

~OVERSEER (534)

[Hebrew, *pa-qidh'*, Greek, *e-pi'sko-pos*]

- Overseers In The Hebrew Scriptures
- Overseers In The Christian Congregation
- Qualifications Of An Overseer, Or Elder
- The Supreme Overseer
- Busybody In Other Peoples Matters
- Overseers, Or Older Men, And Ministerial Servants

- The Hebrew word for overseer, *pa-qidh'*, is drawn from the verb *pa qadh'*; meaning, turn attention to.
- And Yehowah **turned his attention** to Sarah just as he had said; and Yehowah now did to Sarah just as he had spoken. (**Genesis 21:1**)
- **Visit**
- And it came about after a while, in the days of wheat harvest, that Samson went **visiting** his wife with a kid of the goats. So he said; I will go in to my wife in the interior room. And her father did not allow him to go in. (**Judges 15:1**)
- **Appoint**
- And it followed that from the time he **appointed** him over his house and in charge of all that was his Yehowah kept blessing the house of the Egyptian due to Joseph, and Yehowah's blessing came to be upon all that he had in the house and in the field. (**Genesis 39:5**)
- **Commission**
- This is what Cyrus the king of Persia has said; All the kingdoms of the earth Yehowah the God of the heavens has given me, and he himself has **commissioned** me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. (**Ezra 1:2**)
- Similarly, the Greek word for **overseer**, *e-pi'sko-pos*, is related to the verb *e-pi-sko-pe'o*, meaning, **watch carefully**.
- **Carefully watching** that no one may be deprived of the

undeserved kindness of God, that no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it. (Hebrews 12:15)

- And to the noun *e-pi-sko-pe'*, meaning, **inspection**.
- And they will dash you and your children within you to the ground, and they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you, because you did not discern the time of your being **inspected**. (Luke 19:44) *Int*
- Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his inspection. (1 Peter 2:12)
- Office of **overseer**
- That statement is faithful. If any man is reaching out for an **office of overseer**, he is desirous of a fine work. (1 Timothy 3:1)
- Office of oversight
- For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his lodging place become desolate, and let there be no dweller in it, and, His **office of oversight** let someone else take. (Acts of Apostles 1:20)
- The **Greek Septuagint** renders the **Hebrew word** *pa-qidh'* four times as *e-pi'sko-pos*.
- And Gaal the son of Ebed went on to say; Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul a **commissioner** of his? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father, you others, but why should we ourselves serve him? (Judges 9:28)
- And Joel the son of Zichri, an **overseer** over them, and Judah the son of Hassenuah over the city as second. (Nehemiah 11:9)
- And their brothers, mighty men of valor, a hundred and twenty-eight, and there was an **overseer** over them, Zabdiel the son of the great ones. (Nehemiah 11:14)
- And the **overseer** of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of

Bani the son of Hashabiah the son of Mattaniah the son of Mica of the sons of Asaph, the singers, concerning the work of the house of the true God. (**Nehemiah 11:22**)

- Therefore, the **overseer** was one who gave attention to certain matters or persons, **visiting, inspecting, and appointing**. Protective supervision is a basic idea inherent in the **Greek** term.

•• **Overseers In The Hebrew Scriptures**

- **Joseph counseled Pharaoh to appoint overseers over the land to lay up stores during the years of plenty against the coming famine.**
- **Let Pharaoh act and appoint overseers over the land, and he must take up one fifth of the land of Egypt during the seven years of plenty. (**Genesis 41:34**)**
- **And let them collect all the foodstuffs of these coming good years, and let them pile up grain under Pharaoh's hand as foodstuffs in the cities, and they must safeguard it. (**Genesis 41:35**)**
- **And the foodstuffs must serve as a supply for the land for the seven famine years, which will develop in the land of Egypt, in order, that the land may not be cut off by the famine. (**Genesis 41:36**)**
- **Under their respective chieftains, each family line of the Levites had its particular responsibility as regards the oversight of tabernacle duties.**
- **And the chieftain of the paternal house for the Gershonites was Eliasaph the son of Lael. (**Numbers 3:24**)**
- **And the obligation of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting was the tabernacle and the tent, its covering and the screen of the entrance of the tent of meeting. (**Numbers 3:25**)**
- **And the hangings of the courtyard and the screen of the entrance of the courtyard that is round about the tabernacle and the altar, and its tent cords, for all its service. (**Numbers 3:26**)**
- **And the chieftain of the paternal house for the families of the Kohathites was Elizaphan the son of Uzziel. (**Numbers 3:30**)**

