



Qehilath Haderek Handbook



The Qehilath Haderek Handbook

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This handbook contains the Statement of Beliefs, Community Rules, Order of Service, and Rules of the Beyth Dyn, and is the only authorized version for use by all communities of Qehilath Haderek – The Fellowship of the Way, wherever they may be. Its precepts and standards are henceforth binding upon all members, by order of the Beyth Dyn Qehilath Haderek, this day of 1 Aviv, 5774.

Yochanan ben Yisrael

Dayan

Oradyah ben Yisrael

Dayan

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And this I confess to you, that according to The Way, which they call a sect, so I worship the Elohyim of my fathers, believing all that has been written in the Torah and the Prophets.

Shaul of Tarsos

Statement of Beliefs



Qehilath Haderek Statement of Beliefs

YHWH is One. He resides in the heavens and is Creator of all that exists. He is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present. He is the El Shaddai of Avraham, Yitzchaq and Ya'akov, and the author of the covenants with them. He is the lawgiver of Sinai who commanded Moshe. He is the Shield of David who gave him strength and song. He is the heavenly Father of Yehoshua Hamashiach and of His people, the greater commonwealth of Yisrael, whom we are and must be.

Yehoshua is the living Word of YHWH. As the Word, he has existed from the beginning, and through him YHWH created all things. He is also the promised Son and Messiah written of in Scripture, the beauty and esteem of the Shekanyah come in the flesh. He was conceived of the Ruach Haqodesh and born of a virgin. He lived as our perfect example and teacher so that anyone who has seen the Son has seen the Father. He was impaled and died for us as the ultimate Passover offering, and as the final atoning sacrifice for our sins. He was resurrected to eternal life after three days and three nights in the grave and has ascended to heaven where he sits at the right hand of the Father and intercedes for us before YHWH as our Kohen Hagadol. He will return once again at the end of the ages as Melek Hamelekym in power and esteemed beauty to establish the kingdom of YHWH forever.

Ruach Haqodesh is the power, personality, and spiritual presence of YHWH. More than just a force, the Ruach Haqodesh is His essence. Whereas Yehoshua is seen as the esteemed beauty of YHWH and the Word incarnate, the Ruach is that which is unseen and dwells in the heart of His people. The Ruach works in perfect harmony with the Word to instruct, convict and empower His children to love, faith

and obedience; and to great works in His set-apart Name through spiritual gifts. Given to certain chosen of the people of YHWH in the past, a measure of the Ruach is now given in earnest to all of His children who repent of their sins and then turn in obedience to walk in faith with Messiah Yehoshua. In the coming kingdom of YHWH, the fullness of the Ruach Haqodesh will live in the hearts of all mankind for eternity.

The Scriptures are the divinely inspired and authentic written Word of YHWH. As such, in their original forms they are perfect and infallible. The Scriptures are the revelation and complete expressed will of YHWH to His people Yisrael and to all of humanity. They are the foundation of all wisdom and knowledge and are the instruction in right-living for His people. The Scriptures are one seamless whole from beginning to end and are, along with His Ruach Haqodesh, the supreme and final authority in the faith and life of the true believer. The Word of YHWH is truth.

The Torah is set-apart, righteous and perfect. The Torah defines sin. The precepts of the Torah are the basis of the covenants between YHWH and His people, and are the standard used in His judgment. The great principles of the Torah are embodied in the Ten Commandments. Written by the very finger of YHWH in stone and ratified at Sinai, they were illuminated and magnified in the life and teachings of Messiah Yehoshua. The Torah expresses the love and will of YHWH concerning human conduct and relationships. It is binding and in effect until heaven and earth pass away. Keeping the Torah cannot save one to eternal life, rather it is the natural outpouring of love and obedience which flows from where it is written upon the hearts of those in whom the Ruach Haqodesh dwells. Messiah Yehoshua summed up the whole Torah in YHWH's two greatest commandments: to love YHWH with all your heart, soul and might; and to love your neighbor as yourself.

The Shabbath was blessed and set-apart by YHWH at creation on the seventh day. It was made for man to rest upon and it is set-apart for that purpose eternally. It is also one of the Ten Commandments, and therefore is immutable and binding upon all mankind. To break the Shabbath, by refusing to rest or by working during it, is a sin. It is

part of the Shabbath command to remember the creation, as well as the departure from Mitzrayim; and also, that the people of Yisrael should gather together for worship of YHWH and to hear His Word in a miqra qodesh. In addition to these, Scripture says the Shabbath is also a sign between YHWH and His chosen people, an eternal mark upon His children of His covenant with them.

The Moedym of YHWH are appointed to be celebrated and kept by Yisrael forever. These annual festivals have been observed by the obedient and faithful children of YHWH throughout the ages and shall be until the very end of time. The Moedym bring order and rhythm to His seasons, and they bring blessings upon those who keep them. They provide opportunities for worship, fellowship and instruction to the people of YHWH, and they provide us with a beautiful picture of His plan of salvation.

Salvation is the gift of YHWH to those who love Him and keep His commandments. It came by the death and resurrection of Messiah Yehoshua, who gave himself as the ultimate and final payment on the debt owed by all mankind for their sins. Salvation now comes without cost to those who truly believe in Messiah Yehoshua and accept it, freely given by YHWH in His perfect grace and mercy. It is secured by faith in YHWH and in His atoning work through Messiah Yehoshua, whose is the only name under heaven and given among men by which one can be saved. When in faith one turns from his sin, truly repents, and humbly asks forgiveness of YHWH, that person will be saved. By salvation we are justified, made righteous, and redeemed to right-standing before our Father YHWH. We are then accepted as His legitimate sons and daughters and are grafted into His family, the children of Yisrael. As children of YHWH, we become heirs to His covenants, promises and kingdom. If we endure in faith and obedience to Him until the end, we will live with Him in His kingdom for eternity.

Immersion is a ritual and symbol by which we confess our faith in YHWH and in His Messiah, and by which we are spiritually cleansed. It is a testament of our rebirth and union with Him, of His forgiveness of our sins and, along with the laying on of hands, of our receiving His Ruach Haqodesh. It is done by immersion in water, following our

repentance and turning away from sin. At immersion the “old man” of sin in us is put to death, and we are symbolically resurrected with Messiah Yehoshua to walk after him in the newness of life everlasting.

Community is an essential component of our religious belief and practice. Throughout Scripture, the children of Yisrael lived in ordered communities according to the commands of Torah, and so must we do. Our community structure, leadership, rules and order of worship service are uniform and established according to the Scriptural model, and no member of our faith is permitted to live exempt from them. To live or worship according to the practices of another sect or religion renders one unfit for membership in Qehilath Haderek and must result in exclusion from the community.

Yisrael are they whom YHWH has chosen to be His own treasured people. Beginning with Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya’akov, along with their descendants and those who have come out of the nations of the world to join them, they have been chosen by YHWH as a set-apart people and a nation of Kohanym, who are His testimony to the entire world. To Yisrael belong the covenants and promises, which are eternal and inviolable. Not all of Yisrael has yet been converted or presently has belief and faith in Yehoshua as their Messiah and Savior, as has been written, “YHWH has given them a ruach of deep sleep, eyes not to see and ears not to hear unto this day.” Yet, at the end of the age, on That Day, “They shall look on Me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his only son.” And so all Yisrael shall be saved, as it is written, “The deliverer shall come out of Tzion, and he shall turn away wickedness from Ya'akov, and this is My covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins.”

