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## QH 1.2 WHO YOU MIGHT BE

The Qehilath Haderek Statement of Beliefs, Community Rules and Order of Service are the foundational community documents of Qehilath Haderek – The Fellowship of The Way. Along with the Scriptures, they provide the common framework necessary for the proper and uniform functioning of its communities, as well as a standard of minimums for the lives and behavior of its members on a day-to-day basis. They also serve a further purpose, in that they describe rather well what a member of one of its communities should look like. If you find you could fit that description and abide by the standards set out in these documents, a member of Qehilath Haderek might be who you are.

However, Qehilath Haderek is not just those documents and what is in them. While they are a necessary component of the daily life and scriptural structure of its communities, the essence of Qehilath Haderek itself is an idea. This idea is one always held in common by its members, going back through the time of the apostles of Yehoshua, through Moshe and Avraham, even to the beginning of the Word itself – that we should fear YHWH and walk in His Ways, doing the very best we are able to live righteously and keep His commandments, turning neither to the right or to the left, and that we should do so both individually and together as a people. In truth, we sincerely believe this is and always has been the way that YHWH intends for us to show our love for Him and for our fellow man. If you also share this idea, then a member of Qehilath Haderek might be who you are.

Yet even these things do not adequately describe the sum-total of what Qehilath Haderek is, or the fullness of that idea its members embrace. Listen to this:

We have described The Word and The Way of YHWH as being progressively revealed throughout the ages. Avraham *avinu*<sup>1</sup> began to walk in The Way, keeping all of the commands of YHWH that were given to him in his day. Then Moshe came and delivered the entirety of the written Torah, expanding upon that which had previously been given to the Patriarchs. He and the children of Yisrael walked in The Way, more or less, as best as they were able, in their own time. Next came the age of the Prophets, when even greater revelations were given regarding The Word of YHWH and what He expects of those who belong to Him and would serve Him. This enhanced revelation was met with even greater successes and even worse failures than had been previously experienced. The Way and those who walk in it were being ever more clearly exposed and defined. Then came Yehoshua Hamashiach, and that revelation finally unfolded to its absolute fullest.

You have heard it said that the law was finished and done away with, made moot by its completion in Yehoshua, when he said: *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to complete.”* But, the Greek word translated as “complete” in this passage is *pleros*, and does not mean to bring to an end or terminus. It means to fill up, to make replete, to perfect. Continuing on, he said: *“For amein, I say to you, till the heaven and the earth pass away, one yod or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done. Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches men so, shall be called the*

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<sup>1</sup> Our father

*least in the Kingdom of the Heavens; but whoever does and teaches them shall be called great in the Kingdom of the Heavens.”*

Quite obviously, Yehoshua, in no wise intended that the Torah be considered outdated or obsolete, but rather that it be even more firmly established. So, what are we to make of that word *pleros*? Simply put, it means that Yehoshua came and completed that progressive revelation of The Word of YHWH and The Way that had begun at creation. He brought these to their fullness and made them perfect. They are finished. In his person and in his teachings, along with the written Scriptures, we now have the whole expressed will of YHWH laid out plainly for us. Yehoshua then threw down the gauntlet before all who would follow after him. He drew a line in the sand and dared us to cross it. He said: *“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Soferym and the Prushym, you shall by no means enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens.”*

Now, you have heard it said that the Scribes and the Pharisees were all evil and bad men, but this is not so. If they had been, then exceeding their righteousness would have been an easy thing for anyone to do, and this statement by Yehoshua would have been just a pointless exercise in *lashon hara*<sup>2</sup> against them. But, remember, Yoseph of Ramathym, who claimed Yehoshua’s dead body, was a council member and a righteous man. Gamliel and even Sha’ul of Tarsos were *Prushym*<sup>3</sup> and righteous men, blameless according to the letter of the law. To exceed the righteousness of such men as these is no mean feat, and certainly does not constitute a lowering of the bar of righteousness at all; nor is it an easing of the threshold standard for those who would enter the Kingdom of the Heavens, but is rather the raising of it. Indeed, immediately after those words of his, Yehoshua finished his ‘sermon on the mount’ by calling for a perfection of righteous behavior in his *talmidym*<sup>4</sup> which is only attained by taking an even higher path than keeping just the letter of the law. With this, he brought the revelation of YHWH up to its final and supreme state. In Yehoshua Hamashiach, The Way has been magnified and elevated to a higher level than ever before. It is now perfectly illuminated and perfectly defined for all time to those who would follow after him and walk in it. And they are his *Qedoshym*<sup>5</sup>, who do the will of YHWH in all of its revealed beauty. They keep, yet exceed, the simple letter of the law, by observing it also in spirit and in truth. And it is they alone who truly belong to him and will rise to meet him at his coming. That is the idea we share as a community, and it is also our goal and our hope. If it is yours, too, then a member of Qehilath Haderek might be who you are.

