Transcript - The Protocols_of_ an Elder

Shabbat Shalom again and Shabbat Shalom for those who will be listening with us today.

I've said many times, I'm an ordained elder of YAHWEH for roughly 22 years now, something like that and going back in the year 2009 going into 2010, we had a little cleansing, I guess you could say, in our organization in the leadership in the United States. And unfortunately, there were some men who were not acting very ethical and I came up with a paper called the protocols of an elder and it's basically eight points that elders that come into Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem, need to agree to and need to sign before they're ordained as an elder. I signed it myself.

We have roughly 250 deacons and elders in the Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem, a lot of people. And I've never had a problem, hardly have I ever had a problem with anybody not wanting to sign the protocols or having a problem with the protocols. But there were a few things that happened and even on the internet some people have written some things against this. And that today I wanted to do a sermon on this, to show you that these eight protocols not only are they scriptural …

I mean I wouldn't imagine why anyone would want to be part of a congregation with an elder who would not want to follow these eight basic rules and over the years from that time, I've read the protocols over and over and over, probably close to a hundred times. Reading them, thinking, is there something here that would be against YAHWEH or against scripture? Talked with other elders about it, tweaked it a little bit.

But I want to go over today, because I want to show it to you. And this came up, this problem came up again last year, because of a problem with an elder from Nicaragua that had to be removed because of unethical conduct and sins that were committed down there in Nicaragua. And I had asked the elders once again worldwide to just reaffirm the commitment on the protocols of an elder and we did have two elders in Babylon, Paige King and Joseph Miller, who did not sign the protocols of an elder and left our congregation.

So some false information went around and some things went around about this and I just thought, “You know, the best way to do this is that all the brethren should really know.” I'll read today to you the protocols of an elder. I'll show you where each one is in Scripture and let each person make the decision for themselves.

So, the very first protocol, number one. And this is rules of protocol for elders of the Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem. The very first one is: ***I will serve YAHWEH with all my heart, my mind, my soul and my strength.***

So, my question is right off the bat, if there's something that's starting out with “I will serve YAHWEH with all my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength.” Who can argue with that? Well, let me tell you something. When we had this problem back in 2010 a woman actually wrote a 66 page book on this one little page of Protocols of an elder and most of the book, two-thirds of the book was against that first statement that I had in there. This woman may have had some problems. She had snakes and all this other stuff in the book, but I could imagine how somebody can write page and page and page against something like that.

So that's why I say, in the Laodicean era, you do have to take some of this with a grain of salt. There are just people who don't want leadership. They won't don't want any form of leadership and they don't want to be accountable to any and anything. But as the leader of the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem and I hold myself to a higher standard than anybody, like I said, I'm the very first one to sign the protocols, because I want to serve the elders as much as they're serving with me and that's what judicial order is. It's voluntary and reciprocal.

And I honestly I don't believe that if somebody has a problem with one of these eight mandates, that they qualify to be an elder of YAHWEH. So, I will serve YAHWEH with all my heart, my mind, my soul and my strength. How can we be against it? Let's go to *Matthew 22 in verse 37* and this is when they asked Yahshua, What is the greatest commandment?

Matthew 22:37-38 *And Yahshua said to him, "You shall love YAHWEH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment.*

So, it's the first and greatest commandment. Its saying, right off the bat, that as an elder in our congregation, our first service, everything is toward YAHWEH, period. That is where our loyalty is toward, that is where our integrity is toward and unfortunately today loyalty becomes a bad word.

That people, they were accusing President Trump ... that he asked the man from the FBI to be loyal and we want to impeach him because of that. Well, I'm sorry to tell you, loyalty is not a bad trait. A matter of fact, if you look in the kingdom of YAHWEH, I will guarantee you, there will be people there who never knew that Saturday was the Sabbath. I will guarantee you there'll be people there who never knew that YAHWEH's real name is YAHWEH or Yahshua's real name is Yahshua. Because those are facts they may just have never learned in their life and YAHWEH does judge by the heart and by our works.

But I will guarantee you there will not be one disloyal person in the kingdom of YAHWEH, because it's a character trait to be disloyal. It's a selfish character trait and like I've said, when I've given messages on loyalty ... everybody is loyal to something, every single human being. Satan is loyal. He's loyal to himself. He's loyal to his lies. He's loyal to his own agenda. Every single human being ever born is loyal to something. And you're either loyal to YAHWEH, I will serve YAHWEH with all my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength or you're loyal to yourself or somebody else or something else.

But that's the premise, that if somebody's loyalty doesn't start with YAHWEH, that they should not be an elder, at least in this part of YAHWEH's congregation. *Deuteronomy 6 in verse 4:*

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 *Hear, O Israel, YAHWEH our Elohim is YAHWEH echad. And you shall love YAHWEH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart. And you shall diligently teach them to your sons, and shall speak of them as you sit in your house, and as you walk in the way, and as you are lying down, and as you are rising up. And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand; and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates.*

So very clearly we see that this comes from Deuteronomy 6. *Deuteronomy 10, verse 12 and 13*:

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 *And now, Israel, what has YAHWEH your Elohim asked of you, except to fear YAHWEH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve YAHWEH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul; to keep the commandments of YAHWEH, and His statutes which I am commanding you today, for your good.*

So this is not only a good suggestion to our elders, this is commanded. This is the basis of the commandment is loyalty and service to YAHWEH with all our heart, mind, soul and strength above everything else. *Deuteronomy 11 in verse 13* says:

Deuteronomy 11:13 *And it shall be, if listening you will listen to My commands which I command you today, to love YAHWEH your Elohim, and to **serve Him** with all your heart, and with all your soul,*

And then He says He'll give rain in due season. 18 through 22:

Deuteronomy 11:18 *And you shall lay these Words up in your hearts, and in your souls, and shall bind them for a sign on your hand. And they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.*

Like we said, you think with the mind, you do with your hand. And it's got to be part of your character. All of us as believers, not just elders, but every believer. Our character should be one of loyalty. Our character should be one of honesty, integrity and wanting to serve YAHWEH to the best of our ability. And for anybody who would bring up against that? It's about the most satanic thing that I can ever imagine in my life.