The Gentiles are those from the nations who are uncircumcised and are not members of the twelve tribes of Yisrael. Prior to the time of Messiah, they were without Elohim and had no possibility of salvation. Yet the prophets foretold a time when a way would be made for them to enter the kingdom of YHWH. That time miraculously began with the resurrection of Yehoshua and the subsequent giving of the Ruach Haqodesh to all mankind who will:

repent of their sins, have true faith in the saving name of Yehoshua Hamashiach, then turn to walk in The Way of righteousness after him, obediently serving YHWH, the one and only Elohim of Yisrael. To those righteous gentiles who do so, forsaking their former lives of sin and idolatry to keep those commands specifically given to them and to the greater commonwealth of Yisrael, it is said: “Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to YHWH, to serve Him and to love the name of YHWH, to be His servants, all who guard the Shabbath and do not profane it, and who are holding onto My covenant - them I shall bring to my set-apart mountain and let them rejoice in My house of prayer.”

The Q’doshym are the elect and set-apart ones of YHWH. Not all of Yisrael belongs to this very special and select group, but only they who are of the 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Yisrael, along with that great host from among the nations of the earth, who are the true servants of Elohim, having both the keeping of His commandments and the testimony of Yehoshua His Messiah. It is they alone who will be resurrected and will rise to meet Yehoshua at his coming, and it is they alone who will sit on thrones to judge the rest of humanity and to rule with him in his kingdom for a thousand years.

Love is the ultimate goal of all we believe and do. True love is found through the keeping of the commands of YHWH, in accordance with the teachings and halakha of Yehoshua His Messiah. Just as the keeping of the commands of YHWH will fail without love, so loving as seems right in our own eyes will fail without the keeping of His commandments. The two greatest commandments of all are to love YHWH with all our hearts, souls, and might; and to love our fellows as we do ourselves. It is a recognizable mark upon all those of our faith that we do both of these and leave neither undone.

The Kingdom of YHWH will be established finally and eternally with the return of Messiah Yehoshua at the end of the ages. He will come in power and esteemed beauty as our promised King and Savior. His Q’doshym, both the natural and the grafted in, the living and those who have died, will rise to meet him, and his feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives. There will be a terrible war which will end with Satan bound and Messiah Yehoshua reigning in peace on the

earth with His Q'doshym for a thousand years. After this time, Satan will be loosed for one final battle, which he will lose, and he will be cast into the lake of fire forever. This will be followed by the judgment in which all mankind will be resurrected to stand before the great throne of YHWH and be judged for their deeds. The books will be opened, and those whose names are not written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. Finally, there will be a new heaven and new earth. A new Yerushalayim will come down from heaven, and YHWH will dwell there among His children forever.

We, the lawfully appointed Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek, do unanimously agree and affirm this authorized Statement of Beliefs for Qehilath Haderek, which shall henceforth be binding upon all of its communities and members. Enacted by the Beyth Dyn, this day of 1 Aviv, 5774.

Yochanan ben Yisrael

Dayan

Oradyah ben Yisrael

Dayan

Blessed are the perfect in The Way, who walk in
the Torah of YHWH. Blessed are those who
observe His witnesses, who seek Him with all the
heart.

David Hamelek

Community Rules



Qehilath Haderek Community Rules

In order to promote the unity, ensure order, and maintain the integrity of our communities, the Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek hereby set forth and establish these community rules, which shall henceforth be authoritative and binding upon all its communities and members.

Membership Structure - The membership of Qehilath Haderek shall be comprised of both what are known as the Yehudim and the Goyim; also known as the Jews and the Gentiles, or the circumcision and the uncircumcision. For we perceive that there is no partiality with Elohyim as to salvation itself, since in Yehoshua they “who were once afar off have been brought near by the blood of Mashiach.” Our membership shall reflect the “one new man” in whom all are made equal and “fellow citizens of the Q’doshym and members of the household of Elohyim, having been built upon the foundation of the Shliachym and Naviym, Yehoshua Hamashiach himself being the chief cornerstone.” No member or class of members is above another, except that some are raised to positions of leadership and honor according to the precepts of Scripture and the traditions of Qehilath Haderek. And yet even these are in fact to be the servants of all. The binding substance between all members of our faith is love for one another and our common path is The Way of righteousness which is found only in the footsteps and person of Yehoshua Hamashiach, our master.

Membership Eligibility - New members of Qehilath Haderek must be immersed in the names of YHWH and of Messiah Yehoshua, and be confirmed by the community Beyth Dyn after a six month proselytization period spent under the tutelage of a qualified community member. All members must be Torah observant

according to the halakha of the faith called Haderek and the traditions of Qehilath Haderek. Members will hold themselves accountable to one another and to the leadership of the community in all matters of faith and religious observance. All members must agree to and abide by these community rules.

General Conduct - The foundation of every member's behavior will be Torah-observance, and all are required to keep the commands of YHWH that apply to them as best as they are able, both in public and in private. Their time shall not be spent upon unlawful things or in many worldly pursuits, but instead upon deeds of Torah and charity towards one another, and upon things of the Ruach that esteem YHWH and His Messiah. Beyond this, members of Qehilath Haderek are also required to walk in grace and love, following the footsteps of Messiah and avoiding even the appearance of evil. Members should not in any way be yoked with non-believers nor share in their sins, yet should seek peace with all men, whenever possible. Members will never knowingly be involved in any act that may cast a stain upon the community of Qehilath Haderek or upon the name of YHWH.

Leadership Structure - The leadership of each community of Qehilath Haderek is comprised of three levels: the Dayanym, the Zaqenym, and the Shamashym. The Dayanym are chosen from among the Zaqenym of the community as its wisest and most knowledgeable members and are appointed to constitute its Beyth Dyn. The Roshey Beyth Dyn is chosen from among that body as its head and shall lead the community according to the precepts of Torah and the teachings of Messiah Yehoshua. He is appointed by the community Beyth Dyn to serve for any specified length of time. Once appointed, he is the leader, spokesman and administrator of his community, and he is fully responsible for its welfare. His decisions and authority are binding upon all members, unless contravened by the Beyth Dyn. Zaqenym are the primary counselors to the Roshey Beyth Dyn. They are considered the wisdom of Qehilath Haderek and are also responsible for its welfare. They shall guide the community in love and remain absolutely dedicated to preserving its structure and unity. They are appointed by the Beyth Dyn and serve for life, unless removed by Beyth Dyn for gross and unrepentant impropriety.

Shamashym shall serve the community and its leadership, both at worship services and in the area in which they live, under the direction of the Roshey Beyth Dyn and acting with his authority. They shall assist in teaching, worship, communication, charitable endeavors and keeping order, among various other functions. They are appointed or removed by the Roshey Beyth Dyn with subsequent confirmation of the entire Beyth Dyn. Other non-leadership positions may be appointed to members by the Roshey Beyth Dyn as necessary for worship services or for the smooth and efficient operation of the community.

Leadership Eligibility - The Dayanym and Zaqenym of Qehilath Haderek must be chosen as those men who have the greatest wisdom, commitment, compassion and love for YHWH and for the community. The Roshey Beyth Dyn shall possess these same qualities, as well as ability and zeal in both leadership and the administration of the community's needs. All leaders will be men worthy of their offices, blameless, sober, sensible, orderly, kind to strangers, able to teach, not given to wine, not brawlers but gentle, not quarrelsome, not lovers of money, not new converts, and having an acceptable witness from those who are outside the community. They shall be men of great learning and charitable deeds who have themselves once submitted in humility to leaders and teachers of our faith. Likewise, Shamashym ought to be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for filthy gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience. They must be proved first; in knowledge and in obedience to their Zaqenym and teachers, then let them serve, if they are unprovable.