Not that any of us think we have already completely attained all of these lofty goals. We certainly have not. We, the whole assembly of Qehilath Haderek, still fall short of perfection and manage to commit sin, despite our best efforts at righteousness. We are human, and we err. But, a wise man once said, *“It is not thy duty to complete the work, yet neither art thou free to desist from it.”* Just because we still occasionally stumble and sin is no reason to deliberately continue in it. In fact, it is reason to strive even harder to perfect ourselves, if in our hearts we truly wish to please YHWH and to walk in His ways as obedient sons and daughters. Not in order to attain salvation through our own efforts, which is impossible to do and which has already been accomplished in Yehoshua Hamashiach, but because we love Him. Sha’ul of Tarsos compared this striving we do to running a race, when he said: *“Do you not know that those who run in a race indeed all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way as to obtain it. And everyone who competes controls himself in every way. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown. But we for an incorruptible crown.”*

Striving after righteousness for the sake of heaven is never an effort made in vain. Since the resurrection of Yehoshua and the coming of grace, it has become the striving itself even more than the attainment of the goal that is the most important thing. And it is the mark upon us of who we are and who we belong to that we never give up or quit trying to be what our Father in heaven wants us to be, despite our temporary setbacks and failures. In truth, it is our obligation to do so. We are the people who once swore, *“All that YHWH has said, we will do.”*

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<sup>2</sup> Profane speech – talking about someone either excellent or not. See Chafetz Chayim and/or the Book of Ya’akov (James).

<sup>3</sup> Pharisees.

<sup>4</sup> Disciples / Students.

<sup>5</sup> Set-apart ones.

And He said through *Shlomo hamelek*<sup>6</sup>, “Fear YHWH and keep His commandments, for that is the whole duty of man.”

So, we have banded together in our striving to run The Way of Righteousness according to that highest possible level and towards that lofty spiritual goal set by our beloved Messiah. And after failing to achieve that goal each day, we get up each morning in humility and love and dare to try again. If this describes the person whom you long to be and the kind of people who would be your brothers and sisters, a member of Qehilath Haderek might be who you are.

*Chaverym*<sup>7</sup>, what you have been reading in this series of articles and documents is not meant to be just a lesson about The Way or only a description of the community of faith called Qehilath Haderek, but also an invitation.

Not an invitation to everyone, because we know most people are comfortable right where they are and wish to remain so, despite whatever truth is revealed to them. And not an invitation to those who are afraid or unwilling to sacrifice so much of themselves and their world in order to move boldly towards becoming all that YHWH desires they should be. And not an invitation to anyone who sincerely disbelieves or disagrees with what they have read here. And definitely not an invitation to people who are lukewarm or half-steppers, those who will not whole-heartedly devote their lives to serving YHWH in fellowship with their brothers and sisters in community.

The invitation is to those of you who are willing to step out of your comfort zones when YHWH calls you, and when the *Ruach Haqodesh*<sup>8</sup> moves you to do so, despite what it costs or what others might say. It is to those of you who reply to His summons with, “*Here am I!*” when YHWH requires you to prove your faith in sacrifice, so that He can mold you into all you were meant to be. The invitation is to those of you who believe as we do and agree with what you have read in these pages, those whose hearts’ desire is to serve YHWH in love, and in a scripturally-structured community of others who are walking in The Way.

And, there are many of you, many more than you might expect. We know this, because for over a decade now you have been writing and telling us so. The chorus of your voices has reached such a crescendo that we can no longer refrain from writing about it and telling you so. Your beliefs, your practices, and even your hardships are not uncommon. You are not alone, and we think the time has come to do something about it. In fact, we believe YHWH is calling us to do so – through events and signs, and through His *Ruach Haqodesh* – and we cannot refuse Him.

So, if you are in agreement with us, then join us and the others of Qehilath Haderek. If you are in the free world, contact us and we will help you form and organize your community, if you have not already done so. If you are in prison, do the same, and change your records to reflect who you truly are. As with the communities of The Way in the first century, according to the book of *Ma’asei*<sup>9</sup>, we must communicate and coordinate our activities together in order to benefit one another and thrive. We must act as one body in Messiah, with love, unity, charity and words of encouragement, in order to grow. And we must do it in fellowship with those followers of Yehoshua Hamashiach who believe and live as we know is right to do - those of The Way. We are waiting to hear from you, *Achym*<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Solomon, The king.

<sup>7</sup> Friends.

<sup>8</sup> Set-apart Spirit – of YHWH.

<sup>9</sup> Acts

<sup>10</sup> Brothers.