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...His appearing

Kingdom Mysteries **Retaining Sin**

by haRold Smith
a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

"And Yeshua said to them, To you has been given the secret of the Kingdom of YHVH, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that 'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven'." Mark 4:11-12 (quoting Isaiah 6:9-10)

"...and I assign to you, just as My Father assigned to me, a Kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in My Kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22:29-30

"Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Pharisees, Yeshua appeared and stood in their midst, and said to them, 'Shalom be with you.' When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Messiah. So Yeshua said to them again, 'Shalom to you! JUST AS the Father has sent Me, EVEN SO I am sending you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Breath of Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'" John 20:19-23

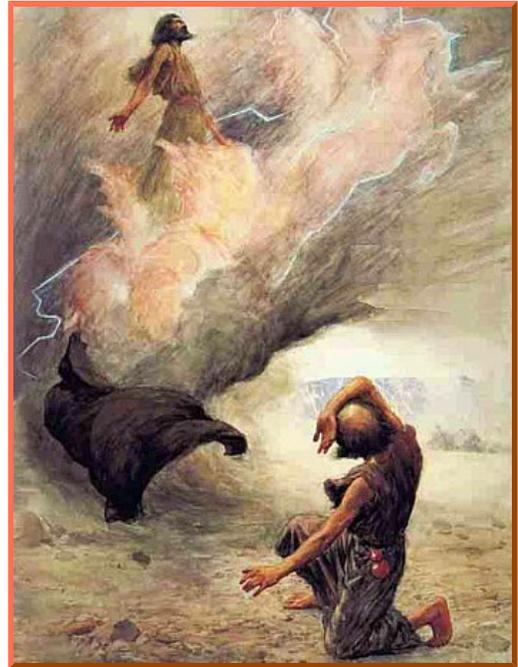
The article, [Just As-Even So](#) (click on highlighted words to view content), explored how those who embrace the Life of Yeshua become *echad* (Hebrew for "one/unity") with YHVH in the same manner as Yeshua. Now, we will look a bit deeper into just what that actually means. Since the words above were given to the followers of Yeshua, let us begin this article by examining what scripture has to say about terms for describing a follower of the Messiah. The most common terms used in the Messianic Writings (NT) are, "disciple(s)" and "believer(s)". The term "disciple(s)" is used approximately 250 times to describe those who trust in Yeshua. Yeshua uses the term 14 times to describe those who were following Him. The term "believer(s)" is used approximately 12 times - yet, Yeshua never uses the terms "believer" or "believers" in reference to his disciples. This is so because He knew how easy it would be for a person to simply say they "believe" in Him and, yet, not keep His Words. This is in stark contrast to the Hebraic perspective found in the *Tanakh* (OT) of those called "faithful" to keep His Words. So He used the term "disciple". A disciple is one who follows, embraces and imitates the behavior of his Master ([Matthew 10:24-25](#), [Luke 9:23](#), [Luke 14:27](#)).

Many have been taught to believe that simply conforming to the "Christian" religion fulfills this description of being a disciple; but the disciples of Yeshua never refer to themselves as "Christians." In fact, the term "Christian" is only used 3 times in the Messianic Writings (NT), each time presented in a negative light. While the word "Christian" was first given to Hebrew followers of Yeshua by the unbelieving gentile inhabitants at Antioch, it was as a derogatory remark used as a pun from the Hellenistic Greek *chrestos* (xrhsto/j) often meaning "good" or "moral" (thus, "goody-good") rather than christos. Consequently, we see in [1Peter 4:4](#) a preface to the final mention in 1Peter 4:16 that describes how to act when spoken of derogatorily. It was not embraced as a positive label until the second century when [Justin Martyr](#) adopted the word as a title of honor, thereby changing the meaning.. It is never used by Yeshua in reference to his followers - nor, as previously mentioned, is the term used (and thus not approved) amongst his followers. On this basis alone, we have arrived at what those who follow Yeshua should be known as - His "disciples," followers of the Way of Yeshua. The Greek transliteration behind the English term "disciple" is mathetes, and it simply means, "a learner" or "a pupil". The single occurrence of the Hebrew word, talmid, is found in [1Chronicles 25:8](#) where it is translated as the English "scholar"; however, Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon defines it as "a disciple, one taught." The root of *talmid* is found in lamad, meaning "to learn, teach, to exercise in" and *lamad* is used a total of 86 times in the *Tanakh* (OT). In [Isaiah 8:16](#), Isaiah uses a *lamad* derivative, limmuwd, describing "my disciples";

