

Circles of Faith and Holiness

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In uncertain time, persons like us who can't bend with the winds of change have to stand tall. We can't pack up and flee at the first signs of trouble. - Chief Weber

What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? ... What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: 'Behold, I will send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way before You. - Yahshua ha Moshiach

Our intention in this paper is not to label. Labeling leads to stereotyping. Rather, to understand that, despite the influence of biblical predestination, all may yet aspire to justification and greatness.



Seven-fold Millennial Prayer for All Creation

For this new and seventh Millennium, give us favor, O Yah, to pray and believe.

Pray for the

Parousia (second presence) of Messiah
Return of Torah
Saints and Martyrs, Then and Now
Peace of Jerusalem and all Israel
Nations and tribes of the World
Equitable Justice for All Creatures and All Creation
Kingdom (Reign / Realm / Reich) Made Manifest to the Senses.

Faith / Belief Circles

Prof. James Fowler's (1940 – 2015) Stages of Faith

(Six) Universalizing Faith (Justifying Faith)

This is the highest stage of faith. It is a rare person who reaches this stage. My



professor of Blessed Memory, James Fowler, describes people at this stage as having "a special grace that makes them seem more lucid, more simple, and yet somehow more fully human than the rest of us." For Essenes, this is the Ideal. No more arguing doctrine. No more infighting over petty beliefs. No

more yielding to superstition, materialism and religious hobbyism. People at this stage can become important religious teachers because *they have the ability to relate to anyone at any stage and from any faith*. They are able to relate *without condescension* but at the same time are *able to challenge the assumptions* that those of other stages might have. People at this stage cherish life but also do not hold on to life too tightly. They put their faith in action, challenging the status quo and working to create justice in the world. Robert Keeley points to people like Gandhi and Mother Teresa as examples of people who have reached this stage. A similar stage in the realm of maturity has been put forward by Abraham Maslow as "Self-actualizing," yet is more than that – Universalizing Faith takes into account matter that can't be seen, yet represent powerful values; intangibles with precious tangible worth.

(Five) **Conjunctive Faith** (Comfortable Faith)

People do not usually get to this stage until their early thirties if at all. This stage is when the struggles and questioning of stage four give way to a more comfortable place, a more assured life's philosophy. Some answers have been found; and the person at this stage is comfortable knowing that all the answers *might not be easily found*. In this stage, the strong need for individual self-reflection gives way to a sense of the *importance of community* in faith development. People at this stage are also *much more open* to other people's faith perspectives. This is not because they are moving away from their faith but because they have a realization that other people's faiths might inform and deepen their own. And that their stage of faith might provide insight to break down the walls of Stage Four for those whom they perceive might, by the favor of the Almighty and their own willpower, go onward and upward.

(Four) **Individuative-Reflective Faith** (Questioning Faith)

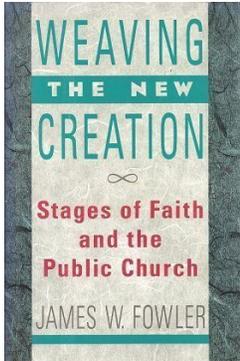
This stage usually starts in late adolescence (18 to 22 years old). However Robert Keeley points out that "people of many generations experience the kind of *dissonance* that comes with the real questions of faith that one begins to address at this stage of development."

People in this stage start to question their own assumptions around the faith tradition.

(Look into the Think Tank – there are MANY such people there who could benefit from a study such as this.) Along with questioning their own assumptions about their faith, people at this stage start to question the *authority structures* of their faith. This is often the time that someone will leave their religious community if the answers to the questions they are asking are not to their liking. (And often go on to something far less satisfying, just because they feel they need to break from the leadership of long-standing faith communities.) Greater maturity is gained by rejecting some parts of their faith while affirming other parts. In the end, the person starts to take greater ownership of their own faith journey. Due to the age-related immaturity of this stage, the Individuative / Reflective may choose a religion or faith community far and away from their tradition or from their parents' religion, even entering in with terrorists or enclaves far and away from anything they are used to.

(Three) Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Passive Faith)

(Weaving the New Creation by Fowler available in the [Yahad Theology Library](#).)



