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Apostles
4: 11a

Furthermore, He gave some people as apostles.



Sha'ul now enumerates the specific spiritual **gifts** that are given to **Yeshua's** followers. **The gift** of being **an apostle** is for those *sent out* to represent **Messiah**. In Judaism, it has a much stronger meaning than merely one *sent out*. It also means *a direct spokesman*. **The Talmud** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Ei – The Oral Law**) **says, "a shaliach** (one who is sent) **is the same as the one who sent him" (Tractate Berachot 34).**[158] **They** were given two basic responsibilities. First, to lay a foundation of the Church **(Ephesians 2:20)**, and secondly, to confirm **God's Word** through **signs and wonders and miracles (Second Corinthians 12:12; Acts 8:6-7; Hebrews 2:3-4)**.

*Dear Heavenly Father, Praise **You** that in **Your** great chesed love and care for **Your** children, **You** gave **signs and wonders and miracles** to confirm **Your Word.** **You** could have gone to heaven and been finished with **miracles**, but **You** graciously chose to bestow the ability to perform **signs and miracles** on the early Church that it would grow as it proclaimed **Messiah Yeshua's** great victory over sin and death.*

*Thank **You** for so clearly fulfilling all the many prophecies in the TaNaKh about the coming **Messiah**. It is especially powerful that **Messiah Yeshua** performed all the **signs and wonders** that **Isaiah** had predicted that **the Messiah** would do. **Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing (Isaiah 35:5-6a). He opened my eyes! . . . Since the beginning of the world,***

no one has ever heard that anyone has opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, He couldn't do anything." (John 9:30c, 32-33). *Thank* ***You*** *for using* ***miracles*** *that so clearly express* ***Your*** *power and Sovereign Godliness to draw people to* ***Yourself****, by* ***Messiah's*** *many and Awesome* ***miracles*** *and as* ***signs*** *to confirm* ***Your Word*** *to the early Church. In* ***Messiah Yeshua's*** *holy* ***Name*** *and power of* ***His*** *resurrection. Amen*

The first of the **gifted** men in the B'rit Chadashah Church were **the apostles**, of whom **Yeshua Messiah Himself** is foremost **(Hebrews 3:1)**. In its primary and most technical sense, **apostle** is used in the B'rit Chadashah only of **the Twelve**, including **Matthias**, who replaced **Judas (Acts 1:26)**, and of **Paul**, who was uniquely set apart as **the apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 1:15-17; First Corinthians 15:7-9; Second Corinthians 11:5).** The qualifications for **apostleship** were having been chosen directly by **Yeshua** and having witnessed the resurrected **Messiah (Mark 3:13; Acts 1:22-24)**. **Paul** was the last to meet those qualifications **(Romans 1:1)**. It is not possible therefore, as some claim, for there to be **apostles** in the Church today. Some have observed that **the apostles** were like delegates to a constitutional convention. When the convention is over, the position ceases.

The term **apostle** is used in a more general sense of other men in the early Messianic Community, such as **Barnabas (Acts 14), Silas and Timothy (First Thessalonians 2:6)**, and few other outstanding leaders **(Romans 16:7; Second Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 2:25**). The **false apostles** spoken of in **Second Corinthians** (see the commentary on **Second Corinthians Bz – Servants of Satan**) no doubt counterfeited this class of **apostleship**, since the others were limited to thirteen and were very well known. **The** true **apostles** in this second group were called **messengers** (Hebrew: *apostoloi*) **of the churches (Second Corinthians 8:23)**, whereas **the thirteen** were **apostles of Yeshua Messiah (Galatians 1:1; First Peter 1:1)**. When the B'rit Chadashah canon of Scripture was completed, and the foundation of the Church had been laid, the office of **apostle** therefore ceased.[159]

However, there is a new unbiblical religious movement called The New Apostolic Reformation, or NAR, which contradicts this biblical teaching. They emphasize experience over Scripture, mysticism over doctrine, and modern-day "apostles" over the plain text of the Bible. Of particular distinction in the NAR are the role and power of spiritual leaders and miracle-workers, the reception of "new" revelations from **God**, an over-emphasis on spiritual warfare, and a pursuit of cultural and

political control in society. The seeking of **signs and wonders** in the New Apostolic Reformation is always accompanied by blatantly false doctrine.

Growth in the NAR is driven primarily through small groups and church planting, often completely independent of a parent congregation. The movement is not centrally controlled, and many of its followers will not self-identify as part of it or even recognize the name. All the same, thousands of churches and millions of believers adhere to the teachings of the New Apostolic Reformation. Popular teachers associated with the New Apostolic Reformation include Bill Johnson, Rick Joyner, Kim Clement, and Lou Engle.

The NAR teaches that **God's** intended form of church governance is "apostles and prophets," holding leadership over evangelists, pastors, and teachers. However, this has not been the case for the vast majority of Christian history. So, according to the NAR, **God** began to restore prophets and apostles over the last thirty to forty years. Only now, as the church is properly guided by the appropriate spiritual leaders, can it fulfill its commission. This commission is seen as more than spiritual, as it includes cultural and political control.

In the NAR, "apostles" are seen as the highest of all spiritual leaders, being specially empowered by **God**. True maturity and unity, per the New Apostolic Reformation, is only found in those who submit to the leadership of their "apostles." According to this teaching, as the church unifies behind "the apostles," these leaders will develop greater and greater supernatural powers. Eventually, this will include the ability to perform mass healings and suspend the laws of physics. These signs are meant to encourage a massive wave of converts. These "apostles" are supposedly to be recipients of a great wealth transfer (in the end times), which will supposedly enable the Church to establish **God's** kingdom on earth.[160]