Recognition of Zaqenym - Each member will recognize the Zaqenym of the community and honor them at all times. All members will rise whenever a Zaqen enters a room. No member will receive any accusation or evil report against a Zaqen, except as lawfully required and on the testimony of two or three qualified witnesses. All members shall show respect and obedience to the Zaqenym, since they are charged with looking out for the benefit of the community and always have its welfare at heart, bearing its burdens and responsibility continually upon themselves.

Immersion - Qehilath Haderek recognizes and requires two forms of ritual immersion: that for original conversion or dedication to the faith, and that for occasional purification. All new converts who have not previously been immersed into the names of YHWH and Yehoshua Hamashiach are required to do so upon completion of their proselytization period. Those joining Qehilath Haderek who have previously been immersed into these names may do so again as a rededication of their vows and as a symbol of unity with the community. At least once yearly, all members of Qehilath Haderek are expected to undergo an immersion of purification, preferably in the days immediately preceding the Pesach celebration.

Shabbath & Moedym Observance - It is a command to rejoice before YHWH on His Moedym. Each member will observe the Shabbath, Feasts, and Fasts of Scripture with Qehilath Haderek according to its traditions, in love and unity, utilizing the dates of the Complete Believer's Calendar. No member will work on Shabbath, Chag HaMatzoth (1st and 7th days), Shavuoth, Yom Teruah (1st day), Yom HaKippurym, Sukkoth (1st day), or Sh'myny Atzereth. Each member has a personal responsibility to know and practice the laws and traditions of all of these Moedym.

Service Attendance - All members will attend a weekly miqra qodesh or other meeting of Qehilath Haderek for worship, prayer, study and fellowship. Primary services will generally be held on Shabbath and Moedym. However, if these services are cancelled or not possible for any reason, members will meet instead on any alternate day and in any convenient venue, as necessary, so as not to forsake the assembling together of the community. In addition to Shabbath services, at least one weekly Torah study session and fellowship shall be attended by all members in their respective living areas or, at the very least, by mail or electronic means. Failure of any member to attend three consecutive scheduled services can be considered grounds for discipline or expulsion from the community by the Beyth Dyn.

Structure of Services - Worship services shall be conducted according to the Qehilath Haderek Order of Service, and the established traditions of the community. Variations on the standard

order may be used in accordance with the requirements of special observances and Moedym, or made to a very limited degree, if necessary, with approval by the Beyth Dyn. In addition to the regular leadership positions of the community, the Roshey Beyth Dyn shall appoint any worship leaders, such as a Chazzan or Cantor, as well as any additional teachers and musicians as he deems necessary for the proper conduct of services.

Women in the Assembly - Women members of Qehilath Haderek are to be held in the highest regard. They are completely co-equal with their male counterparts and shall be treated as such. However, just as Scripture mandates unique behavior for certain persons, such as the Kohanym, Leviym, lepers, kings and others, so it mandates certain differences in behavior for men and women. Women shall learn in silence and in submission. They shall not teach or have authority over a man, "because Adam was formed first, then Chavah; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman, having been deceived, fell into transgression." The exceptions to these rules are: that women are always permitted to teach children and other women, and; in a place where there is no qualified man to teach or lead, a woman who is qualified may do so.

Other Services and Religions - No member will attend the worship services or functions of other religions, including those of a supposedly non-denominational or ecumenical nature. These are considered idolatry and will result in expulsion from Qehilath Haderek. An exception to this rule may be legitimate outreach ministry and evangelistic efforts by mature community members who are specifically appointed by the Roshey Beyth Dyn or Zaqenym of the community for this purpose. The only other possible exception might be for community members who are in prison and who must attend an authorized faith-based treatment program in order to obtain parole eligibility. Such exceptions will be decided by the Beyth Dyn on a case-by-case basis.

The Names of Elohyim - All members will recognize and may use the name of YHWH, and of Yehoshua His Messiah, when referring to them. All members may also use the titles El, Elohyim, or any of its variations when referring to the Most High. Members may never

refer to the Most High by the names of other mighty ones, such as g.o.d. and a.l.l.a.h., which are blasphemous. Members will not let the names of other elohym be heard from their mouths. No member should give honor to any false mighty one by using its name for days of the week or months of the year, but instead should refer to them by number or by their Hebrew names. Members will certainly not worship alongside those people who are using those other, blasphemous names.

Tithing - All members will separate from their yearly increase the appropriate tithes. This is to be done according to the scriptural command of one-tenth in years one through six of the Shemittah, and in the seventh year there is none. The tithe is to be set-apart and delivered to the appropriate Kohen for the use of the Beyth Hamiqdash. In the absence of a qualified Kohen or our Beyth Hamiqdash, the tithe may be escrowed toward their eventual coming, or invested in such a way that will best seem to bring them about. The tithe does not belong to its bearers and may not be kept for personal use, it belongs to the works of YHWH. In addition to the first tithe, in the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of the Shemittah, a second one-tenth must also be separated and escrowed for use by its bearers to finance their celebration at the yearly festival of Sukkoth, as its bearer sees fit to do. In the third and sixth years of the Shemittah, this same second tithe shall be given to the poor, needy, widow, orphan, ger, and to the Leviym with you, in order that they may celebrate the Sukkoth. As with the first tithe, its bearer has no right to utilize it for any other purpose than that which YHWH has intended.

Charitable Donations - All members will give from the heart to any needy brother in Qehilath Haderek, if they have the means to give. Tzedekah will be required as circumstances and means allow, which is the mandatory giving to certain persons and groups that is commanded in Torah. Members should also participate in chesed, which is the merciful giving that is done in lovingkindness and goes beyond what is required, so that all may see the love of Messiah and the power of the Ruach Haqodesh at work in the people of YHWH and esteem Him.

Habits of Prayer - All members will be in the habit of praying daily and, if possible, in the company of other members of Qehilath Haderek. Twice daily, upon waking and before sleep, each member is required to recite the Sh'ma. Each member will say typical Brakoth on occasions such as before and after meals, for rosh chodeshym, and before the commencement of performing most positive commandments. At least once each week, all members of the community will perform the five elements of prayer: Baraku, Sh'ma, Amidah, Aleynu, and Mourner's Qaddish.

Habits of Study - Each member will faithfully read the prescribed weekly Torah portions. Every Shabbath, members will read the corresponding haftarah portion and a portion from the Ketuvym Hatalmidym. Members will also learn and become proficient in the use of the Siddur, as well as other seasonal texts and prayers which are utilized by the community. These shall include but not be limited to: the Pesach Haggadah, Machzorym, and Selichoth prayers. Each member is required to read and become familiar with the articles and writings published by Qehilath Haderek and should understand the basic mechanics of our calendar. Each member is expected to learn and know the basics of Hebrew, in order to better know and understand the Scriptures and prayers.

Communal Learning - Each community will establish for itself a place and time of communal learning to be conducted weekly on a day other than the Sabbath. The wisest and most learned of the community will be selected by the Roshey Beyth Dyn to teach, and all others will learn in peace and in silence. Proper decorum will be maintained in the house of learning at all times, and questions reserved for a time as designated by the teacher. Subjects for learning should generally be restricted to the basics of Scripture and our faith, to the study of Hebrew, and the rules and traditions of Qehilath Haderek.

Talmidym - Each member of our faith is required to provide him or herself a personal teacher and mentor, becoming a long-term talmid under his tutelage. This teacher should be a mature member of the community who is not only learned and able to teach sound doctrine and the traditions of Qehilath Haderek, but who is also

himself walking in them. Such a teacher is one who is humble and has love for his talmidym, having learned by having been a talmid himself. A talmid shall learn not only through various texts and lessons, but by submitting himself to his teacher, sitting at his feet until he knows what his teacher knows, becoming like him in respect to the faith and traditions of Qehilath Haderek.