in [Isaiah 50:4](#) as a relationship characterized by an educational process accentuating speaking and listening and again in [Isaiah 54:13](#) to specify the "disciples" of YHVH - indicating that *limmuwd* could be disciples of both YHVH and a human master at the same time. While not specifically labeled as such, the most eloquent illustration of a rabbi and *talmid* relationship is found in the interaction between Elijah and Elisha.

"And it came to pass, when YHVH would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray you; for YHVH has sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As YHVH lives, and as your soul lives, *I will not leave you* ."
2Kings 2:1-2

1st and 2nd Kings interweaves two themes. It continues the history of the breakdown of the Davidic Kingdom after its division in [1Kings 12](#) into the northern Kingdom of Israel (ten tribes) and the southern Kingdom of Judah (two tribes). It records their history up to the Assyrian captivity of Israel ([2Kings 17](#)) and the later Babylonian captivity of Judah ([2Kings 24](#)). Entwined throughout the first ten chapters set in the Northern Kingdom, we find the story of the final works of the Prophet Elijah, his translation to the throne of YHVH and the many miracles of his **disciple**, Elisha, after he had received **the mantle of his master**. Their relationship is a classic Hebrew depiction of a **rabbi and his talmid**. It begins when Elijah chooses Elisha as his disciple by casting his "mantle" upon him ([1Kings 19:19](#)). Elisha's devotion to his master is strongly emphasized in the triple repetition of his vow, "As YHVH lives, and as your soul lives, *I will not leave you*" ([2Kings 2:2-6](#)) - this is the commitment of a follower. The blessing that Elisha craved in asking for a double portion of the spirit of his master when Elijah was about to be taken from him ([2Kings 2:9](#)) was not to be twice as great - **but to have the portion of the first-born son**. In a Hebrew family, the first-born son inherited a double portion of his father's property, twice as much as each of the other sons. Elisha asked to have the prophetic office and with it the power of YHVH's Spirit to enable him to fulfill it. In this last scene we sometimes almost have to wonder whether we are in the Old Testament or the New. We have an elevated master, a waiting disciple and a subsequent delivery of power ([Acts 1:8](#)). The Hebrew apostle *Sha'ul* (Paul) in his letters to both Timothy and Titus, addressing them both as "my own son" ([1Timothy 1:2](#), [Titus 1:4](#)), exemplifies the Hebrew perspective of the relationship of the disciple as the "son" of his teacher. The same thing is seen when Elisha cried, "My father, my father!" as he watched Elijah depart ([2Kings 2:12](#)). As he left, Elijah's mantle literally fell to Elisha who then carried on his master's prophetic ministry and did even greater miracles - thus the reference for Yeshua's comment of [John 14:12](#).