Deuteronomy 11:19 *And you shall teach them to your sons by speaking of them as you sit in your house, and as you walk in the way, …*

The same as we read before. So I think I'll stop there. So, that's Protocol number one. **I will serve YAHWEH with all my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength.**

Protocol number two***. I affirm that I believe in the doctrines and protocols of the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem And will only teach sound doctrine to others, that comes out from Scripture and does not contradict the doctrine from Jerusalem.***

Wow, that's surprising right? That we only want to ordain leaders and give authority to people who will teach proper doctrine. I mean, look at the world we're living in today. It says in the end time ... that in the end time there'll be extra teachers, tickling the ear and bringing false doctrine [2 Pet 2:1]. It's the first thing Yahshua warned us about in the Matthew 24 [verses 5-6], the Olivet prophecy, to watch for false teachers.

So of course. What responsibility would I be holding as the leader of the congregation, if I didn't hold elders, I'm not even saying people, I'm saying elders, if I didn't hold them accountable to teach proper doctrine. If we go to *John 7 in verse 16,* because let's look at why ... what's the premise of it? The premise of it is *John 7:16:*

John 7:16 *Yahshua answered them and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but of the One who sent Me.*

That's number one, the doctrine we teach. We have 23 lessons and we're expanding on that. We have other Bible studies. There is not one doctrine in the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem that is a doctrine of Don Esposito, not one. Every doctrine are the doctrines that are handed down by the Apostles from generation to generation. If there is a new study that YAHWEH is showing us, whether it be on the calendar or something else, all of the elders look at it. All the elders discuss it and before we would ever publicly even teach about in the congregation, there would have to be a sense of unity between the elder hood and which is the way we always do it.

But at the same rate, Hebrews 6, I'm not going to go there, but *Hebrews 6:1 & 2*. What are they? What does it say? These are the basic doctrines of the congregation. What are they? Repentance, faith, baptism, laying on our hands, eternal judgment, resurrection of the dead; these are these are basic doctrines that have been there from time immemorial. They've been there from the beginning of the New Testament congregation and some of them even in the first covenant.

So, of course one of the characteristics of an elder is, he has to be able to teach. We are not going to have somebody and give somebody an authority in the congregation to teach heresy, I mean, that would be ludicrous. *Ephesians 4 in verse 11* and it says:

Ephesians 4:11-14 *And indeed He has assigned some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some shepherds and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Messiah, until we all may come to the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of Elohim, to a full-grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah, so that we may no longer be children, being blown and carried about by every wind of false doctrine of men, who through their craftiness are very skillful in deceiving the people;*

And Yahshua has put His elders in the congregation, Yahshua trained those elders. *Mark 3:14* talks about.

Mark 3:14 *And He ordained twelve, that they might be with Him; and that He might send them out,*

The primary reason Yahshua came to this earth was to pay the penalty of our sins and that we could have forgiveness of those sins. But He didn't need a three-year ministry to do that, two to three years. The reason why Yahshua was here for two to three years was the fact that He had to train elders. He had to train people to take over, because He knew that He would be in heaven and that elders would have to train other elders and train other elders.

And there's been through the years, we're keeping the feast in Jerusalem now for going on 17 years and without fail, as guests come, because every year we have guests that come there. They're amazed at the congregation. They say, "Wow, I've never seen a congregation like this," because the people are loving. They're caring and we all believe the same thing.

So, I don't have to be the only one up there giving a sermon on something. Whoever it is, it doesn't even have to be an elder, somebody in our congregation is talking to someone, whether it's the state of the dead, that there is no mortal soul, that there is no eternal hellfire, women's place in the congregation, all these things, that anyone in our

congregation can teach and share the truth with somebody else. And people are amazed at that and I tell them don't take that for granted, that that just happened, because it doesn't just happen.

If you look at most congregations in the world, you don't have unity of doctrine, even in small groups. Everybody's believing something different and the only way that we have unity of doctrine is, is because our people believe in judicial order. They believe in judicial order and the people believe in the doctrine that we're teaching. And unfortunately, some of the men that left us, believed in it when they first came and then they stopped believing it. Some of them have gotten into some crazy things one time. It was even that Jerusalem is Babylon.

So, it's not that I've changed. I have the same doctrine now that I've always had, but people come sometimes with ulterior motives and they change. The people coming into the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem, all of them that come into the congregation believe in YAHWEH's redemptive end time work from Israel. Everybody wants to come to Israel not because of me, they want to come there because it's YAHWEH's eternal city. And they understand judicial order goes from Jerusalem.

But then there's some people that change that and they stop believing it and they stop believing in this ministry and they stop believing that YAHWEH is working with us, but that's their problem. That's not my problem. I am doing the same thing that I've been doing now for 34 years. I believe how I've always believed except where YAHWEH has enlightened me and things and we've been doing 20 years ministry in Jerusalem that YAHWEH is blessing us with. But the doctrine is important. If we go to *John 8:31*:

John 8:31-32 *Then Yahshua said to the Jews who had believed in Him, If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

It's the truth that sets us free. It's not a book. Many people write to me all the time that read *The Great Falling Away* and they say, "Your book opened my mind to the truth." No. My book was a tool that helped you. YAHWEH's Spirit opened your mind to the truth, because I could have a million people read my book and they wouldn't agree with it. It's only if YAHWEH is opening up your mind. But once He opens your mind to the truth. The truth is the truth of the truth. The truth never changes.