Dietary Practices - All members will be observant of the scripturally kosher food laws in Wayikkra 11, abstaining from pork, shellfish, and other forbidden meats. All forms of chametz - yeast or other leavening agents – are forbidden from being eaten or possessed during the annual festival of Chag HaMatzoth, and anything containing chametz shall not be found within their borders throughout that festival. Members will learn and say from their hearts the brakoth before, and the Birkat Hamazon after meals. Members will take their meals together regularly, if possible, with the appropriate table fellowship and words from the Scriptures; enjoying all foods that are set-apart for their enjoyment by the Word of Elohim and prayer.

Grooming and Dress - All members will adhere to the grooming and dress standards as delineated in Scripture. A man's hair should be polled at a reasonable length, and his full beard left unmarred and not rounded. A woman's hair should be reasonably long and not polled as a man's. An exception to these standards may be made for certain vows and cleansings as mandated in Scripture. It is expected that, insofar as possible, an adult woman of our faith shall keep her hair covered in public. In general, a man may not wear garments that pertain to a woman, and a woman may not wear garments that pertain to a man. The specifics of this rule may vary according to local traditions and the conventions of various geographical regions. In all cases, dress and grooming of members in public should be clean, modest, and not revealing or sexually provocative.

Lashon Hara and Rechilut - Every member will abstain from talking about other people, most especially in evil speech about other members of Qehilath Haderek, regardless of whether that speech is true or false. The only exception to this rule is when such speech is

required by a Beyth Dyn. Every member will abstain from coarse talk within and without Qehilath Haderek. No member will lie to his fellow. No member will curse his fellow or the Most High. No member will speak or even gesture in such a way that may hurt his brother or sister. No member will peddle gossip of any kind, most especially about the affairs of Qehilath Haderek or its members.

Forbidden Relations - The members of Qehilath Haderek shall not do any kind of the abominable practices of the world around them. Members shall not commit adultery. They shall not have conjugal relations with anyone of near kin. They shall not have conjugal relations with any beast. They shall not have conjugal relations with any woman during her monthly separation. A man shall not have conjugal relations with other men. A man shall not dress or behave as a woman, nor shall any woman dress or behave as a man. Moreover, a member of Qehilath Haderek should not even entertain thoughts of any of these things, nor participate in discussions that appreciate them, or he will already have done them in his heart. Members who commit such abominations will be expelled from the community.

Beyth Dyn - The Beyth Dyn shall exist as the sole court for Qehilath Haderek. Composed of two or three Zaqenym who are grounded in Torah and wise, it will make halahkic rulings in doctrinal matters, resolve conflicts between brethren and appoint the leadership of Qehilath Haderek. That leadership will also use Beyth Dyn at times to set policy and to make important decisions on behalf of the community. The wisest, most loving and able among the Zaqenym shall be designated senior Zaqen and shall be appointed Roshey Beyth Dyn of the community, setting its agenda and providing a tie-breaking vote on any matter when necessary. All members must acknowledge and accept the judgments made by the Beyth Dyn in agreement that its rulings are binding and without option for appeal.

Dispute Resolution - When a member is wronged by another brother or sister, the higher path is to simply show love and allow the wrong, forgiving it. However, if problems persist between brethren, the one wronged shall seek a resolution according to the scripturally commanded method: First, that member should try to reconcile with

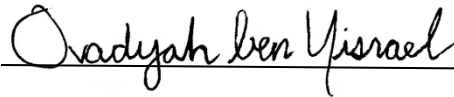
that brother or sister. If that fails, then the member should bring two impartial witnesses to that brother or sister so that the witnesses may hear every word of the issue. If that also fails, then the member should call the brother or sister and witnesses to the presence of the Zaqenym of Qehilath Haderek and request a Dyn Torah. The witnesses must be men who are qualified and unbiased. The Beyth Dyn will render a formal judgment regarding the wrong, and all members will accept that judgment. If a brother or sister is found to be falsely accused in any matter, the one who accused him or her shall suffer the punishment which had been sought for the other. Members of the community will not, under any circumstances, do harm to one another by using unscriptural methods to solve problems between them, or by taking those issues outside of Qehilath Haderek to other forms of authority.

Exclusion from the Community - Failure to keep these community rules of Qehilath Haderek and the decisions made by its lawfully appointed Beyth Dyn may result in a member's expulsion from the community.

We, the lawfully appointed Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek, do unanimously approve and affirm these authorized Community Rules of Qehilath Haderek, which shall henceforth be binding upon all of its communities and members. Enacted by the Beyth Dyn, this day of 1 Aviv, 5774.



Dayan



Dayan

The steps of a man are ordered by YHWH,
and he delights in His Way.

David Hamelek

Order of Service



Qehilath Haderek Order of Service

In order to esteem and beautify our Creator YHWH in worship, ensuring a unity and accord that most closely adheres to the Scriptural model, we, the Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek, establish this authorized Order of Service for all congregations of Qehilath Haderek.

Using this Order of Service without first establishing a Scripturally-structured community according to the rules of our faith is neither possible nor permitted. Also, it must be accepted that neither our community structure nor this Order of Service is a function of democracy. Order is established for the benefit of all and is maintained in love. Nowhere in Scripture is a community found to be governed democratically, because such a scheme does not work.

Leadership, once appointed, are entrusted to lead and teach our congregations with power and authority, yet always having the best interests of their people at heart. Various other persons within the congregations may be assigned leadership in portions of the worship service at the direction of the Zaqenym in accordance with their particular gifts, their experience and the needs of the community. Non-members, proselytes, new converts and the untaught are never allowed to lead or teach. Such would bring chaos and confusion to the community and is forbidden by Scripture. The only exception may be guest speakers of competent learning and sound doctrine who have been approved by the Zaqenym of Qehilath Haderek.

Inappropriate grooming and dress are forbidden at worship services. Men should not wear shorts or t-shirts, and women should not wear tight or revealing clothing. A man should wear a tallith and tefillin, if possible, and a woman should cover her head, in

accordance with the commandments. No one appearing before a secular king dresses in anything but his finest. How much moreso should this be when appearing before Haqadosh, Baruk Hu, as it is said, "*Da lifney mi amed atah* - Know before whom you stand." In congregations of Qehilath Haderek, the commands of the Miqra Qodesh will not only be kept but, whenever possible, be made beautiful.

During worship services, disruptions and desecrations will not be tolerated. Arriving late or leaving early should be avoided, if at all possible. During prayer, song and reading of the Scriptures, members of Qehilath Haderek should not carry on conversations, flush toilets, or fail to control their young children. At all times in the Miqra Qodesh, members should be reverent and respectful towards the meeting place of YHWH and towards others present.

At all times, Dayanym and Zaqenym of Qehilath Haderek should be shown respect and honor, and most especially during worship services. When a Dayan or Zaqen enters the meeting room, all members should rise to their feet, beckoned by the Chazzan or the Shamashym if necessary. This is a command of the Torah, not of men, and the keeping of commandments is always a blessing. A Dayan or Zaqen shall not be accused except under extreme and necessary circumstances. No member shall argue with a Dayan or Zaqen, nor shall either receive disrespect from any member. Such behavior is considered shameful for the entire community and is regarded a "Chillul Hashem" - a desecration of the Name of YHWH, by which we are called.

