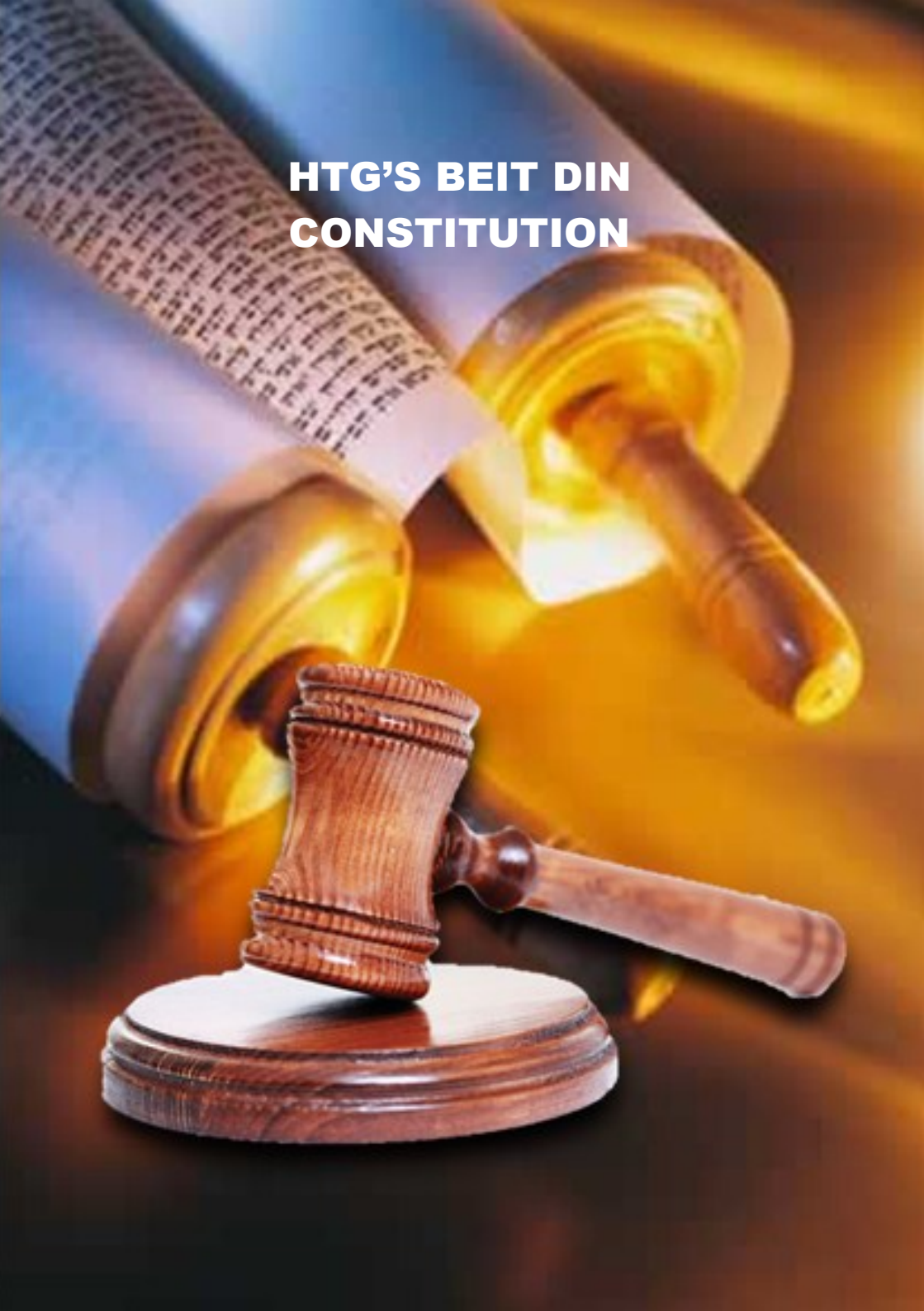


HTG'S BEIT DIN CONSTITUTION



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By

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Preface

YHWH "God" has called us to do two things. First, we are to never give up studying and seeking the correct interpretation of any given Bible passage. Second, such opportunities are golden moments for us to learn to show grace and love to others whose understanding of a given passage may differ from ours.