Passive Faith generally starts about the age of 13 and goes until around 18. However, ***some people stay at this stage for their entire life, and youth who find faith at this time may be influenced by what they have found for the rest of their lives.*** Unlike previous stages, people at this stage are able to think concretely and abstractly. What were once simple unrelated stories and rituals can now be seen as a more cohesive narrative about values and morals. With abstract thinking comes the ability to see *layers of meaning* in the stories, rituals and symbols of their faith. At this stage people start to have the ability to see things from someone else's perspective. This means that they can also imagine *what others think about them and their faith*. People at this stage claim their faith as *their own* instead of just being what their family does. (Note *radical* teen-aged conversions in Charismatic / Pentecostal circles.) However, the faith that is claimed is usually still the faith of their family – but in a more sectarian or active manner. Issues of religious authority are important to people at this stage. For younger adolescents, that authority still resides mostly with their parents and important adults. For older adolescents and adults in this stage, authority resides with friends and religious community. *For all people in this stage*, religious authority resides mostly *outside of them personally*. (For me at this stage, it was charismatic faith-healers and certain local pastors who took me under their wing, so to speak. -JS)

(Two) Mythic-literal Faith (Mythical Faith)

Generally ages 6 to 12. Children at this age are able to start to work out the difference between verified facts and things that might be more fantasy or speculation. At this age children's sources of religious authority start to expand *past parents* and trusted adults to others in their community like teachers and friends (or those who are observed). Like the

previous stage, faith is something to be experienced. At this stage it is because children think in concrete and literal ways. Faith becomes the stories told and the rituals practiced. Later in this stage children begin to have the capacity to understand that others might have different beliefs than them. (Again, for me – I asked my grandmother, “Where does Joe (the neighbor) walk to every Sunday morning.” The reply was, “He is walking to church. He is a Catholic – very religious.” I don't know why, but I wanted to walk with Joe and be very religious, too. I learned later that the nearest Catholic Church was miles away.)

(One) **Intuitive-Projective Faith** (Childlike Faith)

Generally pre-school aged children. The cognitive development of children of this age is such that they are unable to think abstractly (though concretely) and are generally unable to see the world from anyone else's perspective. As Robert Keeley writes: "These children cannot think like a scientist, consider logical arguments, or think through complex ideas." Faith is not a thought-out set of ideas, but instead a set of impressions that are largely gained from their parents or other significant adults in their lives. In this way children become involved with the rituals of their religious community by experiencing them and learning from those around them.

(Zero) **Undifferentiated Faith** (Potential Faith)

Generally children from birth through about 2 years of age. Have the potential for faith but lack the ability to act on that potential. Through loving care from parents and other adults in their life young children start to build a lived experience of trust, courage, hope and love. At this stage, children experience faith as a connection between themselves and their caregiver. This trust is vitally important if a child is to trust the deity later. But a guardian promoting over-protection may not expect the same kind of trust to extend to the deity.

Quality Circles

Quality Circles describes a business management strategy in which managers give over their authority to their workers in order to complete an important project. It is a bottom-up

strategy.

Assume a work-group consists of several persons with well-developed skills in the areas needed to complete a project. Assume also one or more managers tasked with the personal responsibility of completing the project in a timely manner.

The manager need to have any other skills other than the authority and assertiveness to get the "team" of experts to complete individual tasks, then put outcomes of the tasks together for a completed project. This is the popular business model of today.



Now assume that the manager abdicates his power and authority and allows each member of the team (again, each being an expert in, say, accounting, funding, drafting, etc.) to get her particular part of the project completed, then relies on the 'team' as a unit to put the individual pieces together to form the completed project.

Considering this Quality Circle strategy, what do you think the mental and physical outcomes of successful completion of the project might be? Consider each individual team member, then consider the team as a whole. Finally consider the manager. Why do you suppose that Quality Circles had only a brief lifespan over the 1980s and 1990s and is seldom found today? A tip-off: managers lost their jobs because their authorities and powers were simply not needed anymore. When managers began to realize the eventual outcomes of the Quality Circles strategy, what do you suppose they might do to prolong their own employment?