So, I feel bad when people change. When they stop believing in YAHWEH's end-time work from Israel. When they stop believing in a doctrine. When they stop believing in judicial order or they stop believing in whatever the doctrine is. I feel bad for them, but everybody has free will and if people stop believing and leave the congregation or go on their own, all I can do is pray for these people. But it's not my problem. It's not my problem, because I didn't create the problem and like I said, we have to make sure that people are qualified. *Titus 1 in verse 6* and part of the qualification of an elder is that they teach proper doctrine. Titus 1 in verse 6, he says:

Titus 1:6-7 *Appoint only an Elder who is blameless, husband of one wife, having faithful children, not in accusation of loose behavior, or disobedient, for the overseer must be blameless as a steward of Elohim, not self-willed …* Right? Can't be just wanting his own way. Well, why ... if 250 men are all believing this way? Why can't I just bring my false doctrine? Come on, that's not YAHWEH's way. So, he's not someone who's self-willed ... *nor prone to anger, not excessive in the use of wine, not quick to strike with his fist, not greedy of ill gain;*

Titus 1:8-11 *but hospitable, a lover of good, discreet, just, holy, temperate, Holding fast the doctrine of faith, that he may be able both to encourage by* ***sound doctrine*** *and to convict those who are proud. For there are indeed many insubordinate men, empty talkers and deceivers of the people, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouth you must stop, who overturn whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for the sake of ill gain.*

Hey, it happens. Even the Apostle Paul said that there were people in his own midst. I'll read it later, that came up and left the faith. There's nothing I can do about that. But again, when we're looking at the protocols, I have the responsibility before YAHWEH to make sure before someone is considered an elder in this congregation, that they're able to teach sound doctrine. And remember an elder is not a certificate that you get, you don't go to a school and get a certificate like a doctor or an optometrist or whatever and you put it on your wall, CPA and now you're that for life. No, an elder is a job description.

And when somebody is fulfilling that job in the congregation, all the requirements, then they're recognized in the congregation that they are an elder in that congregation. Once somebody disqualifies themselves by not fitting the qualifications of an elder or even leaves the congregations out on their own and teaching a false doctrine, they're no longer qualified by Scripture to be an elder. They've left the covering that was there. So, how on earth can somebody leave your congregation and then, well, how are you an elder by this person? Well, you're an elder with them, but you left him. So that's not an elder That's not an elder someone who is not fulfilling the role anymore within the congregation. It's that simple.

It doesn't mean their life stops at that point. I pray for … there's a lot of people in the end time, the Bible says that, the parable of the sower, there's people that come in there's people that go, And my only prayer is to everybody. It's only good for everybody. It's only that people, whatever road they're on, that YAHWEH will get them to His kingdom and my only focus is the road for Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem, because that's the road YAHWEH put me on.

For people who leave that road, they have to judge themselves, YAHWEH is the judge. It's not me. But all I can say is, "Wow, I'm thankful He put me on this road." Because once you come to the truth, the truth never changes, the truth never changes. So why would I want to change? Why would I, like it says, always learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. And I think it's a horrible road and a horrible life for people who continuously, every couple of years are just doing something else.

When that means leaving your job every couple of years, moving every couple of years or particularly leaving YAHWEH's congregation and moving on. It's one thing to go from Seventh-day Adventist to Jehovah Witness, but where do you go after Mount Zion? Where do you go when you hit the top of the mountain? There's no way to go from there. And what can you do? You'd, like I say, you wish the best for everybody, but that preaching sound doctrine is a requirement. It's a biblical requirement of an elder for YAHWEH. Go over one more. *1st Timothy 1, verse 1*:

1st Timothy 1:1-3 *Paul an apostle of Yahshua Messiah according to a commandment of Elohim our Savior, and the Master Yahshua Messiah, our Hope, to Timothy, a true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, peace from YAHWEH our Father and our Master Yahshua Messiah. Even as I called on you to remain in Ephesus, as I was going to Macedonia, that you might charge some not to teach different doctrines,*

1st Timothy 1:4-7 *nor to give heed to fables and stories of endless genealogies, which cause disputes, rather than build up the faith of Elohim, but the fulfilment of the commandment is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience, and a true faith, from which some have gone astray, and have turned aside to foolish talking, wishing to be teachers of the Torah, neither understanding what they say, nor about that which they confidently affirm.*

That's why I said, some come in they believe the doctrine and then all of a sudden they get off on some wild tangent. And now they're right and everybody else is wrong and what can you do? *1st Timothy 4, verse 1 and 2*:

1st Timothy 4:1-2 *But the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, following deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, who with false appearance mislead and will speak lies in hypocrisy, being seared in their own conscience* ... drop down to verse 6

1st Timothy 4:6 *Having suggested these things to the brethren, you will be a good minister of Yahshua Messiah, having been nourished by the Words of faith, and by the good doctrine which you have followed ...* Drop down to verse 13.

1st Timothy 4:13-16 *Until I come, be diligent in reading, and in prayer, and in teaching. Do not neglect the gift in you, which was given to you through prophecy, with laying on of the hands of the Elder hood. Meditate upon these things; give yourself wholly to them, that it may be plain in all that you are progressing. Give attention to yourself and to your doctrine; and be firm in them, for doing this, you will both deliver yourself and those hearing you.*

So, wow. I mean, it is one of the most foundational things of an elder, that the elder is the teacher. He's the one that the people are following and if the blind leading the blind, if an elder does not have proper doctrine, he's not going to be followed. So, certainly I'm proud to be able to have that. That they'll only teach sound doctrine from Scripture and it does not contradict the doctrine from Jerusalem.