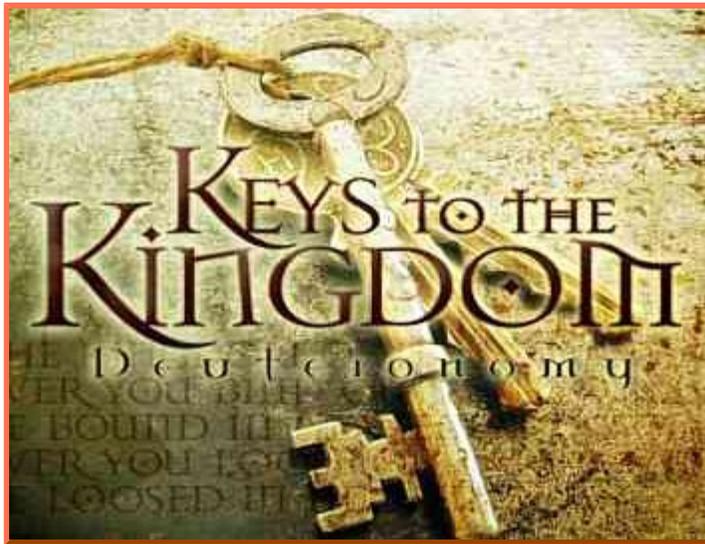


...the passing of the mantle

The idea of **following**, therefore, defines the Hebrew Master/Disciple relationship. In keeping with this Hebrew perspective, Yeshua is addressed as a Hebrew *rhabbi* (translated as the English "rabbi" or "master") approximately 15 times in the Messianic Writings. Yeshua typically called his disciples by saying "Follow me." Therefore, remembering that the Hebrew *mashiach* (which in English became Messiah) means "anointed" and looking beyond the arcane use of *christianos*, derived from the Greek word *christos* (Eng. "Christ") which also means "anointed"; we can see in [1Peter 4:16](#) a deeper understanding of what bearing the mantle of the Anointed One means - the followers of the Anointed One become *anointed ones* in their own right. When Yeshua appeared in that room with His disciples, the first thing He said to those present was that **just as** His Father had sent Him, *even so* was He sending them - *with the power to remit and retain sin*. Remember that what had so incited the Pharisees was Yeshua's ability to "forgive sin" - something they traditionally believed only the Father was able to do. Yet here, Yeshua was saying that He was granting His disciples the *same authority* He had been given by His Father ([Matthew 28:18](#)). Just as with Elijah and Elisha, He was passing His mantle to His followers, His disciples - those who followed Him in their behavior. So, then, we have to ask ourselves, what does it mean to "remit" and "retain" sin? Most confuse what Yeshua is saying here by likening it to what He said in [Matthew 6:14-15](#) - but, in that passage, He speaks only of what the Father will do as a result of *how we behave toward others*. In John 20, there is no mention of what the Father does - only what authority has been given the followers of Yeshua to enact. And what authority is that?

In **John 20:23**, the Greek word translated as the English "remit" is **aphiemi**, which has as its primary definition "to send away" (the same Greek word used in **Matthew 9:5** to describe what Yeshua said it means to forgive sin). The Greek word translated as the English "retain" in that verse is **krateo** whose primary meaning is "to take possession of". When you retain something, when you take possession of something - what does that mean? It means *you own it*. The Father doesn't keep it - He is nowhere to be found in this directive. The followers of Yeshua take possession of it. If the disciples of Yeshua are sent in the same manner as the Master, the question arises - how did Yeshua deal with sin? In **1John 3:5** we are told that He took sin upon Himself and **Hebrews 9:26** says He "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself". **Romans 6:23** and **1Corinthians 6:20** both tell us there is a price to be paid for sin. Yeshua **paid that price** for all who would embrace the **Words of His Father**. There is no record in the eyewitness accounts of any disciple being healed or delivered - those miracles were used as incentive to prod one truly seeking Truth to become a follower of *haMashiach* (the Messiah of Israel), a **Gatekeeper** of His Kingdom. The Power granted a follower of Yeshua is surrounded by a hedge of **selflessness**. When we seek to **preserve our life** in some manner, we are seeking to **consume** that Power on ourselves - the antithesis of what His Life exemplified. Yeshua tells us in **Luke 17:20-21** that the Kingdom of YHVH is within or among those embracing His example of Life. It was from the **virtue cultivated** in His manner of life that caused His Light to become so pure, so brilliant that He was able to absorb the sin of those He healed - as **Light** consumes darkness. Yeshua's disciples are sent in the same manner as He was - to take upon themselves the sin of those they encounter that healing might occur with the recipient of that healing beginning to follow Yeshua in their own right as a result. In **Isaiah 53:5** and **1Peter 2:24** it is revealed how healing occurs - because He bore our sin in His Body. Who comprises **His Body**? Is it not His disciples who bear the mantle of "anointed"? If His disciples are sent just as He has been sent, then, do they not have the same authority that He was sent with? How does all of this actually work?

