program and a new shopping adventure takes place. Worldly consumerism has swept the American church world; its orientation is self, and it ultimately produces decline.

While it is well to make visitors feel welcome and to meet the needs of different groups, biblical congregational life rests upon a very different foundation. I refuse to answer the question: “Where do you go to church?” It is like asking me: “Have you stopped beating your wife yet?” To answer the question is to cooperate with a falsehood, for according to the New Covenant Scriptures, we do not “go to Church or Synagogue,” we become part of a community of committed covenant relationships – a community to which we are submitted in order to be equipped to do the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11 ff). This is a very different picture than “going” to church or synagogue. One of the tests of what we are building is whether long term covenant relationships are formed that will last a lifetime. Also, the place of joining should not be the result of comparison shopping with a check list, but a matter of the leading of the Spirit. The Spirit’s direction is the only valid reason for joining, and the only reason for leaving. Often our joining has nothing to do with the excellence of what is offered, but rather what God wants us to bring to it. Perhaps we are called to join to bring a dimension of life and blessing to the community that is not already there and that is needed. We may be called to a community that is in great prosperity, or one in great need. It is the Spirit that joins us in community. We see this pattern clearly in Acts 2:42-47:

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (NIV).*

I want to clarify several things. First, size is not the issue. One can build large or small and still build according to the pattern of the New Covenant Scriptures; the Acts 2 community was quite large. Let us note some of the features of the Acts pattern. They had intimacy and met from house to house, building their lives together in community and real fellowship!

Second, the Acts 2 community devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching. Historically, when the Spirit was poured out among people, there was oftentimes a major change in the willingness of people to receive teaching. God’s people will never learn the Bible in half-hour messages on Saturday or Sunday mornings; individual study and teaching are necessary. In today’s consumer cafeteria, some may choose to be educated, but regrettably most will not. It takes real time and effort to be a well taught people.

Third, the Acts 2 community was full of love for one another. Open homes and hospitality were their way of life. Houses provided the primary meeting places for the first century New Covenant community. In addition, the sharing of possessions was spontaneous and exuberant. I do not believe that Scripture is describing a socialist community where to be a part of it, one had to live from a common financial pot. True, they sold as others had need, and the leaders distributed (Acts 4). Ananias and Saphira were members of that community before they sold their property.

Fourth, they were devoted to worship and prayer. According to Acts 2:42, *“they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”* Prayers in first century Judaism included praise, worship, and intercession.

In my college days, I began to question this thing called “church.” Was attending a meeting once a week really what God had in mind, or was it something that was much fuller in meaning and more demanding? I came to the latter conclusion. It appears that many in my generation were also questioning, and many became part of communities that were formed to live a more intensive life together. Some of these communities continue to this day. People chose to live near others in the community and to be connected in small groups that met weekly for mutual accountability. I think this is a good model and, to an extent, can be followed. The Methodists followed it and derived their name from the small group method. We also are called to community so, where we live and work is inescapably connected to that call.

New Testament theology envisions a people who are in a covenant community and mutually accountable under an eldership. They are equipped to do the work by “Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.” They are building long term covenant commitments and will stay in one community until or unless the Spirit sends them forth. All seek to exercise their gifts and talents to build up the community and to grow in the knowledge of their callings and vocations. 100% involvement is the goal.

We should note that the Bible assumes that the small group, today called the cell group, is the basic foundational gathering though, in my view, the larger community gathering is also important. This is clear in 1 Corinthians 12-14 which assumes that the people in the various groups that meet will all be seeking to be used in the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit. Indeed, Paul says that they can all prophecy one by one. Each is to bring their hymn, teaching, exhortation, prophecy, tongue, or interpretation. Thus, the New Testament assumes that a vibrant charismatic community expressed in small groups is foundational. In small groups, each member may be covered in prayer, share his victories and challenges, and each may be touched by prophecy – perhaps not every week, but frequently. Newcomers are brought to the friendly atmosphere of a home, and leaders can be trained in the context of leading their small groups. The Biblical pattern is unmistakable. In America, establishing this pattern is difficult because of our average lazy existence, but some have done it! It is flourishing in China, Africa, and Eastern Europe!



In community we seek confirmation for our decisions, and there is therefore accountability. If we do not receive confirmation we have cause to pray more and check whether we have really heard the Spirit. After that, we are free to follow our consciences in what we believe to be the leading of the Spirit. I am pleased to lead a network of congregations with people of deep and lasting covenant relationships and commitments. No, I will not respond to the question “Where do you go to Church?” because the question should be: “What community are you a part of?” God’s evaluation of our communities is not whether they are large or small; there are legitimately leaders of tens, fifties, hundred and thousands. The important issue to God is whether our communities are producing covenant life where the great majority of members are fully engaged. This is the kind of community that we see in the New Testament, and we should settle for nothing less.