- And their **obligation** was the Ark and the table and the lampstand and the altars and the utensils of the holy place with which they would minister and the screen, and all its service. (**Numbers 3:31**)
- And the chieftain of the paternal house for the families of Merari was Zuriel the son of Abihail. They were encamped on the side of the tabernacle toward the north. (**Numbers 3:35**)
- And the **oversight** for which the sons of Merari were obligated was over the panel frames of the tabernacle and its bars and its pillars and its socket pedestals and all its utensils and all its service. (**Numbers 3:36**)
- And the pillars of the courtyard round about and their socket pedestals and their tent pins and their tent cords. (**Numbers 3:37**)
- Eleazar, Aaron's son, was made the chieftain of the chieftains of the Levites and had general **oversight** of the tabernacle structure and its utensils.
- And the chieftain of the chieftains of the Levites was Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, who had the oversight of those taking care of the obligation to the holy place. (**Numbers 3:32**)
- And the **oversight** of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest is over the oil of the luminary and the perfumed incense and the constant grain offering and the anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle and all that is in it, namely, the holy place and its utensils. (**Numbers 4:16**)
- The High Priest also might appoint **overseers** for certain sanctuary services.
- After that all the people of the land came to the house of Baal and pulled down his altars, and his images they broke up thoroughly, and Mattan the priest of Baal they killed before the altars. And the priest proceeded to put **overseers** over the house of Yehowah. (**2 Kings 11:18**)
- (**1 Chronicles Chapters 23-27**) shows the numerous and varied positions and arrangements for **oversight** in effect during David's reign,

as regards both the priesthood and the royal court, including economic and military matters.

- The prophecy of;
- Instead of the copper I shall bring in gold, and instead of the iron I shall bring in silver, and instead of the wood, copper, and instead of the stones, iron, and I will appoint **peace** as your **overseers** and **righteousness** as your **task assigners**. (Isaiah 60:17)
- Sets **overseers** in parallel **with task assigners**, since **overseers** may **assign work** to others as well as supervise and watch over the interests of those persons or things entrusted to their care.
- In this prophecy Yehowah foretells the time when he would appoint peace as your **overseers** and righteousness as your **task assigners**, a prophecy initially fulfilled in Israel's restoration from exile but more fully realized in the Christian congregation.

•• Overseers In The Christian Congregation

- The Christian **overseers**, *e-pi'sko-poi*; correspond to those recognized as, **older men**, *pre-sby'te-roi* in the congregation. That both of these terms designate the same position in the congregation can be seen from the instance of Paul's calling the **older men** of the congregation of Ephesus to Miletus to meet with him there. In exhorting these **older men**, he states; Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has appointed you **overseers**, form of, *e-pi'sko-poi*, to shepherd the congregation of God.
- However, from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the older men of the congregation. (Acts of Apostles 20:17)
- Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has appointed you **overseers**, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son. (Acts of Apostles 20:28)
- The apostle further makes this clear in writing to Titus, where he discusses the subject of making appointments of **older men** in city after city. In evident reference to such ones, he uses the term, **overseer**, *e-pi'sko-pos*.

- For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make **appointments** of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders. (**Titus 1:5**)
- For an **overseer** must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain. (**Titus 1:7**)
- Both terms, therefore, refer to the same position, *pre-sby'te-ros* indicating the mature qualities of the one so appointed, and *e-pi'sko-pos* the duties inherent with the appointment.

See Also OLDER MAN

- There was no set number of **overseers** for any one congregation. The number of overseers depended upon the number of those qualifying and accredited as **older men** in that congregation. That there were several **overseers** in the one congregation of Ephesus is evident. Likewise, in writing to the Philippian Christians, Paul referred to the **overseers** there.
- Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with **overseers** and **ministerial servants**. (**Philippians 1:1**)
- Indicating that they served as a body, **overseeing** the affairs of that congregation.
- A consideration of the **Christian Greek Scriptures** indicates that the **overseers**, or older men, in any one congregation were of equal authority.
- In his congregational letters, Paul does not single out any one individual as **the overseer**, nor are these letters addressed to any individual as such. The letter to the Philippians was addressed to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with **overseers** and **ministerial servants**.
- Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the holy ones in union with Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, along with **overseers** and **ministerial servants**. (**Philippians 1:1**)
- In this regard **Manuel Guerra y Gomez** noted: **Certainly *episcopos* in the protocol of the letter to the Philippians does not suppose a**

monarchic authority, it is rather a term that names the people of evident plural and collegial structure in charge of the direction and government of the Christian community of the Macedonian city.

· At the same time the *diaconos*, according to the general meaning of the word, are the helpers, the ministers of the *episcopos* and by the same token were at the service of the believers. [Episcopos y Presbyteros, Burgos, Spain, 1962, p. 320]

· Qualifications Of An Overseer, Or Elder

· To attain the office of **overseer**, the following qualifications must be met.

- That statement is faithful. If any man is reaching out for an office of **overseer**, he is desirous of a fine work. (1 Timothy 3:1)
- The **overseer** should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach. (1 Timothy 3:2)
- Not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, but reasonable, not belligerent, not a lover of money. (1 Timothy 3:3)
- A man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness. (1 Timothy 3:4)
- If indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation? (1 Timothy 3:5)
- Not a newly converted man, for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil. (1 Timothy 3:6)
- Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony from people on the outside, in order, that he might not fall into reproach and a snare of the Devil. (1 Timothy 3:7)
- Likewise, in his letter to Titus, in discussing the subject of making appointments of elders, Paul said that in order to qualify as such, a man had to be free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly.

