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MESSIAH'S MENORAH

“I will build My Ekklesia (Church),
and the Gates of Hades will not prevail against it!”

(Matthew 16:18)

The *Ekklesia* (assembly or church) was a mystery that was not revealed to the Old Testament prophets because it did not pertain to those times. But in the *Tabernacle* we find many profiles of the Messiah.

Y'shua is the theme of the Word. We sense His Presence in every book. Indeed, He pervades all of the Scriptures, even as light permeates the day.

The Tabernacle is a most interesting study. It presents the Person and Work of the Saviour, in many, and often minute details. Y'shua the Messiah is the Substance of every shadow, the Realization of every type and figure. Remove Him from His place in Scripture and the whole becomes a meaningless jumble; a dry and valueless history.

God's answer to every problem is **Messiah!**

God's provision for every need is **Messiah!**

God's remedy for every failure is **Messiah!**

In this issue we will study one of the most beautiful and prominent pieces in the Tabernacle - the Golden Lampstand - **The Menorah.**

In Israel today, the Menorah is one of its national symbols, because of its beauty, and because it is a part of Israel's spiritual heritage - dating back to the time of Moses.

To the believer, the Menorah represents the Messiah and His Body, and the life of Elohim manifest through the sevenfold ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The original Menorah was made from a single, huge piece of gold. Directions for making the Menorah were given to Moses in ...

EXODUS 25:31-40

“Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand is to be made of hammered work. Its base and its shaft, its cups, its ornamental knobs and its flowers shall be *of one piece* with it. Six branches are to extend out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand from one side, and three branches of the lampstand from the other side. Three cups *shall be* shaped like *almond flowers* on one branch, with an *ornamental* buds and blossoms, and three cups shaped like *almond flowers* on the other branch, with *ornamental* buds and blossoms - and so for the six branches extending out of the lampstand.

“And on the lampstand itself are to be four cups shaped like *almond flowers*, with *ornamental* buds and blossoms, And there shall be a bud under the *first* pair of branches of the *lampstand*, and a bud under the *second* pair of branches of it, and a bud under the *third* pair of branches of it, according to the six branches extending out of the lampstand. Their buds and their branches *shall be of one piece* with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold.

“And you shall make seven lamps for it, and set the lamps on it so that they give light in front of it. And its snuffers (wick-trimmers) and their trays *shall be* of pure gold. The lampstand and all these utensils shall be made of a talent of pure gold. So see that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain.”

Just prior to this passage there are instructions for the Table for “the Bread of the Presence,” which represents the food of the priests. Y’shua is our Bread of Life. Now as we come to the Menorah, the Lampstand, we are reminded that God’s priests need LIGHT as well as FOOD.

In fulfilling God’s eternal purpose, Y’shua Adonai has become, in His sacrifice and priesthood, the spring and power of everything needed, to His church. And in the Menorah we see the beautiful picture of Messiah and His Body.

PURE BEATEN GOLD

The Menorah was made of nothing but pure gold; and it was made as one piece, of one talent of gold. The gold, moreover, was hammered, or beaten, to fashion the lampstand. This points to the finished work of the Messiah as the sole basis of the union of Messiah with His people, and of the manifestation of the Spirit in the Church.

Y’shua is pure gold; and He was beaten by order of Pilate, and hammered to a tree post at Calvary. He is pure beaten gold.

THE BRANCHES

The Menorah represents the unity of the Messiah and His members - His Body.

The lampstand had a base, a shaft, and six branches - three extending from out of each side of the shaft.

“Six” represents sinful man; but these are the “Redeemed of the LORD” who come “out of the side” of the Saviour. As Eve was taken out of the side of Adam, the Bride of the Lamb is taken “out of the Saviour’s wounded side.”

“We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”
(Ephesians 5:30)

In John 15, Y’shua uses another figure of speech as He says to His people; “*I am the Vine, you are the branches.*” This is a reality as is the Lampstand. The Vine produces **fruit**; the Lampstand produces **light**.

The six branches, along with the shaft of the Lampstand - the Messiah Himself, now number “seven;” which speaks of perfection - the perfect union of Messiah and His Body.

Notice that the branches, as well as the shaft, and the whole lampstand, were of beaten or hammered gold. Everything to do with His body and its testimony, is

based on His finished work. Also implied here is that believers need to pass through spiritual exercises that result in a precious conformity to the image of the Messiah. For “as He is, so also are we in this world.” (1 John 4:17). And this is our desire, as Paul says:

“*I want to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.*”
(Philippians 3: 10)

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” (Romans 8:29)

“But He knows the way I take. When He has tested me, I shall come forth as (*purified and beaten*) gold.” (Job 23.10)

THE ALMONDS

The almond-like cups, and the buds and almond flowers which beautify the lampstand, speak of RESURRECTION and Messiah’s perennial freshness, for He lives on in “the power of an endless life.”

The almond tree, in many countries, heralds the arrival of Spring, when everything springs to new life. All born again believers have been raised to newness of life in Messiah, and they now live in the power of Messiah’s resurrection life.

THE SEVEN LAMPS

On the top of the six branches and on the shaft itself there were lamp bowls which contained olive oil and wicks. These seven lamps of the Menorah represent the seven-fold ministry of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 11:1-3 tells of the seven-fold Holy Spirit:

“A shoot will spring up from the stem of Jesse, and from his roots a Branch will bear fruit ...

