

# ADAT SHALOM

## Our Ministry, Our Beliefs {Part 3}

- A. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR MISSION STATEMENT
- B. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR MANDATE FOR MINISTRY
- C. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR MODEL FOR MINISTRY
  - A. The Founding of the Jerusalem congregation
  - B. The Functions of the Jerusalem congregation
  - D. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR MINISTRY FUNCTIONS AND DISTINCTIVES
- E. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR MEASURE FOR MINISTRY
- F. ADAT SHALOM→ OUR METHOD FOR PRODUCING A GROWING MINISTRY

As we looked at our Model for ministry, the **Jerusalem Congregation** (Acts 2:41-47), we noted that they began to be **committed** to a number of **ministry functions**:

- Evangelism (Peter's proclamation of the Gospel) (Acts 2:14-36),
  - Devoting themselves to the study of **God's word** (the apostles' teaching)
  - Fellowship, the Breaking of bread, Prayer, (Acts 2:42)
  - Sharing and **meeting the needs of one another**, (Acts 2:44-45)
  - Praising God (worship) together, (Acts 2:47a)
  - Growing numerically according to the **will of God** (Acts 2:47b)

These *functions* took “forms” and “structures” within the congregation, as spiritually “gifted” men and women began to minister and “equip” believers for the work of service. As the new believers participated in these ministries, and “*experienced*” spiritual growth, they were to aim for these **key ministry goals**:

- To *mature* as individuals, *and* as a “body” of believers into Messiah-likeness (Ephesians 4:11-13, 15-16)

→ To **grow** in their **faith**, their **hope**, and their **love**—  
the *measure* of **maturity** (Colossians 1:3-5) (I Thessalonians 1:2-3)

According to the **scriptures**, what **produces faith, hope, and love**  
among **believers**, are “**structures**” that provide **three vital experiences** →

- Vital **Learning experiences** with the **Word of God**
- Vital **Relational experiences** with **One another** and **with God**
- Vital **Witnessing experiences** with **non-believers**

Before we do an **expanded study** on these **three vital experiences**,  
we want to **strongly affirm** that the **source** of **all spiritual growth**  
and **maturity** among **believers** is **God**,  
who **sovereignly works** within us through **His Spirit**,  
and through these *experiences*.

...for it is **God** who is **at work in you**,  
both to **will** and to **work** for **His good pleasure**.  
(Philippians 2:13)

For **we** are **His workmanship**, created in **Messiah Jesus**  
for **good works**, which **God** prepared **beforehand**  
so that **we** would **walk in them**. (Ephesians 2:10)

I **planted**, Apollos **watered**, but **God** was **causing the growth**.  
So then **neither** the one who **plants** nor the one who **waters** is anything,  
but **God** who **causes the growth**. (I Corinthians 3:6-7)

## As **Believers**, we need **Three Vital Experiences** for **Spiritual Growth** and **Maturity**

### 1) Vital **Learning experiences** with the **word of God**

“They (the **disciples**) were continually **devoting** themselves to the  
**apostles’ teaching**...” (Acts 2:42a)

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All **Scripture** is **inspired by God** and profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**,  
for **correction**, for **training in righteousness**;  
so that the **man of God** may be **adequate**,  
**equipped** for every **good work**. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

For this reason we also constantly **thank God** that when you received the **word of God** which you heard from us, you **accepted it not** as the **word of men**, but *for* what it really is, the **word of God**, which also **performs its work** **in you** who **believe**. (I Thessalonians 2:13)

So then **faith** *comes* by **hearing**, and hearing by the **word** of **Messiah**.  
(Romans 10:17)

For whatsoever was **written** in earlier times was **written** for ***our instruction***, so that through **perseverance** and the **encouragement** of the **scriptures** we might have **hope**. (Romans 15:14)

Now as to the **love** of the **brethren**, you have no need for *anyone* to write you, for you yourselves are **taught by God** to **love one another**;  
(I Thessalonians 4:9)

## 2) Vital **Relational experiences** with **One another** and with **God**

“They (the **believers**) were continually **devoting themselves** to...**fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**...  
And all those who **believed** were **together**...  
breaking bread from **house** to **house**,  
they were taking their meals **together**...” (Acts 2:42, 44, 46)

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For I (**Paul**) long to **see you** (**Roman** believers) so that I may impart some **spiritual gift** to **you**, that you may be **established**;  
that is, that I may be **encouraged together**  
**with you** *while among you*, each of us by the **other’s faith**,  
both **yours** and **mine**. (Romans 1:1:9-10a, 11-12)

For what **thanks** can we render to **God** for you...  
as we night and day keep **praying** most earnestly that we may **see your face**,  
and may **complete** what is **lacking** in your **faith**? (I Thessalonians 3:9a, 10)

Be **devoted** to **one another** in brotherly **love**;  
give preference to **one another** in **honor**...  
rejoicing in **hope**, persevering in **tribulation**, devoted to **prayer**,  
**contributing** to the **needs** of the **saints**,  
practicing **hospitality**. (Romans 12:10-13a)

Let us **hold fast** the **confession** of our **hope** without wavering,...  
and let us consider how to **stimulate one another** to **love** and **good deeds**,  
**not forsaking** our own **assembling together**,...but **encouraging one another**,  
and all the **more** as you see **the day** drawing near.  
(Hebrews 10:23-25)

## 3) Vital **Witnessing experiences** with **non-believers**

“...and **you** shall be **My witnesses** both in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and even to the **remotest part** of the **earth**.”

“And all those who had **believed** were **together**...  
And **the Lord** was **adding** to their **number** day by day  
those who were **being saved**...”  
(Acts 1:8, 2:44a, 47b,)

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Now all *these* things are from **God**, who **reconciled us**...  
and gave **us** the **ministry or reconciliation**,...  
Therefore we are **ambassadors for Christ**,  
as though **God** were making an appeal **through us**;  
we beg you on behalf of **Messiah**,  
**be reconciled to God**.  
(II Corinthians 5:18, 20)

...for “**WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME**  
**OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED**.”  
**How** then will they **call** on **Him** in whom they have **not believed**?  
**How** will they **believe** in Him whom they have **not heard**?  
And **how** will they **hear** without a **preacher**?

**How** will they **preach** unless they are **sent**...?  
So **faith** comes by **hearing** and **hearing** by the **word of Messiah**.  
(Romans 10:14, 17)

...but **sanctify Messiah as Lord** in your **hearts**, always *being ready*  
to make a **defense** to everyone who **asks you**  
to give **an account** for the **hope** that is in you,..  
(I Peter 3:15)

Closing Comments  
**A Healthy, Growing Congregation**  
will **Prioritize all Three Vital Experiences**

Personal Application  
“**Witnessing experiences**”  
The most **challenging**, but most **rewarding** of  
the **vital experiences**

“Already he who **reaps** is **receiving wages**  
and is **gathering fruit** for **life eternal**;..”(John 4:36a)

For who is **our hope** or **joy** or **crown of exultation**?  
Is it not even **you**, in the **presence** of our **Lord Jesus** at **His coming**?  
(I Thessalonians 2:19)