Throughout the HRTI's teachings, we use a slightly different vocabulary to that which some might be accustomed. We have chosen to use what many refer to as a Messianic vocabulary. The reasons being: firstly, using Hebraic-sounding words is another way to help you associate with the Hebraic Roots of your faith. Secondly, these words are not merely an outward show for us, they are truly an expression of who we are as Messianic Jews and Gentiles who have "taken hold" of our inheritance with Israel.

Instead of saying "Jesus", we call our Saviour "Y'shua" – the way His parents would have addressed Him in Hebrew. In addition, rather than referring to Y'shua as "Christ", we use the word "Messiah" – which is an Anglicized version of the Hebrew word, Moshiach.

"YaHoWaH" is the name of God in Hebrew, where it is written as four consonants (YHWH or YHVH, as the W and V are derived from the same Hebrew letter 'vaw'). These four letters are called the Tetragrammaton (Greek for "[a word] having four letters"). Jews ceased to use the name in the Greco-Roman period, replacing it with the common noun Elohim ("God") to demonstrate the universal sovereignty of Israel's God over all others. At the same time, the divine name was increasingly regarded as too sacred to be uttered and was replaced in spoken ritual by the word Adonai ("My Lord"). From about the 6th to the 10th century the Masoretes (Jewish scholars who were the first to add vowels to the text of the Hebrew Bible) used the vowel signs of the Hebrew words Adonai or Elohim as the vowels for YHWH; and later on the artificial name *Jehovah* was produced. Christian scholars and translators after the Renaissance and Reformation periods replaced the sacred name YHWH with GOD and LORD (all in capital letters in the Bible); which was a strategic move of satan for not using the Name. The Sacred Name occurs 6,828 times in the Hebrew text of the Bible, proving YHWH wants us to use it.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, biblical scholars again began to use the form Yahweh and it is now the conventional usage in Biblical scholarship; but leading Hebrew Scholars suggest YHWH should be pronounced as Yah-oo-VaH (Y'shua is derived from YaH-shuvah which means YaH saves. Yah (יָהּ) is an abbreviation of God's name, YHWH, as seen in Psalm 68:4. The Name is also found in the word hallelu-YaH, which means "you praise the LORD").

HTG's Beit Din Constitution

Introduction

A Beit Din, Hebrew: דין בית, is a "house of judgment." In ancient times, it was the building block of the legal system in the Biblical Land of Israel. Today, it is invested with legal powers in a number of religious matters both in Israel and in Israelite communities in the Diaspora (the Lost Sheep), where its judgments hold varying degrees of authority (depending upon the jurisdiction and subject matter) in matters specifically related to Torah-observant Messianism religious life.

Background of the Beit Din

The first suggestion in the Torah that the ruler divest his legal powers and delegate his power of judgment to lower courts was made by Jethro to Moshe (Exod 18:14–26). This situation was formalised later when YHWH gave the explicit command to "establish judges and officers in your gates" (Deut 16:18).

There were three types of courts:

- 1) The Sanhedrin, the grand central court on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, numbering 71
- 2) Smaller courts of 23, called a Sanhedrin Ketana ("small Sanhedrin"). These courts could pass the death verdict. These existed on two levels, the one higher in standing than the other:
 - The main cities of the tribes, had a court of 23.
 - All towns of a minimum size (either 120 or 230 people) had to have a court of 23, which was under the jurisdiction of the tribal court.
- 3) The smallest court of three was found in villages with a population of less than 120 people.

Courts ruled in all kinds of cases. Any question that could not be resolved by a smaller court was passed up to a higher court. If the Sanhedrin was still uncertain, divine opinion was sought through the Urim and Tumim (the parchment in the High Priest's breastplate, which was inscribed with the Name of God, the אה (Aleph and Tav) (and could give supernatural clues).

The Modern Beit Din

Any Beit Din existing in medieval and modern times is in theory a court of laymen, acting as arbitrators. In practice they are given greater powers than this by the local takkanot ha-kahal (community regulations), and are generally composed of experienced Torah-observant Scholars. Modern training institutes, confer a qualification of *dayan* (religious judge) which is "superior" to the normal rabbinical qualification.