- (1) The Spirit of YHWH will rest upon Him -
- (2) The Spirit of Wisdom and of
- (3) Understanding,
- (4) The Spirit of Counsel and of
- (5) Power;
- (6) The Spirit of Knowledge, and of the
- (7) Fear of YHWH - and He will delight in the fear of YHWH.”

In Revelation 3:1, the Messiah is presented to the Church of Sardis as “having the seven Spirits of God.”

The work of the Holy Spirit can never be separated from the work of the Messiah. It is the exalted Messiah who sent forth the Holy Spirit upon His corporate Body in order that it might shine in His power and perfection.

The seven lamps express the perfection of the light and energy of the Spirit, based upon the perfect efficacy (power, ability, validity) of the work of Messiah.

THE LIGHT AND THE TESTIMONY

The House of God is marked by light, but not natural light. All natural light is excluded from the Holy Place. The Light in the Sanctuary comes from the golden lampstand alone.

The Light is of course, the Messiah Himself. Here we are not dealing with the “Light of the World,” but with the “Light in the Sanctuary.” As in the Heavenly city, where the Lamb is the Light (Revelation 21:23), the Light in the House of God, is Messiah Y’shua Himself shining in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

“The Son being the brightness of God’s glory and the exact representation of His very being and nature, upholds all things by His powerful word.”
(Hebrews 1:3)

The purpose of the union of shaft and branches - Messiah and His members - is to bare the lamps that give the LIGHT. Messiah is the Light, and we are light in Him.

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another ...” (1 John 1:7)

“For once you were darkness, but now *you are* light in the Master; walk as children of light.” (Ephesians 5:8)

The Menorah, as a whole, pictures **the testimony of the corporate Body of the Messiah in the Sanctuary** - the dwelling place of Elohim, shirting in the fullness and beauty of holiness.

THE OLIVE OIL

The pure olive oil used in the lamps represents the LIFE of Elohim. It relates to the Olive Tree of Romans 11 which can be described as the Life of God. All believers partake of the nourishing sap of the Olive Tree. This is the LIFE of God which is the LIGHT of men (John 1:4); the life which is the light of the Assembly of God; the life which is the light of the believers’ testimony; the Light that ...

“... has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Messiah.” (2 Corinthians 4:6)

The olive oil is always there. It never runs out. And of course, the Life of God which we receive is ETERNAL Life.

TRIMMING THE WICKS

It was the function of the High Priest to light and to regularly maintain - to trim - the seven lamps.

“Then YHWH spoke to Moses, staying, Command the children of Israel that they bring to you clear oil from pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. Outside the veil of Testimony in the Tent of Meeting, Aaron is to keep it in order from evening to morning before YHWH continually; *it shall be* a perpetual statute throughout your generations. He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure *gold* lampstand before YHWH continually.” (Leviticus 24:1-4)

THE GOLDEN SNUFFERS

Priestly diligence was needed to keep the lamps of the Menorah lit and trimmed. And here we see another important instrument - the golden snuffers. It may be better called, the golden wick-trimmer, for it was used regularly for the purpose of trimming. It was used as a snuffer only when the Tabernacle had to be moved.

The snuffers also, made of beaten gold, indicates that even the ministry of trimming - correction and discipline - is based on the finished work of Messiah.

As our Great High Priest, Y’shua graciously tends the lamp-stands, trimming the wicks of His people so that they might shine brightly in the energy of the Spirit of the Messiah - just as God intended.

The seven assemblies in Asia are referred to as lampstands (Revelation 1:20; 2:1), and Y’shua, walks among them, encouraging and reproofing.

The Messiah is not in the business of snuffing out the testimony of His people. No! He will rekindle the lamp if it is growing weak. But tragically, in some extreme cases, He may need to remove a lampstand - an assembly - completely.

“Remember then from where you have fallen, and repent and do the works *you did* at first; or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand out of its place - unless you repent.” (Revelation 2:5)

The light of this Ephesian church had not yet gone out; but it was flickering, The life of the church was fast becoming a loveless system of works. Soon, unless it repented, the assembly would be sustained only by human energy - the works of the flesh. And if that continues, the light will soon go out, for instead of pure olive oil, human sweat is used to fuel the light. That’s a very poor substitute, and it does a very poor job.

When the Light goes out, an assembly is no longer an expression of the House of God. So it’s better to close shop, and remove the lampstand.

“But the Messiah also loved the Ekklesia, (*the Menorah, the Church, the Body, the Bride*) - and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water with the Word, and that He might present the Ekklesia to Himself, a glorious *Bride*, without spot or

wrinkle or any such thing - but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Our high calling, dear believer, places us in the midst of these precious realities. We are not merely spectators of heavenly things; we are part of them. In Messiah we have been made priests of the Heavenly Sanctuary, and we have “boldness to enter into the most holy place by the blood of Y’shua.”

As priests of the Heavenly Sanctuary, our High Priest may use us as His wick-trimmers. When He does, may we be gracious in trimming His frayed wicks, as He is with us.