### ***Pillar Four: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Life of Power***

Western congregations debate the issue of the reality and importance of the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit. Congregations in China, India, Africa and South America do not debate this issue. Their pattern of life is expectantly supernatural, and looks remarkably like pages from the Gospels and the book of Acts. The very fact that it is debated here shows our sad situation. I am aware of the teaching that the gifts of the Spirit were only for the transitional age of Apostolic leadership, and I want to tell you that this interpretation is just a rationalization to explain our lack of power. In First Century context where the Holy Spirit is significantly present, “stuff happens.” The nature of the New Covenant is the universal availability of the Holy Spirit, characterized by a quality of supernatural happenings. This is seen in Peter’s preaching in Acts 2:17-18, which explains the marvelous miracle of languages (tongues):<sup>2</sup>

*“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.”*

This is not something for only the first disciples of Yeshua. The immersion (baptism) in the Spirit is an experience to be sought by all until attained, evidenced by supernatural love and manifestations of the Spirit.

Also, Mark 16:17-18 says,<sup>3</sup>

*“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they*

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<sup>2</sup> This is a quote from Joel, but the Book of Joel does not refer to the New Covenant gift of tongues. According to many scholars, however, this quotation in Acts is used by Peter to explain prophecy that is delivered in unknown tongues but heard and understood in real languages (zenoglossia).

<sup>3</sup> Some have said that this is a disputed text. However, it is dated so early that it certainly gives us a summary of what the earliest believers thought and understood to be the teaching of Yeshua.

*drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”*

It is alarming to see believers in Yeshua leaving the ranks of those who believe in this way in order to join non-charismatic congregations and, even more, to see leaders go in such a direction. I encountered such a person who said that she wanted to get back to basics. What book is she reading? According to the Bible, supernatural power is basic! The whole matter of the power of the Spirit and the building up of our faith by the Word is that, without it, we cannot experience full transformation.

We cannot pick and choose what we like from the New Covenant Scriptures; they are in full agreement with each other on these issues of the supernatural. In John 14:12 Yeshua says:

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.”*

This does not mean that every individual believer will do more, but that the potential is there. Certainly, it also shows that the Body of the Messiah will do much more, for the gifts of the Spirit make God’s power among us unlimited. Some have said that the greater work is preaching the full Gospel after Yeshua’s resurrection, but I believe it is also the signs and wonders that were promised. In the New Testament period, the Apostles did (as per John 14:12) the same and greater works. Yeshua was not speaking here of his own death and resurrection which is unparalleled of course, but of the supernatural power that would accompany ministry in his name.

This brings us to an important interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. In this marvelous section of Scripture, Paul gives us guidelines for the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit in the gathered home assembly. There is to be an order in exercising the gifts so that all can benefit to the maximum. Love is to be the motive, which is the reason for 1 Corinthians 13. Love causes us to seek power because we desire to be more effective; love seeks to be effective! Thus, in 1 Corinthians 12:31a, Paul commands us to be motivated by love in seeking the best gifts:

*“But earnestly desire the best gifts.”*

And also, 1 Corinthians 14:1:

*“Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. “*

There is no neutrality here regarding the gifts. Praying in tongues (one of the gifts) for individual edification and for prophecy (another of the gifts) in the life of the Body are well taught; the verses just quoted are commands, not options.

Our relationship to the power and presence of the Spirit is the key to overcoming contemporary boredom in congregations. It is the answer to having to provide user-

friendly experiences in order to induce people to seek the Lord because his Spirit will lead and energize those who are sensitive to the Spirit's leadership. When our services and prayer times become boring, we must repent and intercede for a return of God's manifest presence. Are our people becoming so slack that they have no contribution to make any longer? Then repentance is needed here too. Our services, prayer meetings and cell groups will only be as good and as valuable as the contributions of their members.

Publications too numerous to mention demonstrate how much more effective our witness is when it is accompanied by power. Evangelism accompanied by Holy Spirit Power is the pattern of ministry in the Gospels; in [Luke 9](#), Yeshua sends out the twelve disciples and then in [Luke 10](#), the seventy. The instructions given in both chapters are the same. They are to go into the towns of Israel, heal the sick, and announce that the Kingdom of God has come near (i.e. become available). Healing and deliverance demonstrate the Kingdom's reality in both power and order, and both confirm the Gospel, showing that the powers of darkness are overcome by Kingdom power. So, this is a non-negotiable pillar, and I hope that it will forever be for you. I have had too many experiences with God's supernatural intervention in accurate prophecy, healing, and deliverance, to ever turn back. I know that it is harder to govern in a service when room is made for prophecy and the moving of the Spirit, and I know that those who seek the Spirit are sometimes both wrong and gullible. However, I am convinced that though we need to grow in wisdom, the price of having to deal with occasional disorder is well worth it.

### ***Pillar Five: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Life of Character***

Understanding the Gospel of the Kingdom leads to a way of life that we could call Kingdom life. The Gospel of Matthew is very helpful here because it connects the Kingdom of God to the commandments of Yeshua. In [Matthew 28:18b-20](#) we read,

*"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 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."*

The commandments of Yeshua are the foundation for character evaluation and the instrument for character training. We are able to grow in obedience to his commandments by depending upon his transforming grace. This includes identification with his crucifixion whereby the deeds of the flesh are put to death. This imaginative identification in prayer with his crucifixion is a key to transformation. It is the place of the forgiveness of our sins. Our participation in "Messiah's supper" – in the broken body and shed blood of Yeshua – is also very important. So also, is resurrection power where we believe for and are constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit to motivate us to obedience. Self-effort alone will utterly fail.