Number three. ***I affirm that I will support to the best of my ability the leadership of the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem, set up by YAHWEH through elder Don Esposito from Jerusalem and will do my best to be a servant under him.***

So why would anybody have a problem with that? Why would anybody, a believer ... isn't that what we do in the congregation? To be the best servants of everybody? So why would an elder ... if we're telling the brethren that the brethren need to serve and the brethren need to be respectful of judicial order and the elders, then why on earth wouldn't an elder be respectful of the judicial order to each other and support the leadership. *1st Corinthians 1:10*:

1st Corinthians 1:10 *Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Master Yahshua Messiah that you all say the same thing, and there be no divisions among you, but you be united in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

Well, I look at it and I say - you know something? I thank YAHWEH so much that He put me as the leader of this congregation here, now. Because He could have put me anywhere. Wherever He would have put me, I would have did it. But I am so thankful, because I have such good men under me. Like I said, we have about 250 elders and deacons around the world, that are such fine men that I can trust, I can rely on, that go on mission trips, that work and serve, they help with the feast. It's just I am humbled at the spirit of these people and I thank YAHWEH for it.

But why would anybody not want to serve? Why would anybody not want a spirit of unity in the elderhood? If there's not a spirit of unity between the leaders, how on earth are the people ever going to be unified? And all it's going to do, is bring doubt into the people. That's what happens when an elder goes off track or starts teaching a false doctrine or even leaving the congregation. What happens? It's causing doubt and it's causing people to fall away. And it's a sad state of affairs. *Hebrews 13 in verse 7*, it says:

Hebrews 13:7, 17 *Remember your leaders who spoke the Word of Elohim to you, considering the completeness of their works, imitate their faith …* verse 17 of Hebrews 13 ... *Listen to your spiritual leaders, and submit to them, for they watch for your souls, giving an account, that they may do this with joy, and not with grieving; for this would be unprofitable to you.*

Of course we want to have a spirit of unity. I mean, like I said, I'm teaching the Bible school for more than 12 years and this is what I teach. How we need to surrender. As an elder you have to realize there's something in life that's bigger than you. This is about the kingdom of YAHWEH and it's not easy. And that's why I honor the other elders in the congregation and I really I look up to them, because I know it's not easy being an elder.

Being an elder myself, I know the sacrifice it takes in your life with your family, with financial things. So many things are sacrificed as an elder, but you do it because you want to serve YAHWEH with all your heart, your mind, your soul and your strength. And you want to serve your other elders and help them. And you want to serve YAHWEH's people and that's the reason why we do it. So, I don't know why anybody would have a problem with that.

Number four. Protocol four, like I said, there's eight all together. ***I affirm that I will fully support the network of elders in the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem and I will not slander, gossip or backbite any elder or a member of his family. In the case of an elder breaking protocol, I will go to that elder directly and will also report the incident to elder Don.***

So, that's another one. It's hard for me to figure out why would somebody have a problem? “You mean I can't backbite somebody. You mean I can't slander and gossip. No, no, no. No, I don't want to be an elder. That's not for me. If I can't backbite and slander. What good is being an elder?” I mean, come on, let's be serious about this. Why would anybody?

And you know what? I'll tell you something I've been an elder, like I said, 22 years. I only had to develop this in the end of 2009 unfortunately, because this is exactly what people who are calling themselves elders, were doing. They were gossiping behind each other's backs, behind family members. Like I said, recently an elder had to be dismissed from Nicaragua, because he was talking about sins of brethren that were repented of already and couldn't hold a confidence with the people that he's counseling with.

Come on, as elders we need to be held to a higher standard and if you can't be held to that standard. Hayahad, our school, we say raising the bar; if you can't raise the bar then you don't qualify for the position as an elder. If you can't so much submit to ‘I won't gossip and backbite people’, then someone's going to have a problem with that. And you know

why some people don't want to agree to it? Because they actually do want to. Unfortunately, there are people there that are addicted to gossip and it's a sad state of affairs. Let's see what scripture says, *Philippians 2 in verse 1*, he says:

Philippians 2:1-4 *So then, if there is any comfort in Messiah, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any mercies and compassions, complete my joy, by being in one accord, and one love, and one soul, and one mind. Doing nothing according to strife or self-glory, but in humility, let each regard his neighbor as better than himself; let no one be mindful only of his own things, but let each one also be mindful of the things of his neighbor.*

This isn't just for elders; this is for all of us. That it is our whole convocation as a believer is to not be thinking selfishly of ourself, but to be sacrificing for each other, and certainly not gossiping or backbiting, because who is the accuser of the brethren in Revelation 12? Satan the devil. That's why I say, you want to get on Satan's payroll, you want a paid position, you want to get on Satan's payroll? Start gossiping about other people, because it talks about Revelation 12 [verse 10] that Satan stands before the throne of YAHWEH and attacking and accusing the saints of YAHWEH day and night.

That's his job, that's what he does, a false accuser, and do we want to follow in those footsteps? Of course not, no, we want to be like this, we want to be unifying each other, we want to be working together with each other, we certainly don't want to be like Satan the devil. *Proverbs 18:13* says:

Proverbs 18:13 *If one turns back a matter before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*

So like I say here, if there's a problem with another elder, you go to him directly. You don't want to be gossiping about an elder to the brethren, you want to go to that person directly, that's what Scripture says, *Matthew 18:15*, you want to go to that person and you want to try to work out the problem. If they can't work out the problem, then they can come to me and I can mediate it. *Proverbs 26:17*:

Proverbs 26:17 *One passing by, crossing himself over strife that is not his own, is like one who grabs a dog's ears.*

And you know something? And this is in this Oprah Winfrey society we live in, where everybody wants to give their opinion to everything, this is where even elders, there's times where people will come to me and I'll say, “I'm sorry, I'm not going to get involved in that, I don't want to give you an opinion”. I'm here as an elder, I'm here to teach, I'm here to encourage, I'm here to mediate if there's problems between people, but I'm not here to make judgments on people's lives that never asked me to, it's that simple. If you ask me I'd be happy to give you my advice, if you don't ask me I'm going to keep my opinion to myself.

