

July 1995

Nottingham, England

Disciple — Apprenticeship Program

To be a disciple is to be an apprentice to His throne (Rev 3:20-21). Discipleship is apprenticeship — in training on how to be a servant. A disciple is a learner — learning to be like Yahshua. He is our mentor and model (Phil 2:2-4). Verse 5 — This is the way all disciples are. Verse 7 — He made Himself of no reputation, emptied Himself of His privileges, made void (2758), divested of any kind of natural strength; he reduced Himself (Rom 12:3), as Paul did even of his right as a preacher (1 Cor 9:14-15).

Our Master is the One after whom we model ourselves. We are His apprentices, to become like Him. We must empty ourselves of all natural strength and desire to be somebody, or to be acknowledged, or respected as some kind of leader or authority figure (Phil 2:5-8). Verse 9 — Therefore God highly exalted Him (1 Pet 5:6).

The word *void* — made Himself void (Phil 2:7) — means divested of all earthly strength (*divest*: unclothe, strip, dispossess, deprive), or natural strength in order to do God's will. He did not seek to be equal with God in His own estimation of Himself (verse 6).

This means that, if we are in apprenticeship for the throne of God, ruling over the universe, we have to be like the Son of God who qualified. Now God is looking for many sons like His First Born who divested Himself of all natural human strength that could operate without God's Spirit, and that could do God's will in the flesh. His own natural strength would cause Him to not rely on God's strength, but be as fallen Adam, independent of His Father.

Phil 2:7 describes Messiah, the human (John 1:14) — the self-emptying of the glories of His Deity, but to walk on earth as a human, dependent upon God as God created man to be. By being totally dependent on Him man could work together. If Yahshua could divest or empty Himself of all the glory of Deity, making Himself of no reputation, emptying Himself of all His privileges as Deity, we, then, as His apprentices, must empty ourselves of the flesh.

He veiled the manifestations of Deity and assumed real humanity, being born of a woman, coming in the likeness of a created being — man. He became like us so that we could become like Him! His emptying Himself of all Deity reflects that we must empty ourselves of all fallen human strength that functions without God.

He *became* — *became* denotes prior existence in another form, transition, change from one state to another (John 1:14). We, fallen as we are, must *become* — be changed, renewed, made over, restored to the original, transformed into His image and likeness, by veiling our fallen human nature which wants to exalt itself, and we must take the form of a servant, trusting Him to put us in our right place in the Body (Eph 4:12). This is the only way to be restored to His image. There is no other way — obedience is required (Phil 2:5-9).

So, here we are involved totally in our apprenticeship to the life of Yahshua, as He chose to lay aside His divine form and adopt the lowly form of man. And even as man He did not choose wealth, power, worldly position, or to be recognized due to His divinity. He did not choose His natural human nature independent of His Father's help and direction. Instead he became the Servant of all. In every way and in every thing He humbled Himself, trusting His Father. As His disciples we are to do what He did — no *less* than He did it, and, of course, no *more* than He did it. We must adopt His attitude of unselfishness, servanthood, humility, and obedience (1 John 2:6), so that when He comes we will have been made like Him in every way and in every thing (1 John 3:2-3).