But what better place is there to start than by trimming our very own wicks? And how much better it is for us to trim our own wicks rather than to have someone else trim us! Or for Y’shua to have to say to us:

“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire ... those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. So be earnest and repent.” (Revelation 3: 18-19)

Oh believers! You are set-apart. You are Messiah’s Menorah.

“Humble yourselves, then, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (1 Peter 5:6)

For “the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Matthew 13:43)

What a privilege we have, both as His Menorah in the Sanctuary, and also as His lights in the world. We are chosen vessels to show forth the Life and Light of the Eternal One.



“You are the light of the World ... Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good deeds, and praise and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14, 16)

“Arise, shine, for your light has come; and the *Sh’khinah* glory of YHWH has risen upon you.” (Isaiah 60:1)



THE FAITH IN AUSTRALIA



An interesting article was published in *The Courier-Mail* (Q'land, 22 Ap 00), entitled, "Future of Faith." Writer, Martin Thomas says:

"When the average Australian wakes up on Easter Sunday it is highly unlikely their thoughts will turn to the death of Jesus Christ."

That's not surprising! But the article gave some figures and observations about "the church" in Australia today. It says Australians now care more about spiritual and mystical issues than they have for many decades, but more people are turning away from mainstream churches, finding them irrelevant. They are looking elsewhere for spirituality.

In what some call "post-modernism," people are increasingly rejecting a rationalist, materialist world view; and there is a bitter backlash against economic rationalism and materialism and its "greed."

The rise of the New Age and Eastern religions, Thomas says, has fundamentally changed beliefs in our society.

Many "are now confronting their mortality and life after death - or at least life in the shadows of death." But despite the revival of spiritualism, the church has been left largely bypassed. And many church people are forsaking the mainline churches. The growing perception is that the churches just aren't relevant today.

The head of a Religious Studies Dept at Queensland University says: "The traditional churches are looking increasingly dull, like gas lighting in an age of electricity."

Catholic churches throughout the country still attract 875,000 people a week. Anglicans, Baptist, Uniting, each have an average Sunday attendance of less than 200,000. More people now attend Pentecostal churches than the Anglicans.

80-85% of Australians never go near a church, and yet, says Thomas, there is still an acceptance of the Person of Jesus Christ.

Reminds me of a hippie I once spoke to in New Delhi. She did not have much regard for religion or Christians, but Jesus - "Oh yes, He's real groovy."

The number of people who watch and listen to religious programs on TV far outstrips those who “go to church.”

The article quotes a church social justice campaigner: “The message of Jesus was dynamic, it was not synagogue-based, but delivered as good news out in the community, to prostitutes, the poor, tax collectors and the like.”

A Christian lecturer says, “The major problem is that the church still does have faith within the four walls of the church, while the debate is raging out in the marketplace.” The questions are being asked in the community, but the church isn’t out there!

The article concludes: “There are still no real signs of a return to that which the church says is the real meaning of Easter.”

Of course, he means the resurrection! Yes, that’s the real message - Jesus is alive! And He is mighty to save!

The real meaning of “[Easter](#),” is eggs, rabbits, the worship of the Queen of Heaven, and offering up baked cakes to her. The word Easter is not worthy to be in the Christian’s dictionary. It is not a Bible word. The Greek word in Scripture is *Pascha*, which comes from *Pesach* (Passover). The word Easter comes from [Eostre](#), the fertility goddess, the [Queen of Heaven](#). ([See more about EASTER on our QA page](#))

This year I have received two articles from secular newspapers - *The Sunday Mail*, and *The Sun-Herald* (23 Ap 00), and both articles explain the pagan origin of the name Easter, and of the fertility symbols - eggs and rabbits.

Most Christians greet each other with “Happy Easter,” not realizing that is actually “Happy Queen of Heaven.”

It is time for the Ekklesia to cast out all reference to the abominable Queen of Heaven, and proclaim in on uncertain terms, The Messiah is alive! That message is most relevant. And because He lives, I live also!

“If you confess with your mouth Y’shua as [ADONAI](#) (*Master, LORD*) and believe in your heart that **God raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved; for with the heart man believes, *resulting* in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, *resulting* in salvation. For the Scripture says, [WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED ... for WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YHWH-Y’SHUA the LORD WILL BE SAVED.](#)” (Romans 10:9-12, 14)



AN HISTORIC CONFESSION

POPE JOHN PAUL II SEEKS FORGIVENESS FOR THE SINS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

On the first Sunday of Lent (12 March 2000) Pope John Paul II orchestrated one of the most dramatic and historic gestures of his papacy.

In the presence of the most senior members of his curia, John Paul sought divine forgiveness for sins committed on behalf of the church towards other Christians and the Jewish people. *Parce, Domine, parce populo tua* (pardon your people, Lord) was spoken alongside prayers such as:

“Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we ask Your forgiveness for all the times that some of Your children showed contempt and hostility, even to the point of persecution, against the Children of Israel; continue to inspire in our hearts the sense of fraternity which guides Christians today in their relationship with the People of the Covenant and the blessings.”

The language was for some observers too vague, but for others it amounted to a radical admission of the past failings of the Church, and confirmed catechisms published as a result of Vatican II. For example, paragraph 839 of the current Catechism of the Catholic Church subsumed under the title, “The relationship of the Church with the Jewish people” states, “When she delves into her own mystery, the Church, the People of God in the New Covenant, discovers her link with the Jewish People, the first to hear the Word of God.”