And we need to do the same thing, we need to stop judging other brethren and thinking what they're doing is this way or this way. Who are we to judge another man's servant, right? Like it says in the book of Jacob [4:12], didn't Yahshua die for each of us? Aren't we the servant of Him? So why should somebody else be judging whether what we're doing is right or wrong with our time or with this or with that?

It's not up to us to do that. That doesn't mean we can't encourage people. It doesn't mean if we see a brother or sister going down the wrong path, you can't come and ... that's what it [Mat 18:15] says, you go to them privately and you try to share it. But getting involved in other people's business when we're not asked, we shouldn't be doing.

Number five here, number five of these protocols. It says, ***I affirm that I will not keep any contact with anyone who has been publicly named as a dissident against this ministry and/or has brought dissension and false doctrine into the congregational leadership.***

Well, I mean, I think that's pretty understandable. Somebody who may have had to be dis-fellowshipped from the ministry, who is lying about the ministry, who is attacking us, falsely accusing us online, lying about us to other people. Why on earth would an elder, a leader, that people are looking up to, why would they want to have any contact with somebody like that? I mean, this is just logic. If somebody can't figure that out, and then there's a problem there.

And I'll tell you something, I have been a loyal person since I was born. I know where my loyalties go to. And not in a million years would I ever want contact with somebody who was attacking my family or attacking my close friends or viciously lying about something. And it's not the elder we're really protecting, it's YAHWEH. This is YAHWEH's congregation, this is YAHWEH's doctrine.

YAHWEH is the one leading it and when somebody is viciously, falsely accusing YAHWEH's congregation on anything, they're really accusing YAHWEH. Didn't Moses say that? You're not accusing us, you're accusing YAHWEH and that's really what it comes down to. We go to Romans 16, *Romans 16 in verse 17*, he says:

Romans 16:17 *And brothers I exhort you to mark those making divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and turn away from them.*

So, it's very clearly, like we said, somebody who comes in the congregation because they say they believe in our doctrine, now when they come in and they start getting the ears of other people, they're changing the doctrine and bringing a false doctrine. He says, *mark these people*. He says mark them and don't listen to them. *Turn away from them*.

Romans 16:18-19 *For such ones do not serve our Master Yahshua Messiah, but their own belly, and by smooth speaking and flattering they deceive the hearts of the simple people. For your obedience is known by everyone; therefore, I rejoice over you. But I desire you to be truly wise as to good things, but pure toward evil things.*

So, it's pretty simple, that somebody who is bringing in dissension, false doctrine or whatever, praise YAHWEH, it's very rare, it has to be done, but when somebody like that is marked, no one or an elder should not be keeping contact with somebody who's a dissident. Because all it's going to do is, it's going to bring ... it's going to put doubts in the mind of the brethren.

Because the brethren are saying why is elder so-and-so have in contact with this person when this person is falsely accused the congregation or this person is teaching this false doctrine or this person is saying these false things against elder Don. Whatever it is, it just it's not proper and it's not loyal. That elder is not being loyal to YAHWEH, he's not being loyal to me as the leader of the congregation and he's not being loyal to the other 250 elders and deacons, when they do that. So that's why the protocols here, *Titus 3 in verse 10. Titus 3 in verse 10* says:

Titus 3:10-11 *After the first and second warning, avoid a man of heresy knowing that he who has been such is corrupt; he sins and condemns himself.*

So, very simple, you try the Matthew 18 process. You go to the person, you try to restore them. If they won't listen you, bring witnesses. If they don't listen to the witnesses, then you have to mark them and you bring it before the congregation. It's that simple.

And like I said, praise YAHWEH, in all the years of our ministry we've only had to do that a couple of times, because it's the last thing you want to do. You pray the person might repent somewhere down the line, but in a few of those rare circumstances when somebody really was evil, you had to do it for the protection of the brethren, that they understand that this person is not a good person.

Number six. ***I hereby affirm that I fully understand the protocol of the relationship of myself as an elder working with Elder Don Esposito and the COYJ, Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem. It is based on mutual respect and loyalty and trust. I also understand the role presently given to Elder Don from Jerusalem, for keeping proper doctrine and the worldwide preaching work and the leadership training. But local autonomy within the local leadership is kept in the local area. Our mutual submission is based on mutual trust and understanding that the local elders support Jerusalem as YAHWEH's headquartered city and Jerusalem also submits to the local elders in their given area.***

And that was a point I wanted to put in there so that people do understand judicial order is voluntary and reciprocal. So again, when you have someone falsely accusing that, “Oh, I'm trying to control this or control that.” Why on earth would I put that in there? That the local autonomy stays in the local area, it's the way I've always believed it's the way it is from Scripture. The law goes forth from Zion the Word of YAHWEH from Jerusalem [Isa 2:3; Mic 4:3].

Jerusalem is there to set up the feast sites. That's where the people come and appear before YAHWEH at the feast sites. That's where the training comes from like it talks about in the Bible. And that's where decisions are made from, hard decisions and doctrine. That's my job. I don't want to go past there.

What happens in the local area I couldn't tell you. Like I said, we have hundreds of elders and congregations all over the world. I get reports from the senior elders on general things going on. If there's a problem that I can help, if they ask me to mediate in something, I'm happy to do it. But what goes on the local congregation I couldn't even tell you, because it's not my responsibility.

When I come to areas sometimes as a guest speaker and the local brethren will say something to me, I'll say, “You need to work this out with your local elders. I'm not here for that. I'd be happy to mediate if the elders want me to, but I'm not there.” And I've never tried to usurp the authority in the local area.

But what happens sometimes is, and this is where we had a problem, that unfortunately there were a few men that were ordained that should not have been ordained and mistakes happen. I am the first one to admit, if I had to do it again, there's certain men I would never have ordained. Because you can't ordain somebody hoping that he's going to become an elder. You ordain somebody when he's an elder.

