



Man and Woman: One in Christ

By Dr. Philip Payne

Brief Review and Commentary by Barbara L. Klika, MSW

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This well documented resource is an amazing tour through the Scriptures with special attention to how Sha'ul/Paul viewed and treated women in ministry. Dr. Payne has studied this subject now for more than thirty years and has come far from his first exposure to the question! At that time, he was ready to stand up and declare that women were not welcome in ministry because that is what he had been taught and come to expect.

The question of women's role in ministry, especially in any leadership role, has been a great area of conflict for long years. Payne's painstaking work covers every conceivable area that has brought the subject into question. In 500 pages, he provides detailed linguistic and cultural notes to clarify some of the most confusing passages of Scripture that have long been interpreted to mean that Paul excluded women from leadership roles in the assembly. He also provides updates as new material arises.

For those unable/unwilling to read the entire lengthy manuscript, he has also provided a few summary articles that go right to the point of the main twelve issues and Scripture passages that have led to the "disqualification" of many women who felt called and led to ministry work. One of them is available on our website at: https://www.set-apart-ministries.org/Articles/Guest_authors/12-Pillars-of-Male-Hierarchy.pdf

This issue of women in leadership roles has followed right on from the traditional Christian churches into many Messianic assemblies as well. I think that many Messianic/Hebrew Roots Believers would not be surprised to see the kind of linguistic or translation issues that have served to submerge the true picture of women's activities in the early church. This is so because they include some of the same kinds of issues that have obscured the ongoing importance of the relevance of the Whole Word for today. (This is my observation, not the authors.)

This material deserves attention within the Hebrew Roots/Messianic community because it is just as relevant here as it is to mainstream churches. I continue to believe that the chaotic issues in this time of transition, ultimately coming to Messiah's return, include the loss of women's voices within the "church" at large. Mankind was created in the image of YHWH, and woman came from man to be a suitable helper, a helper comparable to him, not subservient. Payne cogently observes that the demotion of women, both at home and in the assemblies, is based in sin. It was the sin of Adam and

Chavah/Eve that led to the declaration that man should rule over his wife. Among other issues, he questions why the discipline that came due to sin should have ever become the norm that people strive to replicate. Would we not want to emulate the intended plan as far as is possible until His return? I suggest that it is part of His greater plan that involves coming to true voluntary submission to Him as well as repetition and final consummation of the concept of “two” representing witness and division.

The wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon, pointed out the importance of both voices in the lives of Yah's people.

*Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father, And forsake not the teaching of thy mother;
For they shall be a chaplet of grace unto thy head, And chains about thy neck.
Proverbs 1:8-9 JPS Tanakh 1917*

It is in the combination and binding together of both aspects of humanity, men and women, that we can come closest to a full representation of the character and ways of our Father. Knowledge alone puffs up and doesn't edify. Character and maturity must also be addressed.

In His creation of Adam, clearly He foreknew that mankind/one would become two and that He would direct them to “become one.” Clearly He foreknew also that Israel, created to be one people, would divide and become two, Judah and Ephraim/Israel. He knew that the full witness would be divided, with those of Jewish lineage keeping more of the Torah, though primarily missing Messiah Yeshua while those of Gentile heritage would be foremost in keeping hold on Messiah Yeshua, though missing the full message of the Whole Torah, and that Yeshua IS the Living Torah.

Ezekiel wrote of this in his testimony of the two sticks to become one in His Hand (Ezekiel 37). Perhaps it can be said that within the Hebrew Roots/Messianic movement, this is not uncommon for people to realize that the two “houses” of those who call on the God of Israel will one day be reunited as one Flock, with one Word and one Shepherd.

But it is still uncommon for those in either house to realize that a division that began even longer ago, back to the Garden, is also awaiting restoration. The creation of mankind as one, the division of mankind into two, then being told to become one is a prophetic picture, both individual and corporate in scope. It is part of many witness/division pictures throughout the Scriptures. It is the necessity to restore both voices of the beings created in the image of Yah in order to be about His business. The two becoming one is part of our preparation as the Bride to attend the Marriage Feast of the Lamb/Sukkoth. Ultimately, when mankind is more fully restored, we will be more fully equipped, mature, without spot or wrinkle, and ready for that ultimate two becoming one with Messiah.

This brief review and commentary is related to a much larger body of material, under the working title of: “And the Two Shall Become One: Witness and Division from Genesis to Revelation.” By Barbara L. Klika, MSW Undershepherd, Set Apart Ministries. www.set-apart-ministries.org