The Jewish faith, unlike other non-Christian religions, is already a response to God’s revelation in the Old Covenant. To the Jews “belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race according to the flesh, in the Christ,” “for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”

Paragraph 840 follows, “And when one considers the future, God’s People of the Old Covenant and the new People of God tend towards similar goals: expectation of the coming (or the return) of the Messiah. But one awaits the return of the Messiah who died and rose from the dead and is recognized as Lord and Son of God; the other awaits the coming of the Messiah, whose features remain hidden till the end of time.” (Libreria Editrice Vaticana).

Although questions do remain over the inconsistencies in current plans to canonize the controversial Pope Pius XII, and the silence in the Catechisms over Scripture promises relating to the Land of Israel (as opposed to the People), the Roman Catholic Church has laid down a marker for other Christian denominations that have yet to officially recognize their own historic prejudices against the People of the Covenant. - Israel & Christians Today / UK / Spring 2000

The Pope’s apology was the result of four years work by a panel of 28 theologians and scholars, and was by far the most sweeping act by the leader of a major religion.

The Pope actually expressed seven apologies, including one to the Jews. Jewish leaders criticized the Pope’s plea for forgiveness for the sins of the church because it failed to specify the Holocaust.

His pleas for forgiveness for the many past sins over 2000 years, also sought pardon for the use of “violence in the service of truth,” an often-used reference to the centuries-old Inquisition.

The Roman Catholic Inquisition was a 700-year campaign of persecution of “heretics” in which hundreds of thousands were tortured and killed. It was initiated by Pope Gregory IX in 1231 when he wrote to French bishops informing them that he intended to repress heresy, witchcraft, alchemy and deviations such as devil worship.

In 1252, a papal bull by Innocent IV authorized torture as a means of extracting confessions.

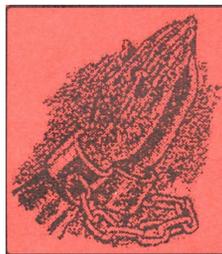
In 1478, Sixtus IV authorized the Spanish Inquisition. Its most notorious enforcer was Tomas de Torquemada (1420-1498), who burnt an estimated 2000 “heretics” at the stake in his role as Grand Inquisitor.

By the time it officially ended in 1909, the Spanish Inquisition had burned more than 300,000 people.

In 1768, a gradual process of dismantling the Inquisition began. The Vatican wound up what remained of the Institution in 1908, creating the Holy Office in its place to deal with discipline and excommunications. - The Courier-Mail / 13 Mar 00

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLICS BISHOPS APOLOGY

In March, Australian Catholic bishops preceding the Pope’s statement of repentance, by released an extraordinary statement of failure and regret, apologising for everything from sexual abuse to marginalising youth, women and migrants.



THE STORY OF ‘HEAVENLY MAN’

In 1984, a man known as one of the foremost leaders of the underground church in China was arrested by the PSB (Security Bureau).

When he was arrested, the police demanded to know his name, the name of his village and the names of his Christian friends. Determined to protect the other believers, [Brother Li](#) refused to give his name. Instead, he answered, “I am a heavenly man, from a heavenly place.”

Infuriated by this answer, the PSB beat him viciously with their fists, wooden sticks, and gun handles. They even used an electric rod, but to no avail - Li simply would not betray his friends. Other Christians watching this public beating from a distance were in tears as they saw how cruelly he was beaten.

Li was then taken away and tortured for many days, but he refused to speak. Eventually the PSB found out which village he was from and brought the local police to identify him.

When they finally established who he was, they hung him from handcuffs in the back of a truck and drove the truck at great speed, so that Li's body slammed into the metal sides of the truck again and again. He was soon covered in blood and in great pain.

During this time, Li kept crying out to the Lord, "Take my spirit, take me away!" But in the middle of the pain, the Lord said to him, "You are not receiving any pain that I did not receive. I know your situation. But you must learn to rest in me."

Through this, Li realized that he needed to rest in the Lord, and from this time on, he began a fast that would last for over 70 days.

In the prison, he was beaten continually by prison guards. His face was blackened from the bruises, and the cells were so cold that his hands and feet turned purple. The pain was so great that he could hardly bear it, and he often cried out to God. Over and over again, God reminded him of verses of Scripture that brought great comfort to him.

The whole prison was soon talking about this so-called 'heavenly man' who lived without eating. The criminal who was assigned to carry Li to and from his beatings every day was so moved by the spirit of forgiveness he saw in Li that he too became a Christian.

As the beatings continued, several others saw the grace with which Li suffered and how he cared for other prisoners in spite of his own pain. Many put their faith in Christ because of him.

Word of his suffering and his fearless stand for the Gospel soon spread outside the prison walls and brought great strength to the underground church.

On the 74th day of his fast, Li's family were finally allowed to come and visit him - but Li was so disfigured by the beatings and had lost so much weight that they barely recognized him. Li asked them for bread and juice so that they could share communion as an end to the fast.

A few months later, Li's wife came to visit him again and brought another loaf of bread. This time she had managed to conceal a small Bible inside the loaf. Li took great care to hide it, reading it only in the early hours of the morning while the guards were still asleep. He treasured those moments with God's Word and continued memorizing many books of the Bible.