Now when we started and our congregation was smaller and you're looking for help and leadership and people offering that, they could have did that without ordination. Because technically they weren't fulfilling the role of an elder. They didn't have a congregation. They didn't have any people following them. And in almost every case when someone was ordained without a congregation, they were idle. They had nothing to do. And what did they try to do? They're trying to do what I'm doing.

So, when they try to usurp authority that YAHWEH never gave them and they're not allowed to, then they try to turn the table and say you're a controlling spirit. No, I'm not a controlling spirit. Like I said, work in the area you're living in. Work in the local area you're doing. Do the Matthew 24 project. I would tell all our elders, I'll give you names; I'll help you to do meetings in your local area.

But the ones who we had problems with were people who didn't want that. They didn't want to be elders and pastors. They didn't want to work in a local congregation. They wanted to do what I'm doing. They perceived that somehow it's more glamorous or whatever. And I could tell you, it's a lot more responsibility and I would have never asked for it, but YAHWEH put me here. I'm honored and I'm glad and I'll do my best. But it's not an easy job that I have. And that's where we've had problems with people, but clearly right in the protocols, it clearly says, autonomy stays in the local area.

Number seven goes along with it. ***I hereby affirm that I fully agree that democracy in YAHWEH's congregation is unscriptural and will not be administered in any form. But I agree with the congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem using the governmental structure to adhere to in Deuteronomy.*** I mean in **Deuteronomy 17:8-13** and **Micah 4:2.** ***In doing so, I understand that doctrinal issues are to be set out by Elder Don in Jerusalem with the International Council of Elders that we have. And the local congregation will keep full autonomy to administer those doctrines to the brethren.***

I mean, it's that simple. Because a man is ordained it does not give him the authority to teach anything he wants to. And that's why I say, **it's autonomy with responsibility** … it's autonomy with responsibility. The same way I have responsibility, because if I teach something that's unscriptural and it goes out to the world, you better believe I'm going to have many, many people coming back to me.

So, all of us... like I said, I sign the protocols of an elder, all of us are under the same standard. Autonomy with responsibility based on mutual respect, loyalty and trust, And like I said, most problems that I had with leaders that wound up leaving us in the past, for people that were idle, that really were not leaders. I mean, there were a couple of men I took years grooming them and coming to America and doing meetings, trying to set them up as a leader and they never wanted to. They never took the reins. They never fulfilled it and like I say, I repent to YAHWEH for laying hands on a couple of those men, because they were not fulfilling the role of an elder in the congregation.

Number eight, the last one***. I hereby affirm that if there is any problem that I have with anything that is being done from the International Council of Elders or Elder Don at the headquarters, I will go directly to Elder Don and/or one of the council members and try to work out the problem. I also affirm that I will always act in a respectful, distinguished and ambassadorial like fashion, when dealing with Elder Don and the International Council of Elders.***

That's number eight. So again, what does someone want to do? “No, no, no. I want the right to be disrespectful to you.” No, it's not the way it works. I am not disrespectful to other elders, no matter what the situation is, I always try to carry myself as an ambassador of YAHWEH and this is what we teach at the Bible school. That an ambassador of YAHWEH, it's

a state of being. You have to always be in state. It doesn't matter where you are, it doesn't matter what you're doing. You always have to be in state as an ambassador of YAHWEH, That this is what our calling is.

So, as an elder, you always need to be in state as an elder. Will problems come up? Of course problems come up. But if a problem comes up, then great. I always tell, you could write me with anything; it doesn't matter if you disagree. That's fine, we'll talk about it, we'll discuss it. As long it's done in a respectful way. And unfortunately, like I said, in the one or two cases where an elder refused to sign this protocol and left our congregation, I don't believe it was even the protocol that even was the problem.

Because with one man, he signed the protocol in 2010 and then he refused it in 2016 and came right out and told me he doesn't believe in my leadership anymore. So the problem was he stopped believing in YAHWEH's end time work from Jerusalem. It had nothing to do with the protocol. And if you stop believing in YAHWEH's end time work in Jerusalem, then what are you going to do? You're going to start being disrespectful, you're going to start believing in your own doctrine, you're going to go your own way. Which is fine, people have free will. But they're not qualifying any longer to be an elder of YAHWEH. So, *Matthew 18:15* says:

Matthew 18:15 *And if your brother with you is at fault, go rebuke him, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.*

That's the Matthew 18 process. So, any elder, anywhere, that would maybe have a disagreement or whatever it might be I want him to be open. Recently I was on an international mission trip and there's an elder who we have in our congregation, internationally, who has been going out on mission trips and he said to me, “I need about an hour with you. That I'd like to talk to you.” And when we got together, he said, “Look, I apologize, but I have two problems with two doctrines that I want to discuss with you, because I can't preach this doctrine if I don't understand it.” And I said, “Don't apologize, that is a great thing to do. I wouldn't want you to teach something that you didn't understand or believe.” I sat down with the man for an hour, went over everything and “boom!” he got it. That's what it's about.

So, it's not forcing anybody's will on anybody else. The answers are in the Bible. We have 23 lessons in the Bible, those are awesome Bible lessons; 23 lessons online rather from the Bible. There is no hole in any of our doctrine. It is solid. No matter what it is and when people study it from Scripture, whether it's the marriage covenant, whether, like I said, it's there's no mortal soul, the eternal reward of the saved. We have all the scriptures there.

And that's the point, that somebody who is going to be ordained, they have to understand proper doctrine. And if they don't believe in that doctrine, they don't qualify to be an elder. That's very clear, the Bible says he must be able to teach and you have to believe in the doctrine to be able to teach. So, that's a fine thing and that's what somebody should do, but you know at the end of the day, *1st Timothy 3 in verse 1*, this is about qualifications of an elder, it says:

1st Timothy 3:1 *Faithful is the Word: If anyone desires the office of an Elder, he desires a good work.*

And to be an elder of YAHWEH, it really is its sacrifice, its humility, and its faithfulness. And that's why I said, most of our elders being in third world countries, I admire them. Because these people, they don't have money, nobody's getting paid, including myself. There's not one paid elder in the whole organization of Congregation of YAHWEH Jerusalem. And those guys are going out there and working day and night for YAHWEH, because they're convicted.