The materials and texts used by our communities in public worship shall be those which are published or approved by Qehilath Haderek, whenever possible. The Siddur Qehilath Haderek or Complete Believer's Siddur, by Sabbath Keepers Fellowship, should be used in liturgical prayer. The Scriptures, by The Institute for Scriptural Research, should be used in community readings and teachings. The Qehilath Haderek Calendar or the Complete Believer's Calendar, by Sabbath Keepers Fellowship, should be used for scheduling all Moedym, Torah study, and other observances. All doctrinal and community issues should be based upon and decided in accordance

with Scripture, along with the Qehilath Haderek Statement of Beliefs and Community Rules.

A typical Qehilath Haderek worship service takes two hours to perform in its entirety. Prior to a worship service, the venue must be made ready. If the service is to be held on a Shabbath, preparation should be done on the previous day, if possible, so that no work is performed on the Shabbath and all focus is upon fellowship and worship. Seating should be set up facing east in North America, it being the direction of shortest distance to Yerushalayim towards which we are to worship and pray, according to Scripture. A table or small desk and chair should be set facing everyone from which the teacher will teach, following Yehoshua's example. A "bimah," or podium, should also be set up in front and facing the people, from which prayer, worship, and Scripture reading are led. Seating for Zaqenym of the community should be set slightly apart in a place of honor. The Chazzan and Shamashym should be placed where it will be most convenient for them to perform their functions and assist the congregation. Anything in the room that is distracting or that does not belong in the Beyth Elohyim should be removed. Then, when everything is in readiness and all are assembled at the appointed time, the service may begin.

General Outline

1. Blowing of the shofar
2. Call to Worship
3. Opening Prayer
4. Honoring of Zaqenym and Guests
5. General Announcements
6. Song and Worship
7. Qiddush
8. Birkat Hamazon
9. Preliminary Tehillim
10. Half Qaddish
11. Baraku, Sh'ma and Amidah
12. Aleynu and Mourner's Qaddish
13. Open Prayers of Request and Healing
14. Birkat Hachodesh

15. Reading of the Torah
16. Reading of the Haftarah
17. Reading of the Ketuvym Hatalmidym
18. The Lesson for the Day
19. Closing Songs and Tehillim
20. Closing Prayer
21. Blowing of the Shofar

Order of Service In Detail

1. Blowing of the Shofar - When all are assembled, the shofar is blown. All who possess a tallith and tefillin should don them at this time, then be seated.

2. Call to Worship - At the second blowing of the shofar, all stand for the opening prayer, which is led by the senior Zaqen or Chazzan of the community.

3. Opening Prayer - This is begun with, “Matovu oheleyka, Ya’aqov, mishkanoteyka, Yisrael...,” to which free prayer is added. It is said by the senior Zaqen or Chazzan.

4. Honoring of Zaqenym and Guests - A greeting and acknowledgement of the appointed Zaqenym of the community is given, and a brief opportunity for them to return the greeting and speak is provided. Guests and new members of the community are also introduced at this time. This is done by the senior Zaqen.

5. General Announcements - News of the community, notice of upcoming Moedym or services, and special requests or needs are announced. This is done by the senior Zaqen.

6. Songs and Worship - Congregational songs are sung and any special music or dance is performed at this time. These are led by the Chazzan.

7. Qiddush - The ceremonial fellowship meal of bread and wine is performed. In congregations where a full communal meal is also served, Qiddush can be delayed until after the entire service is

completed and the meal is begun. It is served by the Shamashym and led by the senior Zaqen.

8. Birkat Hamazon - The thanksgiving prayer commanded by Torah to be performed after meals is said after Qiddush and a meal. This is done by the Chazzan.

9. Preliminary Tehillym - The Hebrew word for Psalm is "Tehillah" and means praise. In ancient times, certain Tehillym were sung or chanted on specific days in the Beyth Hamiqdash and synagogues. For example: on Shabbath, Tehillah 92 was recited and is called Mizmor Shir L'yom Hashabbath - a song sung for the Shabbath Day. These traditional selections may be used or others selected for praises prior to the primary service of congregational prayers. They can be sung or chanted by the Chazzan, or read in unison by the entire congregation.

10. Half Qaddish - The Qaddish is a simple and exquisitely beautiful blessing to the Most High. It is very ancient and was used in the Beyth Hamiqdash during Yehoshua's time, as were other parts of our Order of Service. This blessing is generally used between or at the end of various portions of worship. It is recited standing and as a responsive by the Chazzan and the congregation.

11. Baraku, Sh'ma, and Amidah - This is the primary service of corporate prayer and must be held in greatest reverence. No interruptions may be allowed from its beginning to its end. Congregants stand and recite the responsive Baraku blessing, then shade their eyes with their right hand or the corner of their tallith and say the Sh'ma. Next comes the Amidah, or "Shemoneh Esreh." These were all performed in the Beyth Hamiqdash in Yehoshua's day, and He most assuredly said them Himself. He even called the Sh'ma "the greatest commandment." The prayers are led by the Chazzan and joined by the congregation.

12. Aleynu and Mourner's Qaddish - The Aleynu begins with "It is our duty...", and that is the theme of this declaration. Said subsequent to corporate prayer, it is an affirmation to one another and to the world of who we are as a people and where we stand before our

Creator and King. It is followed by the Mourner's Qaddish. These are recited by the Chazzan with a responsive by the congregation. However, if anyone in the community is in mourning for a relative or close friend, it is tradition that he lead the Qaddish instead of the Chazzan. This is done as an act of faith and trust in the Almighty during a time of great trial and sorrow.

13. Open Prayers of Request and Healing - Immediately following the Qaddish, the congregation is invited to gather and pray freely with personal requests and for healing. The Chazzan should begin, then invite all to join. If anyone present is in need of healing, the Zaqenym of the community should lay hands upon them at this time, and then the senior Zaqen or Chazzan may close the prayer.

14. Birkat Hachodesh - This is the blessing which is only said on the Shabbath prior to each rosh chodesh, announcing the predicted first day of the next month. It is used to remind the community of upcoming fasts and Moedym, and to give thanks to YHWH for His faithfulness. It is done by the Chazzan.

15. Reading of the Torah - Some or all of the weekly Torah parasha, is read aloud. In very small groups this is done by either the Chazzan or a designated reader. In larger congregations, the readings are split into seven segments, or aliyoth. The reader notifies each of the seven community members to be honored with an aliyah that they will be called up to read during the service. First, the blessing over the reading of the Torah is said. Then, each aliyah is called in turn. As they read aloud, the Chazzan or reader remains beside them to guide them through the passage, or to assist them should they need help. Finally, at the end of all seven segments, the closing blessing over the Torah is said.

16. Reading of the Haftarah - This is the portion from the prophets which corresponds to the weekly Torah parasha. It is considered high honor to be chosen to read it. Like the Torah reading, it has an opening and closing blessing, and the person granted this aliyah is guided by the Chazzan or designated reader.

17. Reading of the Ketuvym Hatalmidym - This is also known as the Writings of the Apostles. Unlike the Torah and Haftarah portions, there is no universally accepted series of weekly readings from these Scriptures. Passages should be chosen which correspond to the week's Torah parasha or to the lesson planned for the day. The aliyah for the Ketuvym Hatalmidym is performed in the same way as that of the Haftarah.

18. The Lesson for the Day - Traditionally, the lesson is taught on subjects from the weekly Torah parasha, or about an upcoming fast or Moed. Usually, it is the community senior Zaqen who teaches the lesson. However, in some congregations, another person is appointed by the Zaqenym as the designated teacher because of his superior scholarship and ability. Occasionally, a special lesson may be brought for some reason, or a special guest teacher may be invited to teach on a specific subject. Whatever the case may be, during the lesson, the teacher should teach and the congregation should learn. Excessive questions and discussion should be discouraged until the lesson is over. Order and respect must be maintained in the Beyth Elohyim.

