

God's Everlasting Covenant presents: **Is the Church in the Bible?**

This deserves some serious study on the part of Bible students. The subject matter is tedious and lengthy, and cannot be given adequate attention in this short treatise. However, we make an attempt to give an overview, in hopes that the student will study the matter on his or her own.

Before we begin, a terminology change is called for in this study. Christians have typically understood that the Bible is made up of two testaments – the Old and the New. This is an error in translation and in thinking. The word translated *testament* is the Hebrew word *beriyt* and it means covenant. There is also an inference between the words “old” and “new” that what is newest supercedes what is “oldest”. That is simply not correct. The Tenakh or the Jewish Scriptures are not an “Old Testament.” They make up the completeness of God’s everlasting covenant with Israel. The “New Covenant” is a continuation of the everlasting covenant. They are not two testaments or even two covenants. They are one. As students of the truth, we are trying to rid ourselves of words that continue to promote wrong thinking when it comes to the Bible, and so we will use the terms “Tenakh” or “Jewish Scriptures” when referring to what has been classically called the “Old Testament” and “Messianic Writings” for what has been called the “New Testament.” Now to our study!

We are going to look at the use of two words, **qahal** and **ekklesia**. Qahal is the Hebrew word used in the Jewish Scriptures to describe Israel’s gatherings or assemblies, and ekklesia is the word commonly used to refer to gatherings of the believers in the Messianic Writings and has been translated “church”.

Strongs #6951 qahal = from #6950 (a primary root; to convoke – assemble (selves) (together), gather (selves) (together). Assembly, company, congregation, multitude.

Hebrew Lexicon defines qahal as such (from <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Lexicons/Hebrew/>)

Definition

- I. assembly, company, congregation, convocation
 - a. assembly
 - I. for evil counsel, war or invasion, religious purposes
 - b. company (of returning exiles)
 - c. congregation
 - I. as organized body

Uses in Jewish Scriptures = 120 times (KJV)

#6951 translated Assembly (17 times)

Gen49:6

Ex 12:6, Ex 16:3

Lev 4:13

Num 14:5, Num 20:6

Deut 5:22, Deut 9:10, Deut 10:4, Deut 18:16

Judges 20:2, 21:18

1 Sam 17:47

2 Chron 39:23

Jer 26:17, 50:9

Ezek 23:4

#6951 translated Company (16 times)

Gen 35:11

Num 22:4

Jer 31:8

Ezek 16:40, 17:17, 23:46, 23:47, 27:27, 27:34, 32:3, 32:22, 32:23, 38:4, 38:7, 38:13, 38:15

#6951 translated Congregation (84 times)

Lev 4:14, 4:21, 16:17, 16:33,

Num 10:7, 15:15, 16:3, 16:33, 16:47, 19:20, 20:4, 20:10, 20:12,

Deut 23:1, 23:2, 23:3 (both times), 23:8,

Josh 8:35

Judges 21:5

1 Kings 8:14 (both times), 8:22, 8:55, 8:65, 12:3

1 Chron 13:2, 13:4, 28:8, 29:1, 29:10, 29:20 (both times)

2 Chron 1:3, 1:5, 6:3 (both times), 6:12, 6:13, 7:8, 20:5, 20:14, 23:3, 24:6, 28:14, 29:23, 29:28, 29:31, 29:32, 30:2, 30:4, 30:13, 30:17, 30:24 (both times), 30:25 (both times), 31:18

Ezra 2:64, 10:1, 10:8, 10:12, 10:14

Neh 5:13, 7:66, 8:2, 8:17, 13:1

Job 30:28

Ps 22:22, 22:25, 26:5, 35:18, 49:9, 40:10, 89:5, 107:32, 149:1

Prov 5:14, 21:16, 26:26

Lam 1:10

Joel 2:16

Micah 2:5

#6951 translated Multitude (3 times)

Gen 28:3, Gen 48:4

Jer 44:15

Strong's #1577 ekkleisia (from a compound of #1537 ek = a primary preposition denoting *origin* (the point from where motion or action proceeds): *from, out* and #2564 kaleo: *to call, as in bid, call (forth)*). So, a *calling out*, i.e. a *popular meeting, a religious*

congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both: *assembly*)

Greek Lexicon defines ekklesia as such (from <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Lexicons/Greek/>)

Definition

1. a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, an assembly
 - a. an assembly of the people convened at the public place of the council for the purpose of deliberating
 - b. the assembly of the Israelites
 - c. any gathering or throng of men assembled by chance, tumultuously
 - d. in a Christian sense
 1. an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting
 2. a company of Christian, or of those who, hoping for eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, observe their own religious rites, hold their own religious meetings, and manage their own affairs, according to regulations prescribed for the body for order's sake
 3. those who anywhere, in a city, village, constitute such a company and are united into one body
 4. the whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth
 5. the assembly of faithful Christians already dead and received into heaven

Notice the similarities in the definition between the Hebrew qahal and the Greek ekklesia.

