

What is the Church?

The Church is the interdependent ministering community (serving servant) of disciples of Messiah worldwide (Isa 49:6), even to the ends of the earth. *Interdependent* means mutually dependent. The Church is the interdependent, international Body of Messiah that serves (which is the same thing as *worships*) night and day (Acts 26:7). They serve to produce the fruit of the Kingdom that was taken away from old Israel (Mt 21:43). They are the nation of 1 Pet 2:9-10 who serve God, striving to accomplish what old Israel failed to produce (Mt 21:33-45). This is the fulfillment of Mal 1:5,11 in every place or township. *Produce* in Mt 21:43 means to bring forth, yield, strive to attain, exhibit. What the labor attains (or obtains) is the product, the result.

The community of disciples labors to produce the hope of the promise (Acts 26:6) made to Abraham and repeated to the fathers. Ecc'cus 48:10-11; Mal 4:6; Gen 18:19; 15:18 tell *what* our now (or almost) restored Twelve Tribes hope to attain for them. *Attain* means to accomplish, achieve, and arrive at. When this fruit is produced, the natural Israel will rise from the dead and take the land, enemy-free, just as our Father promised in Gen 15:18. This is the fruit, the result, or outcome of our labor. *Fruition* is the achievement of something desired or worked for. His disciples bear the fruit of the Kingdom.

Acts 26:8, as Isa 49:6, is the fruit produced by the new restored nation of Twelve Tribes, which brings to fruition the promise of Isa 49:8. This brings about Rom 11:15 and makes possible the restoration of all things in the next age (Acts 3:21). God will raise the dead nation of Israel when the nation of Mt 21:43 produces the fruit of the Kingdom. This fruit is the reign of God in a people (in *us* – Mt 24:14), which old Israel never produced in its two thousand years of vain service and worship. The word *servicing* in Acts 26:7 (#3000) is the service of each redeemed person grafted into the olive tree (Rom 11:17,24).

Doing acts of service is what it means to be a servant (Isa 49:2-5). They meet the need of Isa 49:8-9. Rom 11:21-22 predicted that the nation that took old Israel's place in producing the fruit of the Kingdom in the first century would also be cut off. It would be cut down, but not uprooted, so that in the last days of this age (Dan 2:28) what is prophesied in Dan 2:44 could come about. "And it shall come about in the days" of Dan 7:24 and Rev 17:12. This is the time when the Book of Daniel will be unsealed (Dan 12:4,9). It is the time that the restoration of all things will restore the unity and love that the First Church left in the first century (Rev 2:4-5; Acts 4:32; Jn 13:34; 17:21, etc.).

Servant Israel is a prince of power with God. He says, "You shall bring me glory" (Isa 49:3, NLT; Ps 50:15). The word *serve* in Acts 26:7, as in Mal 1:11, must be fulfilled by Messiah's Body, bringing about Mt 5:17 — "I came to fulfill them" (NLT), to make them come true by a new nation (Mt 21:43). Love fulfills the law (Rom 8:4) and the prophecies. So don't misunderstand why our Master Yahshua came (Mt 5:17, NLT). He came not to cancel the laws of Moses or the prophetic utterances of the prophets, but to produce a nation, which is His Body, in order to fulfill such prophecies as Isa 49:6,8. So, this is what Paul was trying to get across in Acts 26:6-8. Acts 13:47 will take a united front – a federation of twelve tribes which would bear the fruit that old Israel would not bear. Acts 13:47 (quoting Isa 49:6) is the working out of the Great Commission.

The twelve apostles of the Lamb were striving night and day for a little while to achieve the promise made to the fathers, until all the churches were cut off just as Rome was cut off (Rom 11:20-22). Lk 1:74 is our promise. It is the promise we can trust in all our tribal areas. We need to lay hold of it in order to do what Lk 1:77-79 says in order to bring about Lk 1:72-73. Isa 49:6 must be completed to establish Mt 19:28 and to bring about Acts 3:21 in the next age. This can happen only when we do Heb 10:13, and that means 1 Tim 2:1-8 must be reality in our midst.

1 Tim 2:8 will happen when every man puts his diadem on in righteousness. Jn 13:34-35 and 17:20-23 will be thereby fulfilled when we all together produce the

desired effect. Jn 13:34-35 and Jn 17:20-23 is the efficacy of all working together as one (Pr 17:17). It can't be done any other way than Jn 13:34 to produce the effect of verse 35, or the effect of Jn 17:23. This is what it will take to produce Heb 10:13 and Rev 20:1-3,10.