However, in October of that year, the PSB made a thorough search of his home and found letters he had written from the prison, referring to the Bible. They searched Li's cell, found the Bible, and confiscated it from him. Finally on 25 January 1988, Li was released from prison - exactly 4 years after his arrest.

Shortly after arriving home he was called before the PSB and warned not to continue with his illegal activities. However Li was compelled by the love of God to go out immediately and resume his work of preaching the Gospel and training Christian workers. Thousands turned to the Lord because of his witness in the following years. The proclamation of faith and truth from the mouth of this man and many others like him could not be silenced - even though Li has been arrested and detained more than 30 times since that first arrest in 1984.

In the early 1990's God spoke to Brother Li about the need for unity between the various house church groups. Li began pressing for more cooperation between the main house church movements, together representing more than 58 million members. The need for unity is the burning message on Li's heart because it is in unity that God commands the blessing on our lives and our Christian witness for Him.

Today, two of the greatest prayer needs are for continued unity between the different house church groups; and continued strength for their leaders who, like Li, are still subject to incredible suffering for the sake of the Gospel of Christ.

Story excerpt from 'The Heavenly Man,' by David G Hunt.

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THE MYSTERY OF THE EKKLESIA

“I will build My Ekklesia,
and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.”

- Y'shua ~ Matthew 16:18

“This is a profound mystery - but I am speaking with reference to
the Messiah and the Ekklesia.”

- Paul ~ Ephesians 5:32

Most of our study so far has focused on the believer as an individual. In this chapter, we study the *Ekklesia*, (the Church, which is the corporate Body of the Messiah), and we will focus on the form and function of the collective body of Believers.

I have preferred to use the Greek word *Ekklesia* (pronounced *ek-klay-see-ah*) in this article, because of the widespread wrong concept of what is meant by “the church.”

We all talk about “going to church,” or “we’ll have the meeting in the church,” or about “the church on the hilltop.” But as most of my readers know very well, “the church” is not a building. It is not a denomination, and it should not be equated with “Christendom” which is a divergent mixture of believers and unbelievers. “The church” is the people - or to be more correct, [the born again believers](#).

THE BODY OF MESSIAH

An *Ekklesia* can be “an assembly, a gathering, or a synagogue,” but the *Ekklesia* of the New Testament is primarily speaking of “the corporate body of believers in the Messiah.”

In the passages we will study, we see that that corporate Body is called the Body of the Messiah. It is also called the Household of God, the Little Flock, the Bride of the Lamb, and the Temple (Dwelling Place) of the Holy Spirit. Each of these aspects of the *Ekklesia* is composed of born again believers only.

The *Ekklesia* is a select group of people, but it is not an exclusive religious club. It is open for constant new membership, but it is neither the leaders nor the people who select and confer membership on the individuals. It is God Himself who has selected, or chosen the individuals who become members of His *Ekklesia*. In fact, He chose each one before the world began.

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Master, Y’shua the Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in the Messiah, just as [He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world](#), that we should be holy and blameless before Him, in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons through Y’shua the Messiah to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He favoured us *and* made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:3-6)

Believers were chosen to be sons of God, and also chosen to be members of the Body of Messiah, which means also, chosen to be members of the Bride of Christ, members of the Household of God, and members of the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

So while using the word *Ekklesia*, I want you to be clear about its definition - it is [“the corporate, universal Body of Messiah, made up of all born again believers of this present dispensation of grace \(from Pentecost to the Rapture\).”](#)

MEMBERSHIP IN THE BODY

“Now you are the Body of Christ, and individually members *of it*.”
(1 Corinthians 12:27)

Membership in Messiah's *Ekklesia* is not obtained by signing a form, paying a fee, or having your name registered in a church or society roll. This does not mean there was no cost, and that there's no "roll."

There was cost, and it was paid by the Saviour. It was the cost of your redemption:

"For you know that it was not with perishable things like silver or gold that you were redeemed from the futile way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of the Messiah, a Lamb without blemish *or* defect." (1 Peter 1:18-19)

The moment you are redeemed, your name is added to the Heavenly Roll - to the Lamb's Book of Life.

"Nothing that defiles or profanes, nor *anyone who* practices abominations and falsehood, shall ever come into *it (the heavenly city)*, but only those whose names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life." (Revelation 21:27)

"You have come ... to the *Universal* Assembly, to the *Ekklesia* - *the corporate body* of "The Firstborn" who are **enrolled in heaven.**" (Hebrews 12:23)

"Rejoice that your names are **recorded in heaven.**" (Luke 10:20)

Membership is obtained by being placed "in Christ" - by being baptized into the Messiah - into His Body. This is not water baptism here; it's the work of the Holy Spirit, which happens the very moment we believe and receive Y'shua as our personal Saviour.

"For by one Spirit we were all **baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13)

"Or do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized into Messiah** Y'shua have been baptized into His death?" (Romans 6:3)

"For all of you who were **baptized into Messiah** have put on Messiah - *you have clothed yourselves with Him.*" (Galatians 3:27)

MESSIAH IS THE HEAD OF THE EKKLESIA

This statement should not be surprising, for we recognize that Y'shua is the Master who came from Heaven. But we should note that it is the Father who made Y'shua the Head of all that pertains to the Ekklesia.

