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QH 1.4 POSTSCRIPT TO WHO YOU MIGHT BE

Qehilath Haderek, like its counterpart in the first century, is a form of Judaism, and is *not* any kind of Christianity. In fact, it is the original form of that religion, and not a sect as others are, just as Sha'ul of Tarsos proclaimed. As such, it includes within it many of the common practices and traditions of most normative first century Jewish congregations. Where it differs from those congregations, and from the congregations of modern Judaism, is in what it dis-cludes.

Qehilath Haderek does not accept the writings of the *Talmud*¹ or later rabbinical texts as authoritative or binding upon its members or communities, nor believe them to be inspired by the *Ruach Haqodesh*². Instead, we find our *Aggada* (our narrative), and derive our *Halakha* (our method of walking out the commands of YHWH) from the *Ketuvym Hatalmidym* – the Writings of the Apostles.

That said, we also do not throw out the baby with the bathwater. The *Talmud* and many other Jewish texts are excellent historical sources for many ancient Jewish customs and practices that have not been preserved anywhere else. In fact, some portions of them are absolutely indispensable in that regard. Also, many of its writers were amazingly wise and righteous men who deserve to be heard on those issues we have in common and that do not conflict with Scripture or our own doctrines and beliefs. They can teach us much. However, before even approaching these writings, one must be completely grounded in the Torah and *Ketuvym Hatalmidym*, not only in reading but also in practice, or one will easily become confused and led astray. In other words, such writings are potentially dangerous and are not for beginners in The Way. Those of our faith are always best served by sticking to the spiritually inspired texts of the *TaNaK*³ and *Ketuvym Hatalmidym*. The learning that comes from these alone is enough to last a lifetime.

In areas where there is no tradition or *halakha* recorded about the practices of communities of The Way, *Qehilath Haderek* sometimes borrows them from others who are similar to us. The standard we use to determine whether or not a tradition or *halakha* is permissible for our communities is how it compares to the Torah and the teachings of Messiah, and whether or not it is needed at all. If it passes all three of these checks, it may be admitted with confirmation of a lawful *Beith Din*⁴.

Beyond those issues which are set forth in our founding documents, which are inviolable, our communities are generally autonomous and left to make their own decisions and handle their own affairs. However, *Qehilath Haderek* does have a central council modeled after scriptural examples that may be used for: coordination between communities, the settling of disputes beyond the abilities of local *Beith Dinym*⁵, and for the setting of policy that affects the entire commonwealth of our communities. Each community has one member appointed by its local *Beith Din* as a delegate to the council, who serves as a voice and an ear for them in all matters of note.

And, finally, *Chaverym*⁶, let it be known that we of *Qehilath Haderek* are not so arrogant as to think we presently have all the answers, or that everything we do is unerringly correct. Any one person, group or congregation that tells you they do should be suspect and avoided. Through experience, we have learned that YHWH only gives to us that which we are capable of understanding and accepting at any given time, and that we must receive and act upon whatever new thing that might be before He will give us anything more. Even if it means we were previously wrong about something, we must be willing to admit that, then humble ourselves and change when He calls upon us to do so by showing us better things and greater truths. And we know that each time we do this, in obedience and in faith, He will give us greater grace, and we will increase in righteousness, causing the scales to fall from our eyes so that we can see what He brings to us next even more clearly. We know this because it has happened to us time and again as we have obediently followed after Him and lovingly submitted to Him over the years, in the faith that He will eventually lead us into all truth. We do not know it all yet, but He does – and so will we if we endure to the end, holding fast to the commands of YHWH and the testimony of Yehoshua Hamashiach, walking together in *The Way*.

YHWH Im'ka⁷,

¹ "Oral Torah"

² Set-apart Spirit – of Elohyim

³ Torah, Navi'ym (prophets), and Ketuvym (other writings; Psalms, Proverbs, etc.)

⁴ House of Judgment – court of law

⁵ Houses of Judgment

⁶ Friends

⁷ YHWH be with you