Number of Dayanim

Even though normally an Orthodox Beit Din requires a minimum of three Jews knowledgeable and observant of Halachah, in new communities and exigencies, providing a thorough search has proved unfruitful, Halachah provides that even one Orthodox Jew can establish a Beit Din, since every Orthodox community is required to establish its own Beit Din.

Halachah is the collective body of Jewish religious laws, based on the Written and Oral Torah, including the 613 Mitzvot, as well as customs and traditions compiled today in the Shulchan Aruch, "the Code of Jewish Law." Judaism classically draws no distinction in its laws between religious and non-religious life; Halachah guides not only religious practices and beliefs, but numerous aspects of day-to-day life. Halachah is also translated as "the path" or "the way of walking".

Present Position

In Orthodox Judaism, a Beit Din consists of three observant Jewish men, at least one of whom is widely knowledgeable in Jewish Law (Halachah), to be capable of instructing the other members in any matters of halachah relevant to the case being heard. In progressive communities, women may serve on the Beit Din as well.

In practice, a permanent Beit Din will consist of three scholars.

Requirements and Matters

A Beit Din is required or preferred for the following matters:

- 1) Validation of religious bills of divorce (get).
- 2) Monitoring Messianic Ordination compliance.
- 3) Monitoring Messianic Assemblies and Yeshiva's compliance.
- 4) Supervising the building and maintenance of a mikvah.

- 5) Assisting in legal matters – i.e. an individual is forced to work on a Shabbat, etc.
- 6) A Beit Din is sometimes used to resolve civil disputes, calling for civil cases being resolved by religious instead of secular courts (arka'oth). Modern Western societies increasingly permit civil disputes to be resolved by private arbitration, enabling religious Israelites to enter into agreements.
- 7) Assist with problematic issues in Assemblies and Yeshivas.

By this device, the rules, procedures, and judgment of the Beit Din are accepted and can be enforced by secular courts in the same manner as those of a secular arbitration association. However, the decisions of religious courts cannot be binding without the prior agreement of both parties, and will otherwise act only as mediation.

HTG's Beit Din Criteria

The *HTG Beit Din* was formally established in February 2014. The Council consists of a group of Torah-observant attorneys, advocates, and legal advisors suitably qualified by an accredited University, who share a common vision for Messianic practice rooted in Torah, guided by the Ruach HaKodesh¹, and faithful to Messiah Y'shua in the twenty-first century.

HTG Beit Din consists of the following members:

- 1) **Rosh Beth Din**, literally "Head of the Court". Is equivalent to a Chief Justice. He will be the senior member of the panel. This person will be thoroughly educated in the **Torah** as well as the **Halachah** and must be **qualified in law of the land**.
- 2) **Dayan** (No 1), a Torah-observant scholar, sits and adjudicates cases. This judge may directly question and cross-examine witnesses. This person will be thoroughly educated in the **Torah** and must be **qualified in the law of the land**.
- 3) **Dayan** (No 2), a Torah-observant scholar, sits and adjudicates cases. This judge may directly question and cross-examine witnesses. This person will be thoroughly educated in the **Torah** and must be **qualified in the law of the land**.
- 4) **Dayan** (No 3), a Torah-observant scholar, sits and adjudicates cases. This judge may directly question and cross-examine

¹ YHWH's Divine Spirit.

witnesses. This person will be thoroughly educated in the **Torah** and must be **qualified in the law of the land**.

- 5) **Chaver Beth Din**, Friend of the Court (Amicus curiae) is an internal adviser to the court. He/she may bring specialised expertise to the Beit Din. Often a chaver will be a dayan. This person will be thoroughly educated in both the Torah as well as the Halachah.

HTG Beit Din's Mission Statement

Our mission is the provision of the highest possible standard of legal service to the Hebraic Teaching Group's Torah-observant Messianic Community and beyond.