From what we know of the Essenes, the Quality Circle strategies are what they used to complete the tasks before them. Consider the minimal Yahad – 12 to 15 men or women (or both) with responsibilities commiserate with their titles – Moshiaich, Nasi, Mevaqqre, Shoter, Azar, Moreh, Kohen, etc. Or consider the Disciples of Yahshua – with a Moshiaich (Yahshua), three Kohens (Kepha, Ya'aqov, Yochanan), an Azar (Philippos), 'one who carried the bag' (Yahudah), etc. It's not until we get to pseudo-Paul in the late Pastorals that we are introduced to a hierarchy based on authoritarianism instead of on skills and personal responsibility.

We can learn a lot about how the Yahad got things done if we knew more about quality circles. We would do even better if we were in the mind-set of practicing them. For the system we are involved in only has one authoritarian head, and that is Moshiach. Rather, we work together because we are skilled, we love the work, we love the cohesion of 'chaverim,' and we get things done (as volunteers) without the overseer there to whip us into shape.

We each have a calling, a ministry, and expertise, that we want to use for the as-yet-to-be-seen-with-the-naked-eye Kingdom. We have no need or use of bosses, fearless leaders, a vengeful god or pope. The titles we take are not those of authority, but responsibility. If someone says otherwise, or condemns you because you are called Bishop or Reverend, rejoice! Because that is what you are and what you do because you are called to it and you love it and you love the chaverim! What the bedeviled masses of spiritless humans have to say about your title of responsibility ultimately has nothing to do with you, and righteous angels with work behind the scenes for you because the emphasis of "Quality Circles" is quality.

When I was an itinerant, I literally hated being called "preacher" because I was too uncultured in the surrounds I worked in to realize that, for the parishioners, that was a great title of respect. And in Haiti, I would cringe when someone called me "pastor" for the opposite reason – I was too horrible at it to even be called that. Now I wish I had known better in those situations! If I could have just swallowed my pride and said to myself - "These people in your quality circle are calling you preacher / pastor! Jack, you should stand up and be the best damn preacher they ever heard and do the Kingdom a favor."

My first taste of this was in high school. If you understand a music education, you will understand this. My schedule was full with all the music courses I could take. I was not in the school choir, though. When I was a senior, the choir director, whom I barely knew, asked me to accompany the choir on the piano with the most difficult score I've ever seen. I told him, "I'm not good enough to play that!" With words from his heart, he said, "If not you, who?" Those few words changed my mind. IF NOT YOU, WHO? Immediately I quit all the other music I was doing and transferred to choir. I took the challenge, and I'm still remembered for

it. That night in the concert was the first time that, when I flawlessly finished, I realized that I could do something of worth for others – I could. I could.

Objectives of Quality Circle

The **objective of QCC** is to improve and upgrade quality of work

through:

- (a) The problem solving capability of the workers;
- (b) Team work;
- (c) The cultivation and assimilation of positive values and work ethics;
- (d) Involvement and interest in work;
- (e) High motivation for work; and
- (f) Awareness of responsibility towards oneself, the group, the department / office and the nation.

Circles of Mundane and Divine Beings

Ye watchers and ye holy ones, bright seraphs, cherubim and thrones,

Raise the glad strain, Alleluia!

Cry out, dominions, principedoms, powers, virtues, archangels, angels' choirs:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia!

O higher than the cherubim, more glorious than the seraphim,

Lead their praises, Alleluia!

Thou starting-point and thou the end! O! Magnify our Heav'nly Friend.

Respond, ye souls in endless rest, ye patriarchs and prophets blessed,

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Ye holy twelve, ye martyrs strong, all saints triumphant, raise the song.

O friends, in gladness let us sing, supernal anthems echoing,

Alleluia! Alleluia!

To Yah the Father, Yah the Son, and Yah the Spirit, We are One.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Holiness Circles

*Those having gone into the resurrection **of the living***

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Souls in Rest

Patriarchs, Priests, Prophets of old

Holy Twelve, Holy Family, Holy Magoi, Holy Shepherds, Holy Martyrs

Vegetarians? Eunuchs? Hermits? Stylites? Desert Fathers?

Terminal sufferers? Mentally ill? Maimed, blind, deaf?

Messianic Torah-keepers / Essenes

Christians – spiritual type

*Those who may or **may not have** gone into the resurrection of life*

John 5:28 ... all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the

resurrection of judgment.