19. Closing Songs and Tehillym - The congregation stands, and one or two songs or Tehillym of hope and promise, such as "Adon Olam," are sung in fellowship, led by the Chazzan.

20. Closing Prayer - The senior Zaqen of the community or the Chazzan leads a prayer and benediction.

21. Blowing of the Shofar - This signifies the conclusion of the Order of Service. Until this signal is given, no one should begin to pack up or otherwise disrupt the proceedings.

This Order of Service that Qehilath Haderek utilizes is a simple one, grounded in the methods used by those in ancient Judaism and in Scripture. It is, to the best of our knowledge, quite similar to the style of service that was used at synagogue by our Messiah and His contemporaries. Each element was carefully chosen and placed in its order for beneficial and Scripturally-determined reasons, and many even reflect the prayers and order that were used in the Beyth Hamiqdash of YHWH.

We understand that at times the order of service must be somewhat flexible in order to accommodate certain time constraints, guest speakers, fasts or special celebrations. This is permitted, with approval of the community Zaqenym, but deviation from the established order should never become the norm. Unity and continuity both within and between communities of Qehilath Haderek must be maintained. We also understand and expect there will be some stylistic differences between the various Qehiloth in the way that services are performed, and to some degree this is even encouraged. However, the basic structure and flow of services must be kept intact and not compromised. This is the only order of service approved for use by our communities, and it is uniquely ours. We hope that it will benefit you, our brothers and sisters in faith, and bring all of us just a little bit closer in unity as a people called out in His name.

We, the lawfully appointed Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek do unanimously approve and affirm this authorized Order of Service, which shall henceforth be used by all communities and members of Qehilath Haderek. Enacted by the Beyth Dyn, this day of 1 Aviv, 5774.

Yochanan ben Yisrael

Dayan

Oradyah ben Yisrael

Dayan

And you shall enlighten them concerning the laws and
the Torot, and show them The Way in which they
should walk and the work which they should do.

Yithro ben Reuel

Beyth Dyn



Qehilath Haderek Beyth Dyn

The Beyth Dyn is the official judicial body and court of all communities of Qehilath Haderek. Each community shall have its own local Beyth Dyn, which is responsible for: appointment and removal of leadership, decisions on minor matters of doctrine and halakha, for dispute resolution between community members, and for the prosecution of criminal matters. These local Batey Dyn are composed of three Dayanym (judges), with one of them being designated Roshey Beyth Dyn. The Roshey Beyth Dyn is the chief or “head” of the court, and it is he who chairs it. The Dayanym shall also be Zaqenym of the community, its wisest and most knowledgeable Torah observant members. The Roshey Beyth Dyn is also the administrator of the community. This is possible because there is no absolute separation of powers in a scripturally-structured community, and some overlap of duties is permitted or even expected.

There is also a Beyth Dyn Hagadol, which is known as the Beyth Dyn Qehilath Haderek, and supersedes all local Batey Dyn. This greater Beyth Dyn sets major policy, doctrine, and halakha for all of Qehilath Haderek and supports local Batey Dyn by resolving problems and disputes which they, for whatever reason, are unable to resolve themselves.

Appointment of Leadership

The leadership of each community is appointed in a formal public meeting held solely for that purpose. This is done with the entire Beyth Dyn present and seated, unless for some reason any of them refuses to do so. Nominations for Roshey Beyth Dyn are made by any full community member and recorded by the Dayanym. A non-

binding vote is then taken by the raising of hands of each member. By this, the Dayanym shall know the will of the community, but are not bound by the vote. Once all nominations have been made and the vote complete, the Dayanym shall retire briefly to discuss them. When they come to their decision, the proceeding is reconvened and the final decision announced. The appointment takes effect immediately. The new Roshey Beyth Dyn then announces his nominations for Shamashym. If possible, one Shamash should be appointed in every general area that members reside, or else one for every ten community members in the Qehilah, whichever seems to work best. The Zaqenym have authority to reject any nominee made without giving reason, if they can do so by a majority vote. If this happens, the Roshey Beyth Dyn shall nominate an alternative for that position. A second adjournment for deliberation is made by the Dayanym then, and when a majority of them agree, the Beyth Dyn is reconvened once more and the new Shamashym are publicly confirmed. The selection of the Zaqenym is somewhat different. They are chosen from the community by the Beyth Dyn itself, often in a closed session. Announcement of new Zaqenym is then made to the entire community, and takes effect immediately.

A Roshey Beyth Dyn can be appointed for any length of time. Some communities appoint a new Roshey Beyth Dyn every year, and others appoint them for an indefinite term. Shamashym are usually appointed annually, and then reconfirmed each year or replaced, as necessary. The Zaqenym generally serve for life, unless they leave the community for any reason. Communities of ten or more members usually have two Zaqenym, and another is added for every additional ten members thereafter, as desired or necessary.

Doctrine and Halakha

Minor matters of doctrine and halakha are decided by the Beyth Dyn in a closed session, and then are announced publicly to the community at-large as soon as is convenient. These are usually matters of interpreting Torah law or community tradition, or are operations of the community that are not clearly defined in either Scripture itself or in the Qehilath Haderek Statement of Beliefs or Community Rules. Most of the time, such issues should end with the

Beyth Dyn refraining from ruling on them at all, or possibly just with the court giving a non-binding opinion. Excessive and overly detailed rulings on doctrine and tradition often bring unnecessary division to a community. However, sometimes such rulings can be a benefit and actually bring a community closer together. It is left to the wisdom of each community's Zaqenym to decide in such matters what course is best. Major matters of doctrine, halakha and tradition, such as those already delineated in Scripture or in Qehilath Haderek's own Belief Statement and Community Rules, may not be altered by any local community Batey Dyn.

Dyn Torah

A Dyn Torah is any proceeding under Torah law that is held by the Beyth Dyn, and is the preferred scriptural substitute for going to a secular court. Qehilath Haderek Community Rules do not allow one to be a plaintiff in a matter between members in a secular court without obtaining permission from the community Beyth Dyn. In a Dyn Torah, people who have a dispute present their cases before a panel of two or three judges, the Dayanym and the Roshey Beyth Dyn of the community. At the conclusion of the proceedings, these judges issue a decision which is binding on the parties as a matter of scriptural law.

In some cases, people with a dispute may attempt mediation. Under Qehilath Haderek rules, members are not obligated to mediate, and can insist on a Dyn Torah. Mediation occurs when the two sides having a dispute bring in a third party, called the mediator, to help them come to a resolution that everyone can agree to. It is not necessarily important in mediation who is right in the dispute, but what resolution everyone can accept. In mediation, the mediator cannot force anyone to accept a resolution. Thus mediation is often more friendly than a Dyn Torah, because both parties are working to find a resolution they can live with, while in a Dyn Torah each side is defending their own position and the conclusion of the dispute will likely be a matter of strict Torah law.

Scriptural law often takes the local law into account. For example, Scriptural law often mirrors common business practice, which in the

United States is often a product of American law. If someone enters into a contract that is binding according to American law, then they are generally bound by scriptural law as well, because the business community considers such contracts binding. Also, there is a principle in scriptural law called “*Dina L’malchutha dina*,” - literally, “the law of the government is the law.” The exact parameters are somewhat complex, but this means that scriptural law recognizes many secular laws. Bankruptcy laws are often an excellent example.