Yeshua made it clear that not only his commandments, but all of the commandments in the Hebrew Scriptures are important and are to be studied and applied in a way that fits the New Covenant order. His teaching in Matthew 5:17-20 gives us the pattern for such application, and is proof-positive that the New Covenant is pro-Torah:

*“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 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. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

How can believers become anti-commandment or anti-Torah after reading those words of Yeshua? Only from misunderstanding Paul who said in Romans 8:3b-4:

*“He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”*

According to Yeshua, those who are least in the Kingdom are greater than John the Immerser. To experience the Kingdom, we must at least practice the weightier commandments, but even the least of them instruct us and have application even in the New Covenant (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The wise person searches out their meanings and their applications.

Yeshua goes on to detail the greater righteousness that is not understood and practiced by the Scribes and Pharisees. The Sermon on the Mount details a life of character that is most wonderful. The important thing is to note that by God’s power it is doable. It is not that we can be perfect, but that our lives can be generally ordered according to Yeshua’s teachings in Matthew 5-7. These teachings inform a way of life for us that is in accordance with the character of the Kingdom and is part of our life of witness.

First, Yeshua shows us that we are no longer victims. Because the Kingdom has come in Him, the poor, the mourning, and the persecuted are no longer subject to their old circumstances. Their life is now determined by their new perception of God’s will, and they are empowered to carry it out. We who are believers are overcomers of conditions such as poverty, mourning and persecution. It is not that we are shielded from them; it is that they no longer determine or define our lives.

The *Torah* is applied to the issues of the heart. Not only must we not murder, we must not hold anger or hatred in our heart either. We are to love our enemies, pray for them, and even do good to them. Not only must we not commit adultery, we must obey the higher command to have no lust in our heart either. And oaths are not taken to prove that we are speaking the truth because we who are followers of Yeshua are to be fully honest

and carry out his word! In Yeshua, the very source of sin is dealt a blow, and victory is ours.

We who are followers of Yeshua are ideally delivered of all religious pretension and pride, and we must not do religious things to receive the praise of men. In prayer, fasting, and giving alms, we come to a place where our actions are motivated by love and by the hope of pleasing God. We pray according to the model spoken by Yeshua – for God’s Kingdom to come, and for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (see, [Matthew 6:9-13](#)). This prayer (popularly known as “the Lord’s Prayer”) entreats us first to seek Him and establish his order in every sphere of our life, and second, to seek to extend his Kingdom to the lost. This is not (as some believe) just a prayer for the second coming!

In addition to the above, we are delivered from greed and do not lay up treasures on earth for ourselves. Those called to make money make it for the Kingdom. Those called to modest lives live modestly unto Him. In addition, we are to live free of worry. It is a command to not worry over our material conditions! If we seek God’s Kingdom first ([Matthew 6:33](#)), He will provide. We are not to have condemning attitudes to others but are to seek the best for all. In addition, we are to keep on praying and seeking and knocking, for thereby is the Kingdom of God extended. We are to build our lives on his teaching, the only solid rock of security.

The call to character, whereby we first die to self is little taught in the American church. Let us take divorce as an example, which Yeshua forbids in [Matthew 19:3-9](#):

*“The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?” And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female,” and said, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.” They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.””*

In classical communities that sought to follow the teaching of Yeshua, fellowship in the community required that all follow Yeshua’s teaching on divorce and remarriage. They were of two basic orientations. The first allowed no divorce at all, and remarriage was forbidden if the spouse still lived. The other only allowed divorce with remarriage if there was adultery (and in some cases only if there was not full repentance) or desertion, whereby the deserting spouse would be considered an unbeliever; even then, a significant amount of time would have to pass. Today, to enforce discipline and to disfellowship those who are in adultery due to illegitimate divorce and remarriage is looked at as harsh and judgmental. Our age of easy “believe-ism” cannot accept that the Bible requires

discipline for serious sin and, as a result, the divorce rate is the same or higher among those who profess belief than among those who do not. This is greatly dishonoring to God, discredits the Gospel, and is a complete misunderstanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Excuses often given are unfulfillment, not feeling in love anymore, not getting along, etc. Some say, “God would not want me to be in an unhappy marriage; He wants me to be happy!” This whole orientation is one of self. How different is the orientation of godly character which says, “*I have been crucified with Messiah; it is no longer I who live but Messiah lives in Me*” (Galatians 2:20). If both parties to a marriage are truly believers and hold to this biblical view, it is impossible for them to not be able love each other, because the capacity to love is built into them by God. God commanded husbands to love their wives even in an age of arranged marriages, and today He commands us to love our enemies and fellow believers alike as well. Divorce for two committed believers is therefore impossible, for they will love each other more and more as they become more and more like Yeshua through obedience.

Character is the key to our establishing all the right qualities of commitment to people and to our other responsibilities. God’s commandments begin with loving God and abiding in the vine. They then move on to loving the brethren, loving our neighbor, and even loving our enemy. Character enables us to maintain life-long covenant relationships. It includes integrity in business and finance, and it enables the right relationship of authority and submission in every sphere of life – family, congregation, apostolic stream, and civil government. Those in authority handle their responsibilities with godly love, and those subject to authority remain strong in conscience, and submit with a good and holy attitude. We are (among one another) to be as those who serve as well as allow ourselves to be served, just as Yeshua taught and modeled. All of this comes from a full commitment to do all that Yeshua commanded, and to teach others to do the same. To those who do so, Yeshua promises to be with us always.