Uses in the Messianic Writings = 118 times (KJV)

#1577 translated Assembly (3 times)

Acts 19:32, 19:39, 19:41

#1577 translated Company (0 times)

#1577 translated Congregation or Meeting (0 times)

#1577 translated Multitude (0 times)

#1577 translated as Church or Churches (115 times)

From in depth study, we have come to believe that there was a conspiracy to suppress the true definition of ekklesia, replacing it with a new definition translated *church*. Though one can't be quite sure when, it appears it was with the King James translation, in about 1611.

In 325 AD, "The Church" joined the State under Constantine, and it was carried through the Reformation. The Reformers were all involved in civil government, such as John Calvin who set up the civil government in Geneva. The pope was the head of the Catholic Church and he was kicked out of England, and King Henry VIII took jurisdiction over the Church. And then when the King James version was done, it was very important for them to retain the word "church" because they had jurisdiction over it, so **King James made fifteen specific edicts**, as far as the translation goes, and one of those edicts (edict number three) stated that this bible was to retain the word "church" in the translation and it was not to be replaced with the word "congregation." That was his specific edict. He has no jurisdiction over the congregation (people), but he does over the church (physical buildings). So you can see he never wanted the word "assembly" associated with the original meaning of the Old Testament which meant "congregation." So he knew the correct translation, obviously, but he didn't want it in there, that way they retain control over "the church." (From *Christ's Ekklesia and the Church Compared*, by Richard Anthony)

It is also interesting to note that nowhere in the Greek Lexicon does the definition of **church** appear for the word **ekklesia**. In our opinion, this was a **deliberate** attempt by the translators to remove the continuity in meaning between qahal (in the Jewish Scriptures) and ekklesia (in the Messianic Writings). This student's belief is that it was due to the poison of anti-Semitism and the push to remove the influence of Jewishness from what became known as Christianity, under the heavy anti-Semitic influence of Constantine in the 4th century, and it continued with the 'church' leaders that followed his destructive legacy.

There is actual proof that what is being said here is the truth. The first English Bible was the Tyndale Bible, and it was translated sometime between 1524 and 1526. The Tyndale Bible never once used the word **church**. It used the word **assembly** or **congregation**. The Tyndale Bible did use the word **churches** once in Acts 19:37 to describe the pagan temples. Interestingly, this preference for the word "church" was passed on to the KJV translation, even though the word used there in Acts 19:37 is NOT ekklesia. It is Strong's #2417 hierosulos and means a temple-despoiler. In other

words, it means that the hierosulos (translated by Tyndale as **churches**) is spoiling the Jewish Temple. It is a false temple! Therefore, the Greek word ekklesia was falsely translated **church** in the King James, which was a word used to describe pagan temples!

There is one last evidence of proof: The Septuagint. The Septuagint is the first translation of the Jewish Scriptures (what we call the Old Testament) into Greek. It was completed about three hundred years before Yeshua's ministry. The translators consistently used the Greek word "ekklesia" to translate the Hebrew word "qahal." The correct translation of ekklesia is **assembly** or **congregation** and NOT church. Ekklesia does indeed mean "called out ones" not "church!"

What does the Lord God say about distorting His Word? Let's hear what Yeshua had to say about this subject.

Matthew 4:4: The *Tenakh* (Jewish Scriptures) says, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of Adonai." (CJB)

Matthew 12:36-37: Moreover, I tell you this: on the Day of Judgment people will have to give account for every careless word they have spoken; for by your own words you will be acquitted, and by your own words you will be condemned. (CJB)

Proverbs 30:5-6: Every word of God's is pure; he shields those taking refuge in him; Don't add anything to his words; or he will rebuke you, and you will be found a liar. (CJB)

Indeed, it makes a huge difference what words we use! For further study, our ministry highly recommends ***The Separation of Church & Faith, Volume I, Copernicus and the Jews by Daniel Gruber***. It is an excellent source for this subject and many others having to do with our separation from our Hebraic roots. This book, along with many other excellent resources can be purchased from our friends at El Shaddai Ministries: <http://www.elshaddaiministries.us/bookstore.html>