HTG Beit Din's Commitment

- 1) We are committed to appointing and maintaining a Beth Din comprised of dayanim of the foremost caliber and integrity to preside over the religious life of the Community and fulfilling all those tasks traditionally associated with a Beit Din.
- 2) We are dedicated to serving the community in all aspects of religious life both directly and by liaison with other organisations set up for that purpose.
- 3) To comply with the items listed in "Requirements and Matters" above.
- 4) We are committed to stay rooted in Torah, instructed by the Ruach, faithful to Messiah Y'shua.

How does someone join the HTG's Beit Din?

If you are a Believer who desires that ministering in the Beit Din is your calling, you need first of all to comply with the listed criteria as laid out in the "HTG's Beit Din Criteria." You must also accept the vision, beliefs, and values of the Beit Din as in this Constitution and HTG's Website. Lastly you must be committed to Torah principles and the lifestyle. Once you comply with these principles, you may apply for Membership.

Why women participate in the Beit Din?

Messianic women who share our vision, requirements and criteria may become a member Beit Din.

The HTG Beit Din's views on conversion

Conversion to Judaism (Hebrew: גיור, giyur) is a formal act undertaken by a non-Jewish person who wishes to be recognised as a full member of the Jewish community. A Jewish conversion is both a religious act and an expression of association with the Jewish people. A formal conversion is also sometimes undertaken to remove any doubt as to the Jewishness of a person who wishes to be considered a Jew. We at HTG Beit Din do not do conversion.

Members and adherents that will not be accepted

The following is a list of several movements, not necessarily all, whose members and adherents will not be accepted as candidates or ordination:

Yahwist or Sacred Name movements are not approved: Any group that force that the Name of God must be said, written or performed in a unique way to be saved. Or that restricts the use of the Name YHWH; YHWH **clearly instructs** us to use His Name YHWH many places in the Scriptures². Please see Footnote below.

The Classical/Medieval Christian is not approved: Any group which honours Christmas, Easter or any other "christianized" pagan celebration.

² The titles LORD and GOD appear many times throughout the KJV. In fact, LORD appears 6681 times, while GOD appears 330 times in the OT (Old Testament). That accounts for more than 7000 instances where these titles appear in the OT! Unfortunately, many have been led to believe that these are actual names for God when in fact they are titles. You see, where LORD and GOD appear in all capital letters, that is an indicator that the covenant name of God should be there, represented by the Hebrew consonants, Yod, Heh, Waw, and Heh, thus rendering it as YHWH in English, also known as the Tetragrammaton. YHWH gave us His name **for a reason**, to show us that He isn't just any so-called god, but that He is the Living God; the self-existent and Eternal One, who was and is and always will be; the Creator. Therefore, it is safe to say that if He didn't want us to know His name, then He wouldn't have given it to us. In fact, if you look at Isaiah 42:8 you will see something very interesting in the KJV, which says, *"I am YHWH: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."* From what we understand, early Jews used YHWH, but later changed it to Adonai (Lord), believing the name to be too sacred to pronounce. This had much to do with them being fearful of violating the third commandment: *"Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain; for YHWH will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."* (Exod 20:7 KJV). As you can see, His name YHWH is in the commandment itself; twice in fact. Listen, if YHWH didn't want His name to be uttered, then why even give a commandment not to use it in vain to begin with? It is obvious that He wants us to use His name, period.

Also, any group which does not honour the seventh day Sabbath as YHWH's Holy Day, or any group which teaches all animals are the same for consuming in YHWH's sight. Finally, any group which degrades or annuls the Torah and Hebrew Scriptures as saying they are no more in effect or that YHWH no longer keeps His covenants with Israel.

Racial supremacy doctrine is not approved: We do not accept the concept of physical supremacy of any people, neither do we believe that heritage profits anything in comparison to knowing Messiah Y'shua as Saviour. This holds for all races, colours, and peoples, including Jewish. Jews are the very elected, but not superior. Once a person has come into the knowledge of Messiah Y'shua they have reached the pinnacle of personhood in YHWH and have entrance into all the covenants. This hour's emphasis on the Jewish people is to complete the promises for the glory of YHWH, not for the glory of persons.

Messiah as man alone is not approved: Any group which denies that Messiah Y'shua is God in the flesh or that will not publically confess such.

Any other factions whose members we cannot accept as admins will be listed as they are identified.