All this takes a *community*, not a church building. It takes a Body for Him to dwell in, just as it did in His first visitation (Heb 10:5). Then He came to do what He said He came for (Mt 5:17). He came to redeem as one new man and to accomplish all that had been written about Him. The word Church, *ecclesia* — “called out” — means what Peter *did* on the day of Pentecost. This is what Billy Graham never does — start a new community. That is where the Holy Spirit of Messiah can dwell, forming a Body to be entered through baptism, that is, immersion (Gal 3:27). In Acts 2:38,40-41 they were called out of the decadent society and into a brand new culture where one can grow up into Messiah in every aspect of one's personality (Eph 4:11-16).

The “church” in Jer 30:20 is the community or the congregate of the nation in a particular place, in fellowship with the many other communities all over the world. This is what constitutes a nation, which is a federation of twelve self-governing tribes. The New Testament word translated as *church* is #1577 and denotes a community of the redeemed in its international fellowship under one Head (Jn 17:21-23). It is the church in the many places where it survives as a witness of His love and care (1 Pet 2:12; Rev 2:5). It is the living demonstration of Messiah Himself, incarnate in a Body (Jn 14:20; 12:26).

The use of the word *church* to identify the redeemed of YHWH in a community (as was the original one in Acts 4:32) came into being as a result of the formation of a new wineskin that the new wine of the Holy Spirit could be poured into (Rom 5:5). His Body as a community could only be founded upon the death and resurrection and ascension of the Messiah (Jn 7:37-39). This new community, as Mt 21:43 foretold, was founded upon these three events. And on the foundation of the apostles and prophets the church came

into existence first in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Eph 2:19-20; 1 Cor 3:1; Eph 2:20-23). There is no such thing as “the church” without the foundation being laid by an apostle (1 Cor 3:9-15).

The church cannot be an institution, much less a building. In the book of Acts and the Epistles the word *church* refers 92 times to local or provincial communities, such as the Galatian churches. Twenty times more the word *church* speaks of the whole community of disciples, as in the statement that Messiah is “head” over everything for the *church*, which is His Body (Eph 1:22-23). This speaks of His whole twelve-tribed Body – in every place – as the tribes with all their clans in them (Rev 21:9,12).

The nature of the Church is only as a community or a nation of communities. The New Testament pictures the nature of the church as a people in community.

The Body of Messiah

The Church is the Body of Messiah – as in a Body prepared for Him (the Word) to dwell on earth. Being re-linked to God is restoration (Jms 1:26-27) of the defunct religion of the Twelve Tribes of Israel of the second century. Each member is linked to its head (Col 2:19). Each member is linked to other members of the living organism, as each member of Messiah’s Body performs his own prepared works (Eph 2:10). They function as vital members of Him who is their head, using His grace to employ their individual spiritual gifts to minister to one another. The Body grows and matures as each one grows along with all the other members, up into the Head (Eph 4:15-16).

The Messiah Yahshua continues to minister through His maturing Body on earth, and through His Body, continues His incarnation in this world (Jn 17:23; Isa 52:15). The church is the family of God. Jer 31:1 — He is the God of all the tribes and its clans of Israel. Each member of His family, as members of the Body of Messiah, loves and cares for one another. So an intimate fellowship develops and community members experience the love of God together and can witness to the transformation of one another in His

Body life. The church is God's Holy Temple, His Body in the eternal age (Rev 21:3). Now each member is a building stone linked to the Holy Spirit, who uses each one to construct this marvelous edifice on earth. It will be His Eternal Home. Each stone in the construction is to exercise its gifts to build (1 Cor 3:16-17), helping one another to grow up into Him who is the Head (Eph 4:15).

The Church is the Bride of Messiah (2 Cor 11:1-4). Each one in Messiah's Body is destined for the resurrection at which all will experience their full union with Him, even as we experience union in our humanity in marriage (Rev 19:7-8; 21:9,12). We are disciples who serve Him where He is, which is in a locality on earth (Jn 12:26). Those who are honored by His Father are bonded to His Son intimately so that the image is formed of a Body in which each member is directly linked to the Head. This is required to express the reality the Son. This takes a corporeal body (Jn 13:35; 17:23; Isa 52:15).