My first encounter with this puzzlement occurred upon my arrival in Israel where I was confronted with a young woman who, like me, had volunteered to work for a non-profit Israeli organization. She had been involved in a traffic accident and, as a result, her back was causing her severe pain. I had just recently been exposed to the truth of John 20:23; so, as I laid my hands on her back while asking the Father for her healing, I had an innate **knowing** that her pain was being transferred from her to me - I was taking possession of it and her pain immediately subsided. The next day, however, I could not get out of bed because of an excruciating pain in my back. After a couple of days and a lot of over the counter pain killers, I was able to resume my activities in the office of the organization. Thereupon, I was confronted with another young lady who was obviously very sick with the flu. Once again in my naiveté, I laid hands on her, taking her sickness and she was immediately healed with all her symptoms disappearing. The next day, I awoke violently sick. I began to seek the Father for wisdom because, at this point, it was apparent that something wasn't right. When Yeshua healed and delivered, there is no record of His becoming disabled as a result of that healing. So, I backed off of laying hands on people until Spirit gave more **understanding**. And He did! Recalling His previous words to me, "*you can't give what you don't live,*" He made me aware that my light was just not yet bright enough to absorb that amount of darkness. By not ever being disobedient to His Father's Words (**John 5:19, John 12:49**). Yeshua's Light became like His Father's - the purest, most brilliant on the planet. Remembering that **Light = Life** and because Light and darkness cannot abide in the same space at the same time, when Yeshua took upon Himself the darkness of death that had attached to those He healed it did not affect Him because the darkness was dispelled in the brilliance of His Light, His Life caused the darkness to become Light. From the Hebraic perspective of scripture, whatever is **not Life is death**. Life = Light and death = darkness. Death is living in darkness but Light **dissipates** darkness. Darkness does not "flee" in the face of Light - it is **dispelled**. However, that only occurs through an active choice of behavior to embrace Light, which is the example of Yeshua's Life. The dictionary definition of **darkness** is the absence of light. Shades of grey are the weakening of darkness - not of the Light. There is no more of a struggle for Light to prevail over darkness in you any more than there is a struggle for light to overwhelm darkness when you enter a room at night and turn on the light switch. It took a bit for me to fully grasp what all that entailed, but today I am seeing the fruit of what was learned in that experience



***"I give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
Matthew 16:19 and Matthew 18:18***

"power" in this verse is **eksousia** and means "power of choice". To become a son is not an automatic blessing. We must **exercise** the power given us **IF** His Words are to live within us "just as" those Words were actively living in the life of the Son. So, when my then 25 year old son arrived on my doorstep **full of demons**, I was given a choice of whether **to participate** in his deliverance - or not. I took Quinn in and immediately became frail in health. But, the Father began to open my eyes to what was happening between my son and I. The Light I had been cultivating since my time in Israel began to take effect on Quinn and, slowly, as he made choices to abide in Light in his own right - deliverance began to happen. I began to see the Truth in **Acts 16:31**, that if I allow the Light of YHVH within me to manifest and flourish, it affects everyone under my roof - without me having to say **but a word**. Quinn became like the man described in **Mark 5:15** - and my wounds began to heal, He still has more road to travel and as he continues making proper choices to stay in Light, his healing will get stronger. This is what it means to be **as He is** - to **become** the **Kingdom of YHVH** in this present world (**1John 4:17**).

Many ask, "Where is the dynamism today of those early disciples we read of in **Acts 5:16**?" Because these faithful had just witnessed the Resurrection and **Shavu'ot** what we see happening in this verse was the communal brilliance of their Light being manifested so that all that had to happen was for people to be brought into where they were gathered for healing to occur. They were not brought to an individual, but into the assembly. We are told in **Romaans 8:19** that the whole of creation is eagerly awaiting the manifestation, the unveiling of the sons of YHVH, The Greek word translated into the English "manifestation" in that verse is **apokalypsis** which means the "laying bare of the disclosure of Truth" for all to see. When will that happen? It seems that YHVH is waiting on us - a generation of the faithful, to bring into this earthly realm that **Communal Light** once more. When that happens the darkness of this world will simply dissipate and YHVH's Glory will be brilliant. The **Day of YHVH** will be made manifest in and through His Children, His Family.

***"To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and **made us a Kingdom, Priests to His God and Father**, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.
Amen." Revelation 1:5-6***

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a discussion of Retaining Sin



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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