Types of Complaints

The two major types of complaints which can be brought before the Beyth Dyn are those of a moral/criminal nature, and claims of a civil/financial nature. Moral and criminal complaints are accusations of sin or other wrongdoing under Torah law that have been witnessed by two or more qualified community members who are seeking some punishment or sanction against the individual who committed them. Civil/financial claims are generally those of a contractual nature which is in dispute, and are brought by someone who is seeking substantial or monetary redress.

In either type claim, courts will make decisions based on what each party is obligated, as a matter of law, to do. It is important to understand that sometimes a person may have done something that hurts a claimant, but they are not necessarily liable to any form of sanction or punishment, or to pay damages to a claimant, or to otherwise make any specific amends. In other words, as a matter of law they were not obligated to any punishment or to perform any act. For example, an employer may fire a person who has been working for that employer for many years because the person stopped doing his or her job correctly. Even though the person may very well be hurt, the employer may not be liable to pay damages to that employee, because an employer is not contractually obligated to continue to employ someone who is not doing his or her job as they should. Likewise, a person may have grievously insulted another community member (heaven forbid), but has caused them no tangible physical harm that a Beyth Dyn can legitimately punish. If the victim of that insult has not suffered demonstrable damage as a result of the insults,

the court might not be able to do anything more than reprimand the offender.

Finally, courts require proof. If a person making a complaint or claim is not able to prove their case to the satisfaction of the judges, then the defendant will prevail. The nuances of what constitutes proof are quite complicated, and it is important to know that it is not sufficient that the person making a complaint knows that he or she is right, but that the judges need to be convinced of that fact.

Presenting a Case before the Beyth Dyn

Parties with a dispute may end up before a Beyth Dyn either: (1) because they previously agreed in a contract to bring their disputes before a Beyth Dyn, (2) because they are in agreement now to have a Beyth Dyn decide their dispute, (3) because they have chosen that Beyth Dyn through the hazmana (summons) process, or (4) because they have been charged with committing some immoral or criminal act.

When two or more people enter into any contract, they may include a provision which states that disputes arising out of the contractual relationship between the parties be resolved by an arbitration panel agreed upon by the parties. If a dispute relating to the contract arises, each party is then obligated, as a matter of contract law, to appear before the designated arbitration panel. Alternatively, parties to a dispute may agree together that they will appear before a Beyth Dyn to resolve their dispute.

An individual with a dispute against someone may also choose to summon the defendant to a Dyn Torah through the hazmana process. If someone wants to bring a case to the Qehilath Haderek court, the person can request the Beyth Dyn to send a summons, called a hazmana, to inform the person being summoned. A hazmana (literally “invitation”) is not the equivalent of a summons in the secular courts of the United States. Claims do not have to be fully fleshed out, and someone receiving the summons is not expected to answer with any defense, but rather a response of intent to attend or arrange a Dyn Torah hearing. The Beyth Dyn is not ruling on the substance of the

case during this stage. The Beyth Dyn only needs to be convinced that the case would be one that might theoretically have merit, and it will not reject the case even if the recipient of the hazmana responds with an excellent defense.

The Beyth Dyn generally sends three summonses - hazmanoth - prior to issuing a contempt decree. The court does so to make clear that the person being summoned is refusing to come, and is not merely negligent. Someone receiving a hazmana is required to respond and should not wait for additional hazmanoth.

Qehilath Haderek Beyth Dyn Rules forbid the defendant to refuse to respond to a hazmana. It is a violation of Torah, similar to eating scripturally non-kosher food or violating other scriptural laws. If necessary, after three hazmanoth have been issued and ignored, the Beyth Dyn can hold a Dyn Torah in the absence of the person who was summoned. The Beyth Dyn would then consider the evidence that the complainant brings and would issue a ruling based upon that evidence alone.

The summoning Beyth Dyn can also issue a “heter arkaos,” which grants permission to a complainant to go directly to a secular court, so that the defendant cannot simply avoid any hearing at all.

A summoning Beyth Dyn may issue a “seruv,” or contempt order. A seruv is simply a public declaration by a Beyth Dyn that someone was summoned to a Dyn Torah but refused to meet their obligation under scriptural law to appear in front of the Beyth Dyn. As a result of a seruv, Qehilath Haderek communities may sometimes impose sanctions on such people, such as refraining from social or business interaction, in order to put pressure on the person to meet their obligation of attending a Dyn Torah. The Beyth Dyn is not necessarily involved at that point – the community through its leadership decides what measures are appropriate.

In a moral or criminal proceeding, it is accepted halakha that, if possible, a potential complainant should first approach the one who has committed the forbidden act and try to persuade him or her to quietly repent and cease the offensive action on their own, and to

make any required restitution or amends necessary. If this attempt fails or is not possible, the person should take a witness who is a member of Qehilath Haderek, yet not a friend or an interested party, and again attempt the same. Should this second attempt also fail or not be possible, the person can bring charges against the offender, if he or she must, before the Beyth Dyn of the community. Potential complainants should always remain cognizant that success with such charges against any community member requires two or more competent and upstanding witnesses to convict; and that failing in a conviction (or heaven forbid a finding of a false accusation) against any community member, the Beyth Dyn will automatically bring the punishment sought in the case back upon the head of the accuser.

The Hearing

When a Dyn Torah is called to order, both parties to the suit must stand for the seating of the judges and remain standing as the charges are read, after which they may be seated. Usually, the hearing begins with some procedural matters. The Dayanim will explain the nature of the case and the rules which will be observed during the hearing.

The judges should not have preconceptions about the case coming into the hearing, so they are generally told only the basic outline of the case in advance. Because of this, each side should expect to present the full story of the dispute at the hearing. Usually, the complainant presents his or her claims first. The complainant explains what happened and tells their own perspective of the dispute. After the complainant finishes this presentation, the defendant then presents his or her own version of the dispute. It is always best for all parties to be as organized as possible. The complainant should make sure to explain exactly what is being sought as an outcome from the proceedings, often in the form of some certain punishment or in a precise amount of dollars and cents, and why the defendant, in particular, is obligated or at fault. The complainant should make sure to present all relevant evidence. Similarly, the defendant should present all of their own evidence and counter each argument of the complainant in an organized way. The judges may, and probably will, interrupt at any time to ask questions and seek clarification from both parties.

In the interest of maintaining decorum during the proceedings, it is appropriate for each side to remain silent during the other side's presentation. Any questions or counter-arguments should be quietly noted, and then responses may be presented during a party's subsequent turn to speak. Repeated interruptions by any party during of the Dyn Torah can result in a finding of contempt of court against them.

The parties take turns presenting, going back and forth until both sides have fully presented and fleshed out their views of the dispute. Sometimes the judges cut a presentation short when the presenter is repeating himself, possibly inadvertently, or when the presentation is not relevant to the dispute that the court is judging. The judges will always try to err on the side of caution, allowing each side to speak a bit longer than necessary, so that no one is accidentally prevented from fully presenting their position and evidence.

If either side realizes that some evidence is relevant but unavailable at the hearing, they can request a temporary adjournment in order to submit it later. Often, one side or the other realizes during the proceeding that there is something they did not think to bring that is necessary to prove their case. While the Beyth Dyn is not required to grant an adjournment, and a Dyn Torah should be concluded in one hearing, this is sometimes permitted. Evidence has to be shared with everyone – the judges, and the opposition. Therefore, if the evidence is written, the judges and the other side should receive a copy, so each side should provide and send three copies of anything important – one for themselves, one to the opposition, and one to the judges. When submitting evidence during a hearing, the same rule applies.