"And He, (*the Messiah*), is the Head of the body, the Ekklesia; and He is "the Beginning," the "First-born from the dead"; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything." (Colossians 1:18)

“... in accordance with the working of His (*the Father of Glory's*) mighty strength which He exerted in the Messiah, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things under His feet, and made Him the **Head over all things for the Ekklesia** - *the universal Body of believers who are in fellowship with the Messiah* - which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:19-23)

The Head is the control centre, as we can see from our own bodies. Y'shua is the Head of this corporate Body. He is not a nominal Head, or a constitutional Head; He is the real Head.

On earth, the Ekklesia has various leaders:

“And He gave some *as* apostles, some *as* prophets, some *as* evangelists, and some *as* shepherd-pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the set-apart *believers ...*” (Ephesians 4:11-16)

“And God has appointed in the Ekklesia, first *of all* apostles, second prophets, third teachers ...” (1 Corinthians 12:27-28)

Notice the Master did not appoint any other head, substitute or deputy head!

Men may appoint other men as the Head of a denomination. But none of these leaders are the Head of Messiah's *Ekklesia*. Christ alone is the Head of the Church!

“What about Peter,” some may ask. “Wasn't he appointed as the head of the church on earth?”

No! Peter was an apostle, shepherd and teacher, but not the Head. At the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15) it was James who delivered the conclusion or recommendation, not Peter. But neither of them was the Head apostle.

But look at that verse in Matthew closely, and you will see that Y'shua was building the *Ekklesia* upon Himself, not on Peter:

“And I also tell you that you are Peter (*Petros, a pebble*), and upon this Rock (*Petra, a bedrock*) I will build My *Ekklesia* - *My Body*; and the gates of Hades - Hell - shall not overpower it.” (Matthew 16:18)

Although I place great value on the two epistles of Peter, I'm ever so glad that I am not built on Peter - or upon any man other than the Man of Glory, Christ Jesus - Y'shua the Messiah!

THE EKKLESIA IS “THE LITTLE FLOCK”

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been so pleased to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)

In the analogy here, the Messiah's people are like a flock of sheep that is cared for by the Good Shepherd. The analogy emphasizes the dependence of believers on their Shepherd's care. Sheep need shepherding!

"You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." (Ps. 23:4)

"I am the Good Shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep." (John 10:14-15)

"So watch yourselves and *watch* over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the Ekklesia of God which He purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28)

THE EKKLESIA IS THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

The apostle Paul said: "I am hoping to come to you shortly; but in case I am delayed, I am writing these things to you, so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the Household of God, which is the Ekklesia of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."
(1 Timothy 3:14-15)

The Household of God is made up of believers - sons and daughters of God. It is clear that the household Paul is speaking about, is the New Testament Ekklesia, which Y'shua indicated was still future when He said, "I **will** build My Ekklesia."

There was a household of God, of course, in the Old Testament, but it was not the Ekklesia. Paul indicates that there are various families in heaven:

"For this reason, I kneel before the Father of our Master, Y'shua the Messiah, from whom every family (*every lineage*) in heaven and on earth derives its name." (Ephesians 3:14-15)

In one sense, all believers of all ages are part of God's family. It's like all humans being part of the one human race; and yet the human race is divided into many families.

Messiah's *Ekklesia* is a **new** Body - a new household - comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers.

"For *Messiah* Himself is our peace, who has made both *groups into* one, and has broken down the dividing wall *between us* by abolishing in His flesh the enmity *and* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances - His purpose being to create in *union with* Himself **one new man** *out of* the two, *thus* making peace, and in *this* one body, to reconcile both of them to God through *His death on* the cross, by which He put to death the enmity." (Ephesians 2:14-16)

Y'shua, speaking to the disciples who were the nucleus of the new man, the new creation, said:

“In My Father’s House are many dwelling places ... I go to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:2)

This also indicates that Messiah’s *Ekklesia* is one special entity - the very Bride of the Messiah, for whom He is personally preparing a glorious dwelling place - the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21.

THE EKKLESIA IS A DWELLING PLACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The apostle goes on to the Ephesian believers that they (as all Gentile believers) are fellow-citizens with the Jewish believers who were the beginning of the *Ekklesia*; and that they are also a dwelling place, a temple, of God.

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow-citizens with the set-apart people of God, and members of the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the Messiah, Y’shua Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy Dwelling Place (temple) in *the* LORD; in whom you also are being built together into a Dwelling Place of God in *the* Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Believers individually are “temples of the Holy Spirit,” but the *Ekklesia* is the [corporate temple](#), which *Adonai Elohim* - Father, Son and Holy Spirit indwells.

The Hebrew titles used for the Almighty are *Adonai* (Lord/lords), and *Elohim* (God/gods). Both titles are plural words, and imply the three eternal manifestations/personalities of “the Eternal One.”

This is the uniqueness of Messiah’s *Ekklesia* - the Eternal Three-in-One - Father, Son and Holy Spirit, indwells the members individually, as well as the corporate Body.