NOTE: The above exclusions are in no way to offend individuals or judge the salvation of those who join these movements. That is for Messiah only to decide, and judge our hearts as well. All that is said here is to define what the HTG Beit Din is focused on.

The HTG Beit Din's Charter

The HTG Beit Din's Charter establishes voluntary fellowship. That fellowship in turn allows for accountability and unity among the people of YHWH. The Charter does not govern the internal operations of any group or ministry; however, our office is ready to respond to any spiritual need of which we are called to help. Our Charters are open to all Leaders of Messianic ministries, congregations, home groups, Yeshiva schools, and educational institutions which substantially agree with our Statement of Faith.

The HTG Beit Din Charter is normally exclusive; which means our Charter cannot be normally held while a Leader/Ministry is associated with any other ministry organization, unless permission is granted. An exception may be requested through E-mail.

Information provided on the Charter Application Form is for the exclusive use of HTG Beit Din and is completely confidential. None of your information will be released to anyone without your permission in writing. We reserve the right to deny the release of this information.

Criteria to become a *Dayan* at the HTG Beit Din

The general requirements are listed as follow:

- 1) Must be a dedicated follower of our Rabbi and Messiah Y'shua.
- 2) Accepted Torah-based Messianism as religion and live by the Laws of Torah, also complying with the principals of the Sacrificial/Ritual Laws.
- 3) Must have been practicing the Torah-observant Messianism Jewish faith and heritage.
- 4) Candidate must comply with Halacha, Shabbat meetings, wearing tzitzitot openly, etc. as evidence of walking "the way."
- 5) Applicant must be over the age of 30.
- 6) Must be schooled in the law of the land.

If you would like to apply for dayan, please complete the Application Form on our Website. Once your application has been accepted the once of credentials fee will be due as stated on our Website.

Bottom-line the applicant's Biblical knowledge should be such as when walking into a room of Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Rabbis, the applicant's knowledge should be recognized as equal among that group.

What must be provided for an ordination application?

- 1) a properly filled out application, which states agreement with the Statement of Faith and criteria standards, and includes the application fee as stated on our Website which is non-refundable.
- 2) a resume (CV).
- 3) a current picture (no more than two years old).
- 4) a testimonial explaining your faith and calling.
- 5) Proof of academic competency - copies of qualifications (if applicable).
- 6) Must provide contact information for two character witnesses.
- 7) Must provide your full postal address.

Payment options

PayPal button and details of bank account (for an Internal Bank Transfer) on our Website.

How to Apply for a Dayan

- 1) Email all the requested documentation to admin@hrti.co.za and wait for approval.
- 2) The HTG Beit Din will review your application within 14 days.
- 3) After the review of the HTG Beit Din, you will receive a letter of acceptance or not accepted.
- 4) On approval make your payment.
- 5) If your request is denied, we will also give our recommendation as to where we feel growth is necessary for future consideration for membership.
- 6) On approval we will post your Beit Din Dayan Certificate.

Conclusion

The HTG Beit Din represents a group of Leaders of Messianic Synagogues/ Ministries/Yeshivas who are dedicated to restoring the Hebraic Roots and to provoke the Orthodox Jew to jealousy (Rom 11:11).

Y'shua was/is a Jew. The Disciples of Y'shua were Jewish. Both the Jewish and non-Jewish first century Believers in Y'shua kept the Sabbath and the Biblical Feast days. This Council desires to see all Believers in Y'shua to understand the rich Hebraic/Jewish heritage that the God of Israel gave to His people. In doing so, this Council seeks to give recognition through ordaining Messianic Believers who understand and interpret the Bible from a Hebraic perspective and background while seeking to study, learn, and restore what was originally given to the first century Jewish and non-Jewish Believers in Y'shua as Messiah.

We seek to give recognition to Messianic Believers through ordination to serve a Torah-observant Messianism people to prepare the Hebrew Bride for their Hebrew Messiah. Truly we are beginning to see the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Zechariah who spoke of a time when:

*Thus says YHWH of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass
that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations,
even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying,
'We will go with you: (The Way of the Torah)
for we have heard that God is with you'
(Zechariah 8:23)*