### ***Pillar Six: The Kingdom is Expressed in Apostolic Order***

What do we mean by apostolic order? It has two meanings. The first is that we seek to order congregational life according to the teaching of the original Apostles in the first century. The second is that we order our congregations under apostolic leaders who are chosen by God and prophetically confirmed as the overseers. God’s government is described in the New Covenant Scriptures but sadly, concern for government is at a low ebb in today’s American believing community. Many churches are governed by pastoral tyrants (a shocking term but I mean it in its historical meaning which is one-man rule). Such pastors may have advisors, but they are not accountable to either a board of elders, to their congregants, or to any outside authority. The only remedy for congregational members who disagree with their pastor is to leave. The government of some churches is democratic, where the vote of the congregation’s members determines the congregation’s direction; this is Congregationalism. Some churches are governed by a plurality of elders who are accountable to a higher body of elders drawn from a plurality of congregations; this is the model of Presbyterianism. Some churches are part of a network that is overseen by a Bishop; this is the Episcopal model. In all cases, the rights and

responsibilities of congregants are defined according to the government structure of their respective congregations. Conviction about these matters is crucial in building lasting community, but few believers today even ask about it. Instead, they seek out a program-oriented, consumer-oriented congregation, and accept whatever governmental structure there may be.

Tikkun's view is, first of all, that elders in plurality are to govern congregations. This is seen clearly in the book of Acts where it says that elders were appointed by Paul. It is amazing how little emphasis there is in Scripture on there being a senior pastor. The New Testament Epistles were written to congregations, and senior pastors are not even mentioned. Even in the book of Revelation where the messengers referred to are probably first among equal elders of the congregation of a city, there is not a great emphasis on senior leaders. I believe there are varying leadership gifts among these elders, and that there are leaders of tens, fifties, hundreds and thousands. I also believe it is wise to recognize a "first among equals" leader who has greater ability in vision and in unifying the rest of the leadership in implementing direction. So, I do believe in there being a leader of a group of elders, but plural elder government for local congregations is the New Testament's norm.

Secondly, congregations are not independent. As the early congregations grew they were part of one Congregation of the City numbering many thousands and overseen by elders of the whole city. In addition, the New Testament congregations were overseen by apostles – persons that either planted or established their primary foundations either directly or by those they sent as in the case of Timothy. One sees quite readily that apostles acted as part of the governmental authority of the congregations' oversight. Again, and again Paul brings his corrections to whole congregations. Sometimes this is embarrassing to the elders. Where were the elders of Corinth when things became so disordered that a man could remain in a wrong relationship with his stepmother and when believers were going to Roman courts against one another? While it was expected that the apostle's authority was to be received and an attitude of submission was to prevail, one still sees the dimensions of elder plurality. What if the elders of Corinth had said no to Paul? His only recourse would have been to trust supernatural power to enforce his authority.

In Tikkun's structure, the principle of accountability leads us to a moderate appropriation of the New Testament pattern. First, the apostle does not have a veto over the local elders. The elders and the apostle truly seek unity. However, if after fully hearing the apostle the elders still desire to go in a different direction, they are free to do so with two exceptions: (1) gross moral or doctrinal error and (2) gross incompetence (such as may exist in cases of psychological pathologies). Situations may exist in which elders need retraining or need to be replaced by competent and moral elders. In such cases, it is well for the apostle to involve the senior leaders of other congregations to weigh the issues with him and to involve the members of the flock very judiciously.

The apostle himself should be accountable to other senior leaders. A team of senior fivefold ministers, including other apostles, pastors, evangelists, prophets and teachers

are potential members of a team of plurality to hold a senior apostle of a network accountable. He can be confronted in the same way as any elder, and can be removed if he is found to be in gross sin. In addition, the Bible seems to give special weight to the role of prophets working with apostles in laying foundations. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 we read “...*first apostles, second prophets...*” In Ephesians 2:20 we read “...*built upon the foundations of apostles and prophets...*” And in Ephesians 4, we read that God “*gave some to be apostles, some prophets...*” etc. Gift ministry people who are elders (and especially apostles) carry two special responsibilities. One is to see God’s righteous standards of government enforced, and the other is to see that God’s people are truly equipped by all five of the gifted leaders.

Apostolic order is seen in Ephesians 4:11-12 where we read that “*He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry...*” A congregation needs training from all five. The apostle maintains foundations, and the prophet imparts a prophetic anointing to the members of the community so that their lives are led by the Spirit. The evangelist imparts effective witness, the pastor imparts in such a way that the whole community is pastoral, and the teacher produces a community that knows the Word of God and can teach others. If a community does not have all five within it, gifted persons from outside the community should be invited in to train the community’s members.