“Y’shua answered him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, [and We will come to him, and make Our home with him.](#)’ (John 14:23)

“The one who lives in the teaching of the Messiah [has both the Father and the Son.](#)” (2 John 9)

“And if [Messiah is in you](#), though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if [the Spirit](#) of Him who raised Y’shua from the dead [dwells in you](#), He who raised the Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” (Romans 8:10-11)

“Do you not know that **you are a Dwelling Place (temple) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?**” (1 Corinthians 3:16)

“For we are the temple of the living God.” (2 Corinthians 6:16)

(See also Ephesians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians. 2:20; Colossians. 1:27; 1 John 2:23-24)

A PROFOUND MYSTERY: THE EKKLESIA - THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB

The Ekklesia, seen as the Body of Messiah is likened to a “New Man.” But seen as the eternal companion of Messiah, it is likened to a “glorious Bride.”

In Ephesians 5, Paul teaches two things in the one passage: 1. the desired relationship of husband and wife; 2. the intimate relationship that He has with His *Ekklesia*.

The intimate relationship that He has envisioned for the members of His Ekklesia, both individually and corporately, is presented here in the analogy of the closest human marriage relationship.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as the Messiah also loved the Ekklesia and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water with the Word, and that He might present the Ekklesia to Himself, a **glorious *Bride***, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing - but that she should be holy and without blemish.

“Likewise husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. After all no-one ever hated his own body, but feeds and cares for it, just as the Messiah *does* the Ekklesia - for we are members of His body - of His flesh and of His bones. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND BE UNITED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. [Genesis 2:24]. This is a profound mystery - but I am speaking with reference to the Messiah and the Ekklesia.” (Ephesians 5:25-32)

Yes, it is a profound mystery, but it shows us the uniqueness of the Messiah’s *Ekklesia*.

If you have not read our article,

***“A Love Relationship”* (THE BRIDE AND THE MESSIAH)**

I encourage you to do so.

THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY: THE EXPRESSION OF THE CORPORATE BODY

“To the Ekklesia of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified (set-apart) in Messiah Y’shua, set-apart ones by calling, with all who in every place call upon the Name of our Master Y’shua Messiah, both their *Master* and ours.” (1 Corinthians 1:2)

It is obvious that the whole Universal *Ekklesia* was not present in Corinth. What was present was a local expression of the Universal Body.

The glorified Messiah sent seven messages through John to the local Ekklesiais (plural). (Revelation 2 & 3)

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Ekklesiais (assemblies).” (Revelation 2:7)

Please read our booklet,
“Messiah’s Messages to the Seven Churches”
for a heart-searching message from those seven letters.

In the seven messages we see the direct concern of the Head of the *Ekklesia* for the local bodies. The messages are addressed to “the Messengers” or “Angels,” of the assemblies. Messengers are not Heads; they are elders who have been placed as overseers, teachers, or shepherd-pastors in the local assembly.

“Bishop” (*Gk. episkopos*) is another English word for “an overseer.” Archbishop is not a Scriptural word. Archangel is Scriptural, but it refers to higher angels such as Gabriel and Michael. “Pope” is not a Bible word, although it means papa (father). But as there is only one Father, there is no place for “pope” in Messiah’s *Ekklesia*.

“*There is one body and one Spirit ...one Master ... one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in you all.*” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

“So watch yourselves and *watch* over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the Ekklesia of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

THE NEW TESTAMENT EKKLESIA

The local *Ekklesia* in the NT was not instituted by men, although men were building blocks in it. It was neither a man-organized denomination, nor a multinational organization; it was not an organization at all. It was an organism. It grew through the ministry of the Holy Spirit within the members of the Body.

The NT *Ekklesia* was an assembly of born again people who gathered together in the Name of Y'shua the Messiah, to study Scripture, to share with each other (fellowship), to break bread in remembrance of the Master (worship), and to pray together (Acts 2:42). It was a called-out, set-apart body of believers, centered around the Person of the Messiah, who, although absent in Body, was always with them in Spirit.

The Ekklesiáis were in fellowship with the Messiah, and with each other. Its leaders and members were devoted to one another in brotherly love (Rom 12:10). They were earnest in prayer and good works, and sought to build each other up in the faith. Each member was normally filled with, and led by, the Holy Spirit. Each exercised the various gifts given to him or her, for the edification of the *Ekklesia*, for the proclaiming of the Gospel, and for the extension of the Kingdom, and glory of God.

The assemblies were unpretentious, simple in style, fervently evangelistic in outreach, persevering in persecution, and overcoming evil with good. They were deeply concerned for believers who were in prison for the faith, or suffering in other ways.

The members of the *Ekklesia* were constantly awaiting the return of the Master, and in the meantime, they were like salt, and a light in the community. They were a display of the power of God at work in the world.

Sounds like a perfect church? But *the ekklesiáis* were not perfect; they encountered various problems. They were zealous, however to learn, and to follow the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit was moving mightily amongst them.

FAILURE IN THE CHURCHES TODAY

Can we find a perfect church today? Yes. In Heaven! On earth, however, it is very hard to find a fellowship that meets all our expectations - a Spirit-led, Bible-based, caring, balanced, evangelistic, missionary minded, Rapture-awaiting church like the NT *Ekklesia* I have described above.