Witnesses

When appearing before a Beyth Dyn, just as with any court, it is essential to bring complete and acceptable testimony to bolster one's claims. According to Qehilath Haderek rules, witnesses are required to be confirmed adult members of the community who have no stake in the outcome of the Dyn Torah. Two or three witnesses are required to establish any matter. One witness can only be used to force a

defendant to swear that he or she is or is not guilty. As such, testimony by relatives and friends would not normally count as qualified or acceptable testimony under scriptural law. However, Qehilath Haderek recognizes that in many circumstances testimony will only be available from witnesses who do not meet the above criteria, and will therefore occasionally accept testimony from other people, at least regarding financial claims. Please note that testimony from interested parties such as relatives and friends is always taken with a grain of salt, even if they are allowed to testify. The Beyth Dyn nevertheless sometimes allows interested parties to testify because their testimony can simply help to clarify a case.

Witnesses do not attend the proceedings except during their testimony. This way, they can provide independent corroboration of statements made during the proceedings. The Beyth Dyn does have the authority to subpoena witnesses, if necessary.

Calling a witness in the Dyn Torah is somewhat different than in a secular court. Scriptural law does not view a party to the dispute as a witness, although the parties generally must present their story themselves and do not have a choice of whether or not to testify. The opposing side does not have a specific right to cross-examine either the testifying party or a witness. The Beyth Dyn panel has a right to ask questions of the parties and witnesses. The Beyth Dyn sometimes does allow the opposing side to ask questions directly of a witness, but usually does not allow one side to pose questions directly to the other side. If one side wants the Beyth Dyn panel to ask a specific question to the other side, they make that request to the panel, and the panel decides whether to ask. Unlike in secular court, witnesses are not sworn in, although they are instructed by the court and are obligated under scriptural law to tell the truth.

The Psak/Scriptural Decision

Scriptural law does not require that the Dayanym explain the reasoning they employ in making decisions in a Dyn Torah, except in criminal cases. Unless specified otherwise, a decision is final and takes effect immediately. Scriptural law does not have an appeal system like secular courts. However, the Qehilath Haderek Beyth Dyn

does allow “requests for modification” as part of its rules in the interest of equity and mercy. Decisions can only be modified if the judge reviewing the case finds a clear mistake in the original decision, or if mercy can be permitted under scriptural law and the Community Rules of Qehilath Haderek. A modification cannot, however, result from the reviewing judge's own subsequent and arbitrary interpretation of the evidence or testimonies, nor can any modification be made by any judge of another Qehilath Haderek community, or by anyone else who was not seated as a judge at the original Dyn Torah.

Any requests for modification or other issues that members of various communities wish to be brought before the Beyth Dyn Qehilath Haderek on major matters of Torah law, halakha, or the Community Rules, must be submitted in writing by the community Zaqenym to Qehilath Haderek at: PO Box 363 Athens, Texas 75751.

We, the lawfully appointed Dayanym of Qehilath Haderek do unanimously approve and affirm the foregoing to be the only authorized order for all Batey Dyn in its various communities; and it shall henceforth be binding upon all of its members. Enacted by the Beyth Dyn Qehilath Haderek, this day of 28 Adar 5776.

Yochanan ben Yisrael
Dayan

Oradyah ben Yisrael
Dayan

I am The Way, and The Truth, and The Life. No one
comes to the Father except through me.

Yehoshua Hamashiach

Brakoth for Immersions



Brakoth for Immersion of Conversion or Dedication

With the first immersion for conversion or dedication, say:

Baruk atah YHWH Eloheynu, Melek haolam, asher q'dshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al t'vilath hageir l'ka, b'shem Yehoshua Hamashiach bn'ka.

(or:)

Blessed art Thou, YHWH our Mighty One, King of the universe, who sets us apart in His commandments, and commands us to immerse the stranger to Thee, in the name of Yehoshua Hamashiach Thy son.

With the second immersion, say:

Eloheynu, velohey avoteynu, qayeim et-haben hazeh l'malkuteyka, v'yikarey sh'mo b'yisrael _____ ben _____.

(or:)

Our Elohyim, and Elohyim of our fathers, preserve this son to Thy kingdom, and let his name be known in Yisrael _____ son of _____.

With the third immersion, say:

Baruk atah YHWH Eloheynu, Melek haolam, shehecheyanu v'qiymanu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

(or:)

Blessed art Thou, YHWH our Mighty One, King of the Universe, who has kept us in life and preserved us, and has enabled us to reach this season.



Brakoth for Immersion of Purification

With the first immersion for purification, say:

Baruk atah YHWH Eloheynu, Melek haolam, asher q'dshanu
b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al t'vilath l'vaneyka.

(or:)

Blessed art Thou, YHWH our Mighty One, King of the universe, who
has set us apart by Thy commandments and has commanded us
concerning the immersion of Thy children.

With the second immersion, say:

R'pha'ayny YHWH v'eiraphei! Hoshiyayny v'ivvashe'ah! Ki
t'hilatiy atah! Baruk atah YHWH, rophei u'moshiei ne'eman
v'rachaman l'yisrael.

(or:)

Heal me YHWH, and I am healed! Save me, and I am saved! For
Thou art my praise! Blessed art Thou YHWH, Healer and Savior
who is faithful and merciful to Yisrael.

With the third immersion, say:

Baruk atah YHWH Eloheynu, Melek haolam, shehecheyanu
v'qiymanu , v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

(or:)

Blessed art Thou YHWH, our Mighty One, King of the universe, who
has kept us in life and preserved us, and has enabled us to reach this
season.

Glossary of Terms

Aviv – green ears

Beyth Dyn – House of Judgment

Batey Dyn – plural of Beyth Dyn

Brakoth - blessings

Birkat Hamazon – Grace after meals

Chazzan – Worship leader

Dayan / Dayanym – Judge / Judges

Dyn – Scriptural law. Better translated as “judgment.”

Dyn Torah – Judgement of law - a court proceeding.

Diney Torah - plural of Dyn Torah

Halakha – method of walking out the commandments

Hazmana / Hazmanoth – summons / plural of hazmana

Kethuvym Hatalmidym – Writings of the Disciples

Kinyan – an action that makes a transaction take effect, somewhat like signing a contract makes the contract take effect. One type of kinyan is a Kinyan Sudar.

Kinyan Sudar –a kinyan made by accepting an object of at least some minimal value, such as a pen or handkerchief, as a symbolic agreement to be bound in a transaction. For example, parties usually are handed a handkerchief or a pen at the beginning of the Dyn Torah, which they then raise to demonstrate acceptance of the jurisdiction of the Beyth Dyn.

Kohanym – Priests

Kohen Hagadol –High Priest

Lashon Hara – Evil speech

Machzorym – Festival Prayer Books

Melek Hamelekym – King of kings

Miqra Qodesh – Set-apart gathering

Mitzrayim – Egypt

Moedym – Appointed times

Navi / Naviym – prophet / prophets

Nitvah – respondent / defendant

Q'doshym – set-apart ones

Rechilut – Gossip

Rosh Chodesh / Rosh Chodeshym – new month or moon / plural
of rosh chodesh

Roshey Beyth Dyn - chief judge

Ruach Haqodesh – set-apart Spirit

Selichoth – Prayers of Repentance

Shamash / Shamashym–servant or overseer / plural of Shamash

Shekanyah – Divine presence of YHWH

Shemittah – 7th year Sabbath

Shliach / Shliachym – apostle or sent ones / plural of apostle or
sent ones

Talmid / Talmidym - Disciple or student / plural of Talmid

Toveah – claimant / plaintiff

Tzedekah – required charity

Ya'akov – Jacob

Yitzchaq – Isaac

Zaqen / Zaqenym – elder of the community / plural of Zaqen

Notes:

Qehilath Haderek Chay!

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