In such a structure, how do we see the role of members? Members too are part of the accountability structure of the congregation. First, according to Matthew 18:15-17, each member is part of the process of correcting sins committed against himself. In addition, Galatians 6:1-2 speaks of members correcting one another generally. Every believer is called to correct his brother believer who is overtaken in sin. This does not mean that we correct every little thing, but significant sin should be dealt with. In addition, an elder can be corrected by the testimony of two or three members (1 Timothy 5:19). In the case of Paul’s instructions to Timothy (whom I believe was an apostle), Timothy could receive an accusation against an elder when there was testimony by two or three. This demonstrates that members can appeal to their apostle when their leaders (whom they have previously confronted) are in sin and need to repent. Members are to be trained in their responsibilities regarding this. It follows from this that good congregational leadership seeks the members’ input and confirmation for major decisions. Yes, the authority is in the elders, but wise elders build unity with their members. The budget, the choice of elders, deacons, rabbis, pastoral staff, etc., should be subject to membership input before final decisions are made. If there is a strong voice from members for or against a change in a budget item or reservation with regard to a leader, wise elders will change the budget or delay the appointment of the leader in order to look into why there is member reservation. Seeking confirmation by the flock for major decisions is therefore a good practice.

While we do not believe that anyone can write Scripture today (indeed the Canon is closed), the function of apostles in government and in fostering a vision for growth and Kingdom extension beyond the local congregation is crucial. Congregations under an apostle should therefore partake of his training programs, conferences, and mission



opportunities. His vision brings multiple congregations together and imparts direction. In addition, we promote meetings for congregational leaders of a region for fellowship, for mutual building, and for calling upon the apostle for help when needed. The New Testament presents us with congregations that are relationally linked – not independent – and it presents us with an apostolic order where apostolic leaders have ministry and governmental input into the congregations they oversee.

## ***Pillar Seven: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Quest for Unity***

In John 17:21, Yeshua makes this remarkable request in prayer:

*“...that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”*

In context, Yeshua states that this prayer is not just for his disciples but for all those who would believe in Him through his word. We see from this that the unity of Yeshua’s followers is instrumental to the redemption of the world.

This unity brings fruit at every level. A family in true unity has tremendous power as a force for the Kingdom. An eldership in unity also has great power as does a congregation or an apostolic stream of leaders and congregations. We are told that when brothers dwell together in unity there is blessing (Psalms 133). This unity is the result of love that flows from our relationship with Yeshua. Yeshua’s prayers in Matthew 6:10 and John 17:21 are ultimately for linking true disciples in unity throughout the world – unity that must be fulfilled before his second coming because, after his coming, no more prayer for this will be needed.

We should note that as connected to Pillar Six, five-fold ministry is a key to this unity – especially, I believe, the recognition of apostolic authority and leadership. It is under such equipping ministries that we all come to the unity of the faith and grow into mature believers, fully equipped.

It may seem outlandishly impossible to attain, but Yeshua’s prayer commits us to pray for and work toward the vision that is enshrined in this prayer and it requires us to believe that it will happen. So how do we work for unity? First, we are to pray for unity in each of our congregations and come against attacking evil spirits that bring division, gossip and more. In addition, we are to support the vision and direction of our leaders where it is not out of line with Scripture. Beyond our local congregations, we are to pray for unity of the congregations in our counties, cities and regions. This requires that congregational leaders periodically come together for prayer and cooperative ministry. It also means that we are to pray for godly regional leadership to bring unity to the “Congregation of the City.”

This is not easy when we have charismatics, non-charismatics, independents, Evangelicals, Calvinists, Arminians, etc. However, we often find that even those of

similar viewpoint do not enter into cooperative unity. We should at least be able to enter into close cooperative unity with those who share our convictions and, from that base, reach out to others to do similarly, employing times of joint prayer and cooperative projects. Lastly, we can pray for unity brought by revival. I believe that only a mighty revival will bring true unity; it will necessarily include new orientations in doctrine that will bring us together more closely (sloppy unity where there is a watering down of convictions is not what I have in mind). The Spirit of God can bring us closer in our convictions and can help us to cooperate in mutually beneficial efforts for the Kingdom.

In Tikkun, we require all our pastors to be in a quest for unity by being part of pastors' fellowships, Congregation of the City efforts, and more. We strongly encourage joint worship celebrations. As Messianic Jews, we also need to show our unity with the larger community of believers and reject sectarian attitudes. This quest for unity should characterize our whole lives – within our families, in our elderships, in our congregations, in the “Congregations of our Cities,” and beyond. We should pray and talk until we are in unity. I know that some see such unity efforts among congregations as not important, but I think it is mandated and is a key for the salvation of the Jewish people in our respective areas. Great power is released for salvation where there is unity; unity has been the precursor of great successes in evangelism because when congregations in an area are in unity they have power to bind the princes of darkness over their respective territories. Indeed, when their members come together to take the bread and wine of Messiah, they make contemporary the words of Colossians 2:15 that when Messiah died, the princes of darkness were stripped of their power; let us therefore be convicted to be in a quest for unity. My prayer is that we will be an educated people in all of these matters and that we will not settle for congregational life that denies or ignores them.