Latter-day Evangelists: Prophets, Apostles, Pastors, Teachers

The Spiritually Educated and Gifted (Healers, Miracle Workers, etc.)

Add more categories here

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The Torah-centric

"Godfearers" - Yirei Hashem - Noachides

Believers: smokers, the divorced, beast murderers, cannibals, homos, deviants. Are they in or out?

Those who will come into the resurrection from **death** and be adjudicated

Nominals – The Saved, the Justified, the Religious, the Observers, the Pewsitters

Spiritless Humans

The Depraved, the Reprobate, the Lost, the Demoniac (yet such may still rise).

Exposing Why your Parents / Siblings Do Not Believe as You

- Exposing and Dispensing with the Serpent Seed Myth
- Differentiating between Homo Sapiens and Homo Caelum

Deciding which you are.

Homo Sapiens



Gen 1:26 Then Elohim said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So Elohim made (epoiêsin) man in his own image, in the image of Elohim he created him;

male and female he created them.

 28 And Elohim said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” 29 And Elohim said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.”

Homo Caelum

 2:4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the YHWH Elohim made the earth and the heavens. 5 When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the YHWH Elohim had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, 6 and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—

 7 then the YHWH Elohim **formed** the man of dust from the ground and **breathed** into his nostrils **the breath of life**, and the man became a **living creature**. 8 And the YHWH Elohim planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had **formed**.

Pneumatic Circles of Progression

Surrender --- > metanoiea, teshuvah, turning back – a conscious decision

Justification --- > Water Baptism, 'favor' bestowed that leads to assurance

Empowerment --- > Baptism in the Holy Spirit with evidence manifesting

Sanctification - - -

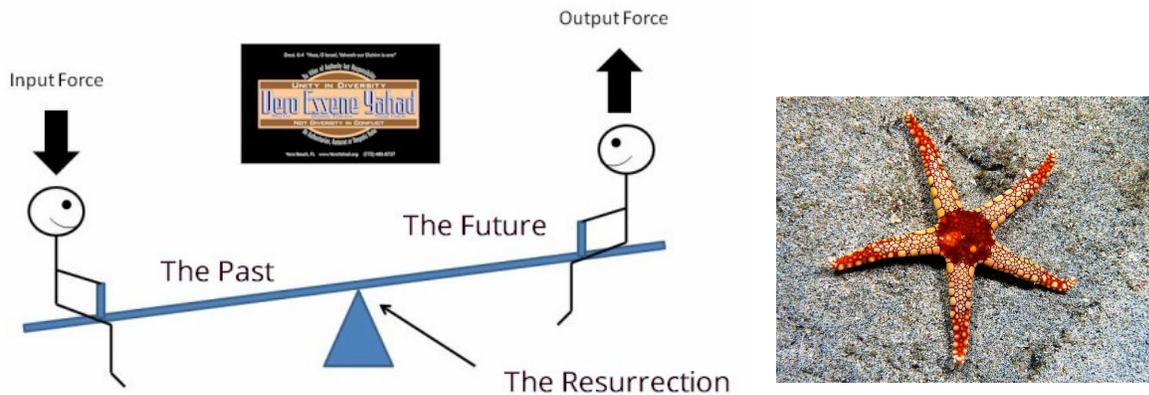
Immediate Sanctification --- > Fasting, Deliverance, Spirit Baptism, Fire, Perfection

Progressive Sanctification --- > Scriptural Holiness, Right Ruling & Judging, Love

Perfection in Love --- > The transition to spiritual life from biological life

Glorification --- > The transition to biological life from spiritual life

Resurrection --- > The pivot point upon which the fulcrum of history rests.



The "Snyder Quintalateral" For Decision-making

These work together (if you decide to work them) like spokes on a wheel or appendages on a sea-star. Look at every problem or text from five perspectives. Weigh the results of your analysis for concise problem-solving.

Inspired writings – The fervent believer will know how to choose such writings, or she may consult an authority.

Logic – Is it sensible to you? Really? Can you tell the difference between what is logic and what is fallacy?

History & Tradition – What do these have to say about the decision, the dilemma, the contradiction.

Experience – Have you done the same thing over and over? No, that's not the definition of *insanity*; it is the definition of *redundancy*.

Revelation – What has the Spirit said to the Assembly? To you? To the prophetic community?