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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The Church: His Model

TEACHING SUMMARY

The organization of the body of Messiah should follow God's design. Yeshua is its one head and the prophet like Moses whom the people must hear. The teaching rejects assigning a human head pastor the place that belongs to Messiah. Leaders remain accountable to the Word.

The New Testament repeatedly speaks of elders in each congregation. Acts 14, Titus 1, and James 5 are examined for this plural pattern. Elders are mature, qualified believers who share responsibility for the assembly. A congregation is not presented as depending on one man who alone carries the authority and burden of its leadership.

Elder, overseer, and shepherd describe related aspects of the same work. Elder emphasizes maturity, overseer describes responsibility, and shepherd expresses care for the flock. These leaders teach sound doctrine, correct error, protect the assembly, and care for its members.

Authority is exercised through God's instructions rather than personal control. Yeshua's teaching about service rejects the pattern of rulers who lord power over others. Elders are to help the body mature and remain faithful to its true head. The plurality of leaders also allows responsibilities to be shared instead of creating dependence on a single personality.

Deacons serve the practical needs of the assembly. Their role does not establish another head over the elders or congregation. The discussion of Acts 15 likewise does not treat James's participation as proof that one elder rules all the others. Decisions remain under Scripture's authority.

First Peter points shepherds toward the Chief Shepherd and calls them to lead by example. Hebrews speaks of leaders in the plural, and accusations against elders require proper witnesses. These passages support both responsible leadership and protection from arbitrary accusations or misuse of authority. The body is to remain united around Yeshua rather than divided by loyalty to prominent human leaders.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Yeshua is the one head of the body.
- He fulfills the role of the prophet like Moses.
- Local congregations are described as having elders in the plural.
- Elder emphasizes maturity and qualification.
- Overseer describes responsibility for the assembly.
- Shepherding includes teaching, protection, and care.
- Leaders serve under the authority of God's Word.
- Deacons meet practical needs through service.
- Elders must lead by example rather than domination.
- The body's unity belongs around Messiah rather than human personalities.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The one head of the body of Messiah is _____.
2. The term emphasized for mature congregational leaders is _____.
3. The leaders who care for the flock are also described as _____.
4. The practical servants discussed in the teaching are _____.
5. First Peter 5 calls Messiah the Chief _____.
6. A leader's authority must come from God's _____.

Challenging

1. The Greek term for elder discussed in the teaching is _____.
2. The Greek term for overseer discussed in the teaching is _____.
3. The promise of a prophet like Moses is cited from Deuteronomy chapter _____.
4. Titus was instructed to appoint elders in every _____.
5. The leader whose contribution at the Jerusalem council is discussed is _____.
6. An accusation against an elder requires two or three _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Yeshua's role as the prophet like Moses shape the teaching's understanding of leadership?

2. What pattern does the teaching find in the passages about elders in local congregations?

3. How do the terms elder, overseer, and shepherd describe the work of leadership?

4. What distinguishes authority grounded in the Word from a leader's personal control?

5. How does the teaching interpret James's contribution in Acts 15?

6. How do shared responsibility and leadership by example keep the assembly focused on Messiah?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. Yeshua — 1 Corinthians 11:3; teaching conclusion
2. elders — Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5
3. shepherds — 1 Peter 5:1–2; Acts 20:28
4. deacons — Teaching discussion of diakonos and congregational service
5. Shepherd — 1 Peter 5:4
6. Word — Teaching explanation of authority; John 14:10

Challenging

1. presbuteros — Teaching comparison of Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5, 7
2. episkopos — Teaching comparison of Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5, 7
3. 18 — Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22
4. town / city — Titus 1:5
5. James — Acts 15:13–21; teaching explanation
6. witnesses — 1 Timothy 5:19

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION NOTES

Suggested responses follow the teaching. Invite discussion and personal application; these are not additional required answers.

1. Deuteronomy 18:15 and Acts 3:22 identify the promised prophet; the teaching applies the central Moses role to Yeshua. It therefore objects to a human leader taking Messiah's unique place. Ask how this preserves both Messiah's headship and the responsibility of elders to serve.
2. Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Acts 20:17 and James 5:14 speak of elders in the plural. The source takes this as a pattern of shared local oversight. Invite participants to identify the textual pattern and consider how a qualified team can share care, teaching and accountability.
3. The source compares elder and overseer in Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5, 7; 1 Peter 5:1–2 adds shepherding. Maturity, oversight and care describe connected responsibilities rather than a ladder of personal rank. Ask for a concrete example of teaching, protection or care that benefits the whole assembly.
4. Matthew 20:25–28 and 1 Peter 5:2–4 contrast domineering leadership with service and example. The teaching locates authority in God's Word and holds elders accountable to it. Discuss how a leader could explain a decision from Scripture, hear a concern and welcome correction.
5. The source understands James's speech in Acts 15:13–21 as helping the gathered apostles and elders reach a conclusion rather than proving an office above them. Distinguish his evident contribution from the teaching's conclusion about rank. Ask how facilitating a discussion can serve others without claiming sole authority.
6. First Peter 5:2–4 points elders to the Chief Shepherd; 1 Corinthians 1:11–13 warns against personality-based factions. Hebrews 13:17 adds responsibility for leaders and the congregation. Discuss shared work, care and accountability that keep attention on Messiah rather than a public personality.