### ***Pillar Eight: The Kingdom is Expressed in Jewish Calling***

In Romans 11:28-29 we read:

*“Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”*

The Jewish people (the nation of Israel) have an irrevocable calling. The context is not that every gift and call that God gives is irrevocable, as some wrongly teach. Rather, it is the covenant with Abraham that is the calling that is irrevocable. I have written about this in several books, the last one entitled “The Irrevocable Calling.” Israel’s preservation is a great testimony to the faithfulness of God and his ultimate Lordship over history. Israel’s return to the Land is a further demonstration of his power and faithfulness. Israel’s unique life under God memorializes his actions in the history of the nation and is a testimony to the fact that God created the heavens and the earth in six days and then rested on the seventh.

The Sabbath is both a humanitarian gift to Israel and a foreshadowing of the age to come wherein all enter into Sabbath rest – *shalom* in Him. Every feast has reference to God’s provision for Israel’s needs (previously agricultural) and for Israel’s salvation foreshadowing its future redemption and that of the nations.

Passover is, for example, at the season of first fruits and the exodus from Egypt, and it foreshadows Israel and the nations coming into their respective promised lands in the Age to Come. Indeed, Israel entering her promised land shows God’s heart for all the nations.

In *Shavuot* (Pentecost), we see thanksgiving for the early harvest, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the first century, the foreshadowing of the time when all the earth will be filled with the Spirit, and the time when “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea*” (Isaiah 11:9).

In *Yom Teruah* (Day of Trumpets a/k/a *Rosh Hashana*), we see the announcement of the judgments of God and the coming of the Messiah to rule and reign. According to 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17:

*“.. the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

Also, Isaiah 27:13 tells us that, at the sound of the *shofar*, the Jewish people will be called to return to the land of Israel from all the nations to which they have been scattered. Those who have not yet returned to the Land are nevertheless destined to do so.

In *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), we see the fulfillment of Yeshua (our high priest) entering into the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Tabernacle with his own blood to atone for the people (Hebrews 9). This atonement is yet to be applied to Israel and all of the nations in the day in which Israel will “*look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn*” (Zechariah 12:10). A fountain of healing will be opened for the cleansing of Israel (Zechariah 13:1), and the nations will be healed as well (Revelation 22:2).

The great feast of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) is the annual agricultural feast of final harvest that looks forward to God’s harvest of the nations gathered into his Kingdom. It looks back on Israel’s dwelling in tents in the desert and God’s supernatural provision for them, and it looks forward to the day in which Israel and all the nations will be one under Messiah’s rule, together celebrating *Sukkot* as the Feast of the Kingdom of God (Zechariah 14).

Practicing the Feasts is prophetic and intercessory. It is akin to prayer for what is portrayed in them and, in various dimensions, it asks that God’s Kingdom would come on

earth as it is in heaven. In the events of the last days, Israel will be a mighty instrument of revealing God's power and might, an instrument for all nations coming to the truth of God that will only be accomplished with the prayer and support of the entire Body of Believers. Indeed, according to Revelation 7 and 14, the saved remnant of Israel (Romans 9:27) plays a major part.

This is only the briefest summary. However, the re-ingrafting of Israel to the Kingdom in Yeshua leads to life from the dead (Romans 11:15). Everywhere in the New Covenant Scriptures we see the Apostolic example of maintaining Jewish identity in Yeshua; Jewish followers of Yeshua are part of their people, of course. How could this ever have been challenged? Paul himself showed that he was obedient to Torah and demonstrated his continued part in the nation of Israel. Messianic Jewish congregations are a key way (albeit not the only way) for Jewish followers of Yeshua to maintain their identity both in Israel and in the Body of Believers. These congregations include gentiles who identify with the Jewish people and worship in a Jewish-rooted context. Jewish life is communal by nature and hard to maintain individually. Some strong families and individuals manage to do so, but this is exceptional. Some churches can develop Messianic Jewish groupings to fulfill this function, and helping their Jewish members to integrate into the local Jewish community is also important. We affirm Jewish culture where it is good and beautiful, and we ideally seek to be living within this cultural context. Messianic Jewish congregations provide a witness to the Jewish community that Jewish life and faith in Yeshua fit together (it is the only option for Jewish believers in the land of Israel). Jewish disciples of Yeshua have a dual identity; they are the saved remnant of Israel and, at the same time, members of the wider Body of Messiah, the Jewish component of the "one new man" (Ephesians 2:15). They link Israel and the Church in a spiritual corporate connection. Someday this Messianic Jewish remnant will no longer be a remnant; they will be all of Israel (Romans 11:26).

Jewish calling is the continuation of the Abrahamic Covenant that is given to Jewish people from the time of their birth. All believers are to affirm that Israel is still chosen and has not been replaced. God's goal is that Israel and the nations will be one under the rule of the Messiah, but the Body of Believers is not a homogenized reality; rather it is a foreshadowing of the day when Israel and the nations will be one under the rule of the Messiah. To help achieve that, all are called to make Israel jealous (Romans 11:14), and some to be involved in providing loving service and a direct witness to the Jewish community.

### ***Pillar Nine: The Kingdom is Expressed in Discipling the Nations***

In Matthew 28:18-20 we read what has become known as the "Great Commission:"

*"And Jesus [Yeshua] came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

*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." Amen."*

From the time of "the fall," God voiced his commitment to the redemption of the world – that "the fall" would be reversed. In his covenant with Abraham, God promised that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's seed. The Gospel which is based on the life, death, and resurrection of Yeshua, is God's fulfillment of that promise and will eventually lead all nations to come under the rule of Messiah and enter into the fullness of his Kingdom.