And like I always say, I remember the Bible sticker, the bumper sticker, not Bible sticker, bumper sticker that I saw years ago, that it says, an elder of YAHWEH, *the pay is not great, but the retirement plan is excellent*. That's why I do it. Why else would I do it unless I believed it with all my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength? I believe in 100% of what I'm doing.

Somebody came up to me one time, years ago and they said, “You know what the problem is with you? You think that everything you believe is right.” And I said, “Well, of course I do. If I didn't think it was right, I wouldn't teach it. I'm not a hypocrite.” That's why I say who I am is who I am. You may like it or you may not like it, but I don't put on an act. I am who I am. And of course, if I didn't believe what I'm teaching, I wouldn't be teaching it. So of course I believe what I'm teaching. The difference is, though, I can prove it.

I can prove it. Every single doctrine that I have, I can prove it. And I've had people before that came up to me and they

start out with, “Oh, we love your teaching, but there's one thing you have wrong.” Okay, maybe I do. And then we got into it, whether it was the deity of Yahshua or something else. And I would say to them, “Okay, if I'm wrong, I'll change. But if you're wrong, will you change?”

And I listen to their five or ten minute spiel, where there's usually one scripture they're going into that they're misinterpreting. And then I'll show them from the Hebrew where they're wrong. And now I'll go into scripture after scripture after scripture, proving them wrong. And I say, “Well, now will you change?” And they usually put their head down and walk away because of pride.

And I have changed. I have changed with things. I didn't believe in the sacred name when I became a believer for almost 15 years. I was using God and Jesus. I found out about the name of YAHWEH. I studied it out. I saw that that's His name in scripture. And I believed it because it's true. And that's the key, **the truth never changes** … the truth never changes.

Why am I here after 34 years as strong as ever? Because I don't look to the right and I don't look to the left. Whatever I believed in, whatever I embraced, whatever I know to be true, I never changed it because the truth doesn't change. And yet things that I didn't maybe know totally, I've been growing in the grace and knowledge of our Master Yahshua Messiah.

But if I'm going to work with people and I give 100% of myself, I've been in my own business my whole life. I have treated all my workers like family. I would do anything for a worker because that person was working for me. He was putting food on my table and I wanted to make sure anything he needed, I was there for him. I always felt that way. Always felt I would do anything for a worker that worked for me because it's family. And it's the same thing here.

That the elders, and they can tell you, we have 250, like I said, elders and deacons, talk to them. They know I love them. They know what I would do for them. They know my heart. And they know we work together. Because they'll serve me and I'll serve them. And that's judicial order. It's a two-way street. And I'm with them. But at the same rate, I take my job serious. And I owe it to YAHWEH first. I owe it to the brethren second. And I owe it to the other elders and myself third. To make people hold to these eight points. There's nothing in these eight points.

And like I said, I went over them over and over and over again. There's nothing in these eight points that is against Scripture. Serve YAHWEH with my heart, my mind, my soul, my strength. Must teach sound doctrine. Support the leadership. Don't slander or gossip other elders. Should not keep contact with dissidents. The congregation is autonomous, but with responsibility. And any problem with me or the council of elders, come directly. Don't gossip.

Let me ask a question now. Why would any person who claims to be a servant of YAHWEH, not want to put their signature on that? I had one person tell me recently who wouldn't sign that. He left our congregation. He said, “Well, my word is my bond. I don't need to sign anything.”

I said, “How would that sound when you go in for a loan of a car? And they say, ‘Okay, Mr. Esposito, we approved your loan. We're giving you the car. Everything is great. Just sign the paper.’ And I said, ‘Well, you know what? No, I'll pay you the money back. But I don't want to sign that paper.’” What is that saying? If I don't want to sign that loan paper, that means I don't plan on keeping my commitment there.

And if I was going to keep my commitment, I'd have no problem with signing it. And the very person who said to me, my word is my bond, broke his word to me, broke his word when we made an agreement on a certain issue. And he gave me his word about that issue. And almost immediately within one month, he went back on his word. And we had many, many witnesses to prove it. So if somebody's word is their bond that means a lot. You better make sure that your word really is your bond.

And if you're an elder of YAHWEH, or you claim to be an elder of YAHWEH and you can't commit to uphold to these eight basic tenets that just give us a vision of what kind of standard we need to hold to, then I'm sorry you don't qualify as an elder of YAHWEH.

Let me tell you something else. I know a lot of the leaders in the other sacred name congregations. I've seen from these congregations some of their requirements of elders. And they're way, way more stringent than us. Some of them are pages and pages and pages. And I'm glad for it. I'm glad for it. Because when you give authority to somebody, if they abuse that authority, they're going to hurt other people. And we should make sure and even in our congregation, we've

changed the rules a little bit, how long someone needs to wait to become an elder and a senior elder because we don't want people in leadership hurting the brethren.

The last thing here ***that it says is, I hereby affirm that I have fully read the above agreement, and I am willingly agreeing to the above protocol, and will do my best to be a loyal servant in this network. I also affirm as an elder of YAHWEH that I will always try my utmost best to be honest and forthright and bring a spirit of unity into His congregation. I also understand that if I break any of the above protocol, I may be censured and or removed from the network.***

And that's the part why they don't want to sign it, because they don't believe in it. Anybody who doesn't believe in my leadership or believe in this congregation or know that they're going to go behind my back and try to work against me, they won't sign it. But I have 99% of the people I've worked with that have signed it and had no problem and I can say this much.

I said at the beginning of this, there were two men last year who left our congregation as elders because they didn't want to sign it. I've never had to remove somebody for breaking it. So it's not a trap to get somebody to sign it to get them out of there. Because if somebody is committed, even if they made a mistake, we would try to work with the person. You try to work with them.