- **For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders. (Titus 1:5)**
- **If there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly. (Titus 1:6)**
- **For an **overseer** must be free from accusation as God's steward, not self-willed, not prone to wrath, not a drunken brawler, not a smiter, not greedy of dishonest gain. (Titus 1:7)**
- **But hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled. (Titus 1:8)**
- **Holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict. (Titus 1:9)**
- **The differences in this latter list of qualifications evidently take into account the special needs of the congregations in Crete, where Titus was serving.**
- **For there are many unruly men, profitless talkers, and deceivers of the mind, especially those men who adhere to the circumcision. (Titus 1:10)**
- **It is necessary to shut the mouths of these, as these very men keep on subverting entire households by teaching things they ought not for the sake of dishonest gain. (Titus 1:11)**
- **A certain one of them, their own prophet, said; Cretans are always liars, injurious wild beasts, unemployed gluttons. (Titus 1:12)**
- **This witness is true. For this very cause keep on reprovng them with severity, that they may be healthy in the faith. (Titus 1:13)**
- **Paying no attention to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn themselves away from the truth. (Titus 1:14)**

•• **The Supreme Overseer**

- For you were like sheep, going astray, but now you have returned to the shepherd and **overseer** of your souls. (**1 Peter 2:25**)
- **Evidently quotes;**
- Like sheep we have all of us wandered about, it was each one to his own way that we have turned, and Yehowah himself has caused the error of us all to meet up with that one. (**Isaiah 53:6**)
- As to those who like sheep went astray, and Peter then says; But now you have returned to the shepherd and **overseer** of your souls. The reference must be to Yehowah God, since those to whom Peter wrote had not gone astray from Christ Jesus but, rather, **through him** had been led back to Yehowah God, who is the Grand Shepherd of his people.
- Yehowah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing. (**Psalms 23:1**)
- O Shepherd of Israel, do give ear, you who are conducting Joseph just like a flock. O you who are sitting upon the cherubs, do beam forth. (**Psalms 80:1**)
- And I myself shall collect together the remnant of my sheep out of all the lands to which I had dispersed them, and I will bring them back to their pasture ground, and they will certainly be fruitful and become many. (**Jeremiah 23:3**)
- According to the care of one feeding his drove in the day of his coming to be in the midst of his sheep that have been spread abroad, that is the way that I shall care for my sheep, and I will deliver them out of all the places to which they have been scattered in the day of clouds and thick gloom. (**Ezekiel 34:12**)
- Yehowah is also an **overseer**, the one who makes inspection.
- You have examined my heart, you have made inspection by night you have refined me; You will discover that I have not schemed. My mouth will not transgress. (**Psalms 17:3**)
- The term **Greek, e-pi-sko-pe'**, could be associated with expression of adverse judgment by him, as in the **First Century C.E.** in the case of Jerusalem, which did not discern the time of her being inspected, **Greek, e-pi-sko-pes'**.

- And they will dash you and your children within you to the ground, and they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you, because you did not discern the time of your being **inspected**. (Luke 19:44)
- Or it could bring favorable effect and benefits, as in the case of those glorifying God in the day for his **inspection** Greek, *e-pi-sko-pes'*.
- Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his **inspection**. (1 Peter 2:12)

• Busybody In Other Peoples Matters

- The apostle Peter warned against becoming a busybody in other peoples matters.
- However, let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other peoples matters. (1 Peter 4:15)
- This expression renders the Greek word *al-lo-tri-e-pi'sko-pos*, which literally means, **overseer** of what is another's. Francisco Zorell defines this word as **one who takes upon himself the duty of minding and correcting other peoples matters, the one who imprudently thrusts himself into other peoples affairs**. [Lexicon Graecum Novi Testamenti, Paris, 1961, col. 70]

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- **Holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict. (Titus 1:9)**
- **Ministerial servants should likewise be serious, not double-tongued, not giving themselves to a lot of wine, not greedy of dishonest gain. (1 Timothy 3:8)**
- **Holding the sacred secret of the faith with a clean conscience. (1 Timothy 3:9)**
- **Also, let these be tested as to fitness first, then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation. (1 Timothy 3:10)**
- **Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households. (1 Timothy**

3:12)

- For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith in connection with Christ Jesus. (**1 Timothy 3:13**)

1 Timothy 3 1-7

Titus 1 5-9

1 Timothy 3 8,9,10,12,13

**irreprehensible
husband of one**

**free from accusation
husband of one wife
wife**

**free from accusation
husband of one wife**

**not a drunken
brawler**

**not a drunken
brawler**

not given to a lot of wine

**not a lover of
money**

**not greedy of
dishonest gain**

**not greedy of dishonest
gain**

**presiding over
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**having believing
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**not a smiter
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not a smiter

not self-willed

not prone to wrath