It is especially important that Jewish disciples of Yeshua take note of this because Israel is not called merely for its own fulfillment. From the very first, its purpose has been to serve and be a blessing of the nations of the world. Jewish followers of Yeshua should therefore pray for the nations and be open to every God-given opportunity to serve. When a Jewish disciple of Yeshua brings the "Good News" (the Gospel) of Yeshua to a nation, a very special anointing is manifest. Some do this on short-term trips, some as part of mercy ministries, some in longer-term venues, and some more locally in one-on-one encounters.

Let us understand that the "Great Commission" is not fulfilled by merely speaking the message, but rather in discipling members of the nations to obey all of Yeshua's commandments. This includes training in godly character (one of our Pillars) and discipling believers in their responsibilities in all spheres of life.

Yeshua says to those who are discipling: *"All authority has been given to Me."* This means that He is delegating his authority and power to his disciples to accomplish his commandments and, in so doing, He promises to those who obey his "Great Commission" that He will be with them *"even to the end of the age."* May God give us his heart for making disciples in the nations, and may He give each of us specific nations for which to pray, and specific Kingdom works in which to engage.

### ***Pillar Ten: The Kingdom Is Expressed in Hope for the Coming Fullness***

I call myself a restorationist because I am one who believes that God will restore all truth and right practice that has been lost to the Body of Believers. Many restorationists teach that the Body of Believers declined after the first century and only began to be restored in the Reformation. What was lost is said to at last be in the process of being restored today. While there is much truth in this viewpoint, it is too simplistic because the Church has seen advances and declines at various times in its history. Certain truths were emphasized in one period, lost in the next, and picked up again in the next. There is not a simple line of decline and restoration that can be charted. In the Church's advancement, it was often two steps forward and one step back. Some advances, especially in the recent Protestant world, seem to parallel the restoration of Israel. The Church's re-discovery of the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues is parallel to the early

Zionists' return to the land. The latter rain parallels Israel's independence and recognition, and the charismatic renewal in the late sixties parallels Israel moving its seat of government to the Old City section of Jerusalem.

On the other hand, there are dimensions of God's truth that seem less today than in the past. The enforcement of congregational discipline was greater one hundred years ago than in today's American congregations. Indulgence for divorce is certainly not a manifestation of restoration, but a step backward. While every age of the Church has seen advances and shining examples of truth, the word "restoration," as it is used in Acts 3, connotes more than restoring something that was previously fully present.

*"... He may send Messiah Yeshua, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:20-21).*

This refers to restoring the world to paradise. Ever since Adam and Eve, the world has not known paradise. Indeed, that all humanity would enter into paradise is something beyond and greater than anything that has occurred in the past. Actually, the Bible leads us to believe from Acts 3:20-21 and other passages, that we are moving toward something greater than is usually connoted by the word "restoration;" we are moving toward fullness.

By fullness I mean that the Body of Believers will come to a place of maturity, unity, power and purity that is indicated in Ephesians 4 and 5, and in Revelation 7. Ephesians 4:11-13 speaks about the five-fold ministry equipping the saints until all come to the unity of faith and grow into a mature corporate man. The Body comes to a place that is described in this passage as attaining "to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah" (Ephesians 4:13). In Ephesians 5:25-27, we read of the Bride of the Messiah attaining to a place described as "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." This is the end product of the Messiah who cleanses her "with the washing of water by the Word..." Revelation 7:9 describes a multitude from all nations "standing before the throne and before the lamb, clothed with white robes;" this is the spiritual picture of the last days bride. Also, John 17:21 describes Yeshua's prayer for unity of the Body which was upon his lips just before his trial and crucifixion. All of this gives us great hope that through revival and equipping we will see the Body of Believers come into fullness. Only such a bride will be able to affect the salvation of Israel and the nations.

Let us understand that we are looking at something that has never existed. It is foreshadowed in the early Jewish Body of Believers in Jerusalem led by the Apostles, but the world-wide Body of Believers never attained the fullness that still awaits it. Even the attainment of Acts 2 to 4 fell short. Why? Because shortly after the message of the Gospel spread to the nations, divisions, impurity, and weakness arose among the congregations. The Corinthian congregation is usually given to show that the first century Body of Believers was not ideal, and we can also take note of the letters in Revelation 2 and 3 which show the same thing.

Tikkun is committed to the restoration of all truth and more. We are committed to the coming fullness of the Body of Believers in unity, power, and purity that will lead to salvation for all the nations of the world.

### ***Pillar Eleven: The Kingdom is Expressed in Every Life Sphere***

Today is a day of advanced understanding. In past ages the Kingdom of God was identified only with the Church. As an old hymn states: *“I love thy Kingdom Lord, the house of thine abode.”*<sup>4</sup> In more recent times and in certain quarters, the Kingdom has been understood as the Millennial Age and thus something postponed to the future. We of Tikkun are quite sure that these views are not adequate.