But nobody has been removed simply for breaking one of these protocols. Only two men have left the congregation, because they didn't want to sign it. But it is what it is. I take my job serious. And like I said, at Hayahad, we are raising the bar. And elders do need to be held to a higher standard. The last scripture is *Acts 20 in verse 17*.

Because some people say, “Well, you know what, if somebody was ordained an elder, how could they not be an elder anymore?” Well, the Apostle Paul went through the same thing. And like I said, it's not a degree you put on a wall, it's a job description. Same with me. If I did something tomorrow, if I left my wife and married another person, I'm not qualified to be an elder anymore. You're only an elder when you're qualifying according to the scripture. *Acts 20 in verse 17*.

Acts 20:17 *And sending to Ephesus from Miletus he* … Paul ... *called for the elders of the congregation.*

So, now Paul calls the elders, he's there with them for three years and he's getting ready to leave. And look what he says to them, very interesting. Drop down to verse 25.

Acts 20:25-28 *And now, I know that you will see my face no more, all of you among whom I have traveled and preached the kingdom of YAHWEH. Because of this I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all. For I did not keep back from declaring to you all the counsel of Elohim. Then take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit placed you as overseers, to shepherd the congregation of YAHWEH which He purchased through His own blood.*

Acts 20:29-31 *For I know this, that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and out of you yourselves will rise up men speaking perverted things, in order to draw away the disciples after themselves. Because of this watch, remembering that I did not cease admonishing each one with tears night and day for three years.*

Wow. So, here's Paul saying the same thing. Men he ordained, men he laid hands on. He says, I know when I leave, these men that I even ordained myself, are going to rise up for their own pride, for their own worldly ambition and they're going to pull the flock away and separate them. It's human nature … its human nature.

It could happen to me. And that's why I keep myself straight. I don't look to the right or the left, because I don't want it to happen. I know it can happen. And I know it happens when we get our focus off the kingdom of YAHWEH. I know it happens when the cares of the world come in, when we're not praying, we're not studying, we're not fasting, and we’re not meditating.

We need to keep our focus on YAHWEH. That's the way to stay strong because we're all human beings. It doesn't matter what your job description is, whether it's elder, deacon, usher or doorkeeper, any of us can fall away if we allow Satan to

get us away with the cares of life. And that's why I say, Hayahad, raising the bar. We have to have the highest standard to live by.

How could one qualify to be an elder if he could not agree to such a simple one-page Bible standard? And what kind of person ... most, to be honest with you ... The problems that we've had and the criticism I've had from this *Protocols of an Elder*, have been 99% of people that are not part of our congregation. Why would somebody who's not part of this congregation, has nothing to do with me or anybody else, why would they care what agreement I have with anybody? What business is it of theirs that if me and elders are making an agreement to be honest and trustworthy and loyal to each other? Why would they care?

You know why they care? They care because judicial order is working in the Congregation of YAHWEH, Jerusalem, and they hate it. They're allowing Satan to attack their mind, like I said, even a woman writing a 66-page book on what I just went over. Can you imagine, on that one-page little document? And she was never part of our congregation, never had anything to do with us.

Sometimes people have too much time on their hands. But this is what happens, that people that are not part of us, they see it working, and because they're Laodicean and because they're by themselves, they become bitter and they become jealous. And they hate the fact that we submit to each other. They hate the fact that we all believe in the same doctrine. They hate the fact that we're united and we love each other. They hate the fact. What can I do? I can only pray for them. That's all I can do.

But I can honestly say that more than 90% of any of the criticism I've gotten from the *Protocols of an Elder*, have been from people that never had anything to do with our congregation. They see these points as evil, because they don't have them in their character. So what I'm saying, we need to be loyal, we need to be trustworthy. Look what I said here, that we need to be loyal, honest and forthright and trustworthy.

These people, they don't have those character traits in their personality and that's why they're going to attack you. Because anyone who does believe in that, I would never, I don't care what it would be for, why would I ever attack somebody for wanting honesty and trustworthiness? And you want to know something? There have been numerous people that have joined our congregation and have told me that that was the reason why they joined, they said when they saw that.

Someone came up to them and said, “Don't join that congregation, look what the elders have to sign.” And they read it and said, “Wow, I want to be in that congregation. Those elders work with loyalty and integrity and honor, and they won't gossip or backbite, I'm in, I'm going to join that congregation.” So, it just depends. It depends, but if people don't have those character traits in their character, then they're not going to understand it.

The word disciple is used on what we are. People ask me many times, what do you call yourself? Well, Yahshua ... the word Christian is in the Bible three times, the word believer is in the Bible four times, but Yahshua called us disciples, 250 times. It comes from the word discipline. A disciple has to be disciplined and an elder even has to be more disciplined.

We need to realize there's something bigger here than us, and that's where our loyalty has to go to YAHWEH in serving him. And in *1 Timothy 3* [verses 2-7], I'm not going to go there, but the characteristics of an elder that are there, are a summary of our protocol. It's that simple. And as long as I'm the senior elder of the congregation, I will hold myself up first, to this standard and I will hold others that are going to work with me to the same standard, because I love them.

And we all work together. It's like a fraternity. It's like a 2,000-year-old fraternity that's here from the time of the apostles. And in the kingdom, we're all going to see each other. And I don't want to be the lowest on that totem pole of integrity and honor for this position of being an elder of Yahshua. No, I want to hold it to the highest integrity, because you know something? Someone ordained me and gave me that baton and I've got to pass that baton to somebody else.

And who knows if I'm alive until Yahshua returns, if I'm passing that baton to Yahshua. So I want to give this office of an elder to the next person with the highest honor and integrity that it deserves as a set-apart position and job description that YAHWEH gives to His people. So, YAHWEH bless. Shabbat shalom.