We are all so loved by God that even the world will know that He loved them enough to give them this demonstration of His love, which they could come into (Jn 17:23). The image of a family (Jer 31:1) is expressed to demand attention as it expresses the reality of the corporeal Body of Messiah. Jer 31:1 communicates that our own clan is so deeply loved by God. That our children are treasured and are to treasure one another is required to express the nature of the love and the glory that binds all in the family to the God of the family, demanding the attention or respect of the watching world.

Each person is intimately engaged in doing the works of Eph 2:10, all being sealed with the Spirit (Eph 1:13). The image of the Holy Temple in which each stone is carefully laid and bonded together is required to describe the serving and worshipping new people of God (Acts 26:7; Mal 1:11). They are the light of the world expressing God's character to all men (Jn 13:35).

In 1 Cor 12:12 we see the word *body*, which means one's own human body as an example of how Messiah's own corporeal Body on Earth must work. It is no less corporeal than the body men saw before He ascended (Col 1:22; Heb 10:10). The Body

of Messiah is made up of only those who are intimately joined (1 Cor 6:17). That is the only way it can be a Body with its various parts. Each member is part of His supernatural Body, which is expressed only in community life. It is that community life that demystifies the Body of Messiah. Each member has differing gifts which enable him or her to contribute to the growth and well-being of the other members. This is to build and not destroy (Mt 12:30).

Jn 12:26 – Serving Him is to serve others with one's gifts by His grace. It is active service, the daily expression of the Body life of the community. This means Jn 13:34 and 1 Jn 3:23 — intimate, loving relationships which create the context in which every part or member of the Body can minister to one another (1 Cor 12:12). As is a human body, so is His Body (1 Cor 12:13).

Disciples are united to Yahshua (1 Cor 6:17) and to one another as the parts of a human body are united to their head and each other (1 Cor 12). Each one in Messiah has his or her own role to play, like a member of a human body, so that the Body may function as God intends (Eph 4:16). Each part is enabled, gifted and energized to carry out its function (Mt 25:14-15; Rom 12:3-8; Eph 2:10; 4:12; 1 Pet 4:11; Heb 4:16).

The church (community) will be a healthy vital body as each member retains the glory of Messiah, which is the inner worth that demands respect of all other members (Jn 17:22). They share with one another in all things (even their sorrows and joys). Eph 1:22-23 – He is head over all things for us and we are His Body. Eph 4:11-32 – Describes the growing up or maturation process as each member does its work, being actively engaged in one another's life.

The church is the Chosen People, now the newly chosen ones in the restoration of Mt 21:43 and Mk 9:11-12. We are to be all the old Israel was not (Dt 18:5; Isa 41:5,9) as Acts 26:7 says, in order to be a blessing to all people (Gen 12:3; Isa 49:17,25; Jer 30:20). In God's choice of the new Israel, the restoration of it requires or demands responsibility and the privilege we have that we must reflect our Master's character. We

must not hold Him up to public shame as the Jews did and do (Rom 2:24; Eze 36:20-23; Dt 14:1-2, and the rest of the chapter).

Should God's chosen and holy people eat pigs and rats, etc? Christians say, "pigs, yes; rats, no." Why?

The idea of chosen people (1 Pet 2:5) is that God has selected us out of all other people (Jn 7:17). The responsibilities we bear as the ones He choose are our own, and each one of us has no one else to blame.

The Body of Messiah is as the human body (1 Cor 12:12). It is the essential form and means of expression of the person of Messiah to the world. The *ecclesia* is vitally linked to the whole world-wide community as in every region (Acts 5:31-32).

"Under the auspices of" is the same as "under the authority of" (Mt 28:18-20). All under the auspices of our Master Yahshua are all together. They form a federation, not a planned federation, but as a Body in which Messiah indwells. They are all one in one Spirit (Eph 4:4-6; 1 Cor 12:12), and so is Messiah.

And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence... I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church. (Col 1:18,24)

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph 1:22-23)

For as many of you as were baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah. (Gal 3:27)

For Christ is like a single (human) body with its many links and organs, which, many as they are, together make up one Body. (1 Cor 12:12, NEV)

1 Cor 12:12 — "Christ" is one on the earth in His many-membered Body, which one can see as well or more than His own human body while it was on the earth in the First Century. It will be in every place to allow the peoples to observe the behavior of the Body of Messiah (1 Pet 2:12). It's all or nothing.