In local churches today, unfortunately, there are many flaws, drawbacks and problems, and we have all encountered some of them at various times. There are disgruntled members, rivalries, personality differences, pride, selfish ambitions, pettiness, politics, clashes, dogmatism, narrow-mindedness, intolerance, racism, financial troubles, wrong doctrines, unbelief, extremism, apostasy, and so on. All these flaws, of course, may not occur at the same time. Some churches may be able to say that most of them are seldom present in their congregations.

In some churches the flaws may be in the shape of their easy-going, comfortable, complacent, lukewarm church-style, that helps the members to feel good and peaceful. They are not much of a spiritual force for the Master's Kingdom. And Satan leaves them alone, because he is not threatened by sleeping saints, and complacent Christians!

Most of these conditions are the result of the **main failure** in the *Ekklesia* today - **the failure of believers to apply the principles of the Word of God in their lives**. We are exhorted to **grow** in the truth of the Word, and to be **doers** of the Word. (2 Peter 3:18. James 1:22)

“All Scripture is divinely-inspired - God-breathed, and is profitable for teaching, for conviction and reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate and complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

In many churches there is a lack of enlightening teaching of the Word that builds up, and strengthens. Often the “teaching” is milk and not solid food.

In other churches there is good solid teaching. The members “know it all,” but it does not sufficiently impact their lives, because they do not apply the truth in their lives. When problems come along, they resort to human and carnal solutions, rather than Scriptural and spiritual principles.

Without the **application of the Word** in the believers’ lives, the *Ekklesia* will be spiritually anaemic, and the problems of carnality will develop.

Prayerlessness is also a main problem. Prayer seeks the will of God; prayer helps to bring unity; prayer helps to keep believers from making mistakes; prayer helps to increase love and faith in lives; prayer helps to dissipate selfishness; prayer opens the door for the Master’s solutions, and helps to thwart the activity of the enemy.

“Take also the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying in the Spirit at all times, with every prayer and supplication. To this end, keep alert *and* watch with all perseverance, interceding for all the set-apart people of God.” (Ephesians 6:17-18)

THE BUILDING UP OF THE EKKLESIA

The Master has provided for the building up of His Body. And this building up involves every member of the *Ekklesia*. The *Ekklesia* is not individualism; it is a multi-member organism - millions of born again believers learning, growing together, and reaching on to maturity and full stature.

“And He gave *and placed* some *disciples as* apostles, some *as* prophets, some *as* evangelists, and some *as* shepherd-pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the set-apart *believers*, for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Messiah; until we **all** come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to **a full-grown, mature, perfect man**, to the measure of the **stature of the fullness of Messiah**.

“*This is* so that we should no longer be children ... but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him, who is the Head - the Messiah, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by that which **every joint** supplies, according to the effective working of **each**

individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:11-16)

That’s how each local *Ekklesia* should be progressing. Every member is important, and has a gift and a role in helping the buildup of the whole. There are many gifts, talents and abilities. As well as the gifts of teaching, evangelism, shepherding, Paul has mentioned the gifts of helping, administration and languages (1 Corinthians 12:27-28). And there are gifts of encouragement, discernment, caring, service, liberality, leading and exhortation. (See also Romans 12:6-8)

The goal is conformity to the full stature of the Master - ultimate perfection - the perfect *Ekklesia* in Heaven.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ETERNAL PURPOSE

Paul said: “To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of the Messiah, and to bring to light what is the plan, and the meaning, of the mystery which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things through the Messiah, Y’shua.

“His purpose is that now, through the *Ekklesia* (*through the universal body of those who are in fellowship the Messiah*), the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the *angelic* rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in the person of Y’shua the Messiah, our Master, through whom we have boldness and confident access *to God* through faith in Him.” (Ephesians 3:8-12)

The eternal purpose of God is to manifest His multi-faceted wisdom to all powers (including the Satanic), through His glorious, effective and incomprehensible work in the *Ekklesia* - Messiah being the Head, and the members, the rest of the Body.

When the *Ekklesia* is complete and glorified - totally filled with the Sh’khinah Glory of God - it will stand as God’s most resplendent “new creation.”

The wonder of it all ! - how the Messiah could redeem from out of the hog-pens of a most depraved world, a people - a Body - in which all defects have been eliminated forever, and that is conformed to His own perfect image! Oh, the wonder of it all!

Even Satan will have to confess on that day, that Y’shua is indeed Adonai, the Heavenly Master, and that He has done all things well, and that the *Ekklesia* is His Masterpiece.

And now, already, the satanic forces can see that the *Ekklesia* is well on the way to completion, (for most of the *Ekklesia* is already in Glory). And those evil forces are determined by all means, to hinder and frustrate the perfection of the Body.

That’s why, at present ...

“... our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against authorities, against the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *forces* of evil in the heavenly *places*.”
(Ephesians 6:12)

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert, for your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, *standing firm in the faith*.” (1 Peter 5:8-9)

THE PROMISE OF Y'SHUA THE MESSIAH

“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage! I have overcome the world.” ... “I will build My *Ekklesia*, and the gates of Hell shall not overpower it.” (John 16:33. Matthew 16:18)

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways beyond finding out! WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD? OR WHO HAS BEEN HIS COUNSELLOR? WHO HAS EVER GIVEN TO GOD THAT IT SHOULD BE REPAID TO HIM?

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

To Him be the glory for ever! Amen.”

(Romans 11:33-36)



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By Don Stanton