Many scholars have correctly stated that the Kingdom of God came to earth with and in Yeshua. It is therefore now possible to enter the Kingdom, live in the Kingdom, and experience the manifestation of Kingdom rule. However, the Kingdom is not yet here in fullness, for the fullness awaits Yeshua’s second coming. That being the case, where and how is the Kingdom seen today? It is seen in those manifestations of Kingdom power spoken of in Pillar Four whenever and wherever there is submission to the will of God; as we read in Matthew 6:10: *“Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.”*

The Holy Spirit now dwells in each individual disciple; it is seen in all those who live according to the teaching of Yeshua. The Kingdom is also seen in the quality of marriages and families that are ordered according to Yeshua’s presence and power. Ephesians 5 and 6 describe Kingdom power in marriages and families that are ordered according to Kingdom principles, and the Kingdom is also seen in the life of congregations that are in right apostolic order. Indeed, one might even say that according to Yeshua’s teaching, congregational life is the fullest manifestation of the Kingdom in this life; it follows from what Yeshua said in Matthew 16:18: *“I will build my Community, and the gates of Sh’ol will not overcome it”* (CJB). The Kingdom is not limited to any one sphere of life but can only be seen in a sphere where there is submission to God’s order. Still, perfect submission to God’s order will not occur in this age.

The Kingdom manifests when civil leaders govern according to Kingdom principles. Also, those who establish businesses are to manifest the Kingdom by bringing their businesses into line with Kingdom principles, producing products and services that benefit people, and using a portion of their profits to bless employees, shareholders and consumers. Indeed, the God-led business leader creates wealth not only for himself, but for the benefit of all those who are part of his enterprise. His wealth is primarily used to extend the Kingdom of God and not to indulge himself in selfish and opulent living. Godly employees, through prayer and faithfulness also have power to bring the Kingdom

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<sup>4</sup> Lyrics by Timothy Dwight (1752-1817), based upon Psalms 26:8 & 137:5-6.

into their sphere, and it is the same for those involved in other spheres of endeavor such as art, science, education, and (dare I say) even politics. Yeshua claims all these realms for his Kingdom, and for us to seek his Kingdom means that, to the best of our ability, we are to bring all things that are within our influence and control into right Kingdom order (*Torah*). Although this is a major part of our witness, no one knows the degree of the Kingdom's manifestation that is possible before Yeshua's return. After his return, Israel and the nations will be in right spiritual order and relationship toward one another; until that time, however, let us endeavor to see the Kingdom of God manifest to the fullest extent possible in every sphere of life that we are in.

### ***Pillar Twelve: The Kingdom is Extended through Prayer***

Prayer is the primary engine of Kingdom extension. Many other religions (Islam for example) were founded and spread by the sword, but our faith is spread by prayer, preaching the Gospel, and laying down our lives for others; to many, these look like things that are weak and foolish. In history, martyrdom has been one of the great weapons of Kingdom advance. We read in 2 Corinthians 10:4 that *“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds...”* Prayer is that mighty weapon in our arsenal to be used constantly. As part of Yeshua's teaching in his “Sermon on the Mount,” we read in Matthew 6:10 that we are to pray: *“Your Kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.”* This is a prayer that we might employ for empowerment to establish God's rule in every sphere of which we are a part – to extend his Kingdom to the lost, and to desire Yeshua's return. Individual and corporate prayer has a significant effect on the rate at which the Gospel is spread and on the perfecting of the Body of Believers. Let us interpret the words of Matthew 7:7-8 in its context of Kingdom extension; Yeshua said:

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”*

In the context of corporate prayer, in Matthew 18:20 there is an even more powerful promise:

*“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”*

*“In My name”* means “in the essence of who He is, and according to his will.” The kind of prayer that works is “will of God” prayer; indeed, where two or three agree in his name there is great power, and how much more so when a hundred fervently agree. When we dwell in the vine we know his heart, and Yeshua promises us that if we so abide, we will have whatever we ask (John 15:7).

Similarly, in John 14:13-14 Yeshua says: *“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do*



*it.*” Our desires become as his and, inspired by the Spirit, we are given the vision to pray our desires and his into being. So, we read in James 5:16 after a description of the power of Elijah’s prayer: “*The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*”

Prayer meetings and fasting (both individually and corporately) are essential for extending the Kingdom.

## **Conclusion**

So, these are the twelve pillars: The Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom; the Kingdom is expressed in worship; the Kingdom is expressed in community; the Kingdom is expressed in a life of power; the Kingdom is expressed in a life of character; the Kingdom is expressed in apostolic order; the Kingdom is expressed in a quest for unity; the Kingdom is expressed in Jewish calling; the Kingdom is expressed in discipling the nations; the Kingdom is expressed in hope for the coming fullness; The Kingdom is expressed in every life sphere; the Kingdom is extended through prayer.

May these pillars become deep convictions for all who read them or hear the message they convey. They are written specifically for Tikkun, which is a network of Messianic Jewish congregations and ministries, but they have application for Christian churches as well. May the reader’s choice of a congregation or church be informed by these truths. For Jews, may they find a congregation or church that lives out the 12 Pillars fully, which means joining one that fosters their Jewish identity and way of life. For Gentiles, it means joining a congregation or church that is committed to the Jewish people, teaches on the Jewish rootedness of Christianity, and seeks to be aligned and in fellowship with Messianic Jewish congregations. May the reader work to establish these convictions in his or her the faith community, and never relinquish them, compromise them, or forgo them for something that is less.