



## Is God in the House? *Completeness at Home*

by Thomas K. Burk

Jesus spent approximately three and one-half years training His Apostles to teach His message of the Kingdom of God. He taught them the truths that His creation, MAN, would need to obey to be forgiven for their sinful ways, and to obtain a relationship through Him of truth, power, and love. This message became known as “the Gospel.” It was preached first under the anointing of the Holy Ghost by the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost. (See Acts 2) The three-thousand souls that accepted Peter’s message that day went on to be born again into the Church of Jesus Christ. But the Church did not start there; it was in the mind of God from the beginning of time. Understanding what the Church is helps us better define what we are as believers, because the Church is not a building, but rather it is a gathering of individuals together under the authority of and faith in God’s Word.

### VOCABULARY

**Kahal:** The Hebrew equivalent for "Church" is Kahal. It is the *Strong's Word* 6951.

**Ekklesia:** The word translated as "church" in the NT is the *Strong's Word* 1577. It is the Greek word "Ekklesia."

*Thayer's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament:* the Greek word "Ekklesia" / church means, "An assembly of people called out."

**Church:** The institution commonly called “church,” comes from the Hebrew word “kahal,” and the Greek word “ekklesia.” Neither of these words refers to a building, but to a people who are a CALLED OUT assembly, and are to be ‘holy.’ Holy in Hebrew means to be separated or sanctified from something and/or to something. Such holiness is not just how you look, but more so speaks of a life separated from the world and its ways and thereby united unto God. Such an occurrence happened when God gave the nation of Israel—the Kehilat, Assembly, or Church—His Law.

### **Acts 7:37-38**

(37) This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

(38) This is he, that was in the CHURCH [1577/Ekklesia / Kahal] IN THE WILDERNESS with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.

Acts 7:37-38 is quoting from the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy.

### **Deuteronomy 18:15 -16**

(15) The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken.

(16) According to all that thou desirest of the Lord thy God in Horeb [Mount Sinai] in the DAY of the ASSEMBLY [“Assembly” 6951/ “Kahal” = “Ekklesia” in Greek; “Church” in English]...

Those who are birthed into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ become something so different from that which they originally were that they are best referred to as a non-Jewish (non-nation), Gentile, Nation (Same as found in Matthew 28:19: “...teach all ‘NATIONS’”—“GOY” – non-Jewish, heathen, Gentile, people). They are removed from their identity and national genealogy and birthed into a new status and family which Jesus called the Kingdom of God.

### **Exodus 19:5-6**

(5) Now therefore, if ye will OBEY [“Obey” is “Shema” as found in Deuteronomy 6:4] my voice indeed, and keep my covenant [Law], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

(6) And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an HOLY NATION. [“Nation” *Strong's* 1471 Hebrew Goy- “A foreign nation; hence a Gentile.”] These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

## **ISRAEL’S WEDDING CONTRACT**

God entered into a marriage contract with the nation of Israel, the KAHAL (assembly) / Kehilat (congregation) of people at Mount Sinai.

### **Jeremiah 2:2-3**

(2) Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

(3) Israel was holiness unto the LORD, and the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

*John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible* : “**Jer :2** - Go - From Anathoth [“Anathoth” is also known as “Anata,” which is a small city east of Jerusalem. Between Jerusalem and Anata rise the heights of the Scarus (Mesarif), where Titus and his legions encamped when besieging Jerusalem in 70 AD.] to Jerusalem. Remember - I remind thee of the

kindness that was between us. The love - **When I entered into covenant with thee at the giving of the law.**”

Here, Israel is a bride and God is the husband. Biblically, a marriage is a covenant or contract. At Sinai God made a Ketubah, or a wedding contract with Israel. A “Ketubah” stipulates the man and woman’s responsibilities. At Sinai, God revealed Himself, not to one person, but a whole nation. (See **Exodus 19:5, 7, 8**) At a Jewish wedding, the groom arrives first and awaits the bride. God initiates this by His grace and awaits our response. Wedding procession always used people carrying fire. Remember the parable of the 10 virgins and its emphasis on oil and lamps. At Sinai God used a torch of lightening and smoke. The man and woman are set apart from all others to be for each other only. This is true holiness; the bride and the groom set apart from all others and to only each other. A marriage is a permanent covenant. It’s an everlasting commitment. So was the Covenant that God made. If you want to see how you fit in with its stipulations, get the Ketubah out (your Bible) and read it and renew it! Sinai was a renewal and expansion of Abraham’s covenant. Sinai was renewed also in the Davidic covenant. Then Sinai was renewed in the New Testament with a better covenant—Jesus.

### **Hebrews 8:6-13**

(6) But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

(7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

(8) For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

(9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

(10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

(11) And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

(12) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

(13) In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

(See also Jeremiah 31:31)

## **THE MARRIAGE WAS BROKEN**

The marriage contract that God gave to the assembly of Israel was the Law (Better seen as the “Word” or “Teachings” of God). The Kehilat were to keep this covenant as long as they and the Lord were espoused. As time went on, the assembly became unfaithful. This caused their marriage contract with God to be therefore broken. The Bible's “Old Covenant” speaks of both promises of blessings and communion for those who kept its stipulations, and curses and separation for those who disobeyed and rebelled against its stipulations. [In regard to these

blessings and curses, Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 give detailed explanations how God uses them as an established rule in His Kingdom.] From the beginning, God desired to write His Word, or Law, on the heart of each member of the Assembly. They refused due to their hard heart, and, because so, God's contract was eventually broken. A heart of stone scripturally breaks the commands of God as is seen in the next verses:

### **1 John 3:4**

(34) Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

### **Zechariah 7:11-13**

(11) But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

(12) Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

(13) Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

The rebellion of a stony heart separates one from the Will of God; in this case it meant the separation of the espoused with their God. Though this is true, because of the love God has for His creation, as the Messiah, He came to make a New Covenant and marriage between He and His assembly. This one was Word based as was the Law, the difference though being that the New Covenant would not be written on tables of stone, but instead on the fleshly heart of a new man in Christ. And just as the first, those who are in obedience to this New Covent become the true Assembly of God, the Church, and the bride of Christ.

### **Hebrews 8:8-10**

(8) For finding fault with them [the rebellious that had the Law written upon a heart of stone], he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

(9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

(10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

The "church" was first established at Sinai. Sinai was at the **FIRST PENTECOST (SHAVUOT)**. This day (Pentecost) was called the **DAY of the ASSEMBLY** (Deuteronomy 9:10, 10:4, 18:16) in the Old Testament and **CHURCH** (Acts 7:37-38) in the New Testament. **So, what happened in Acts 2 was NOT the birth of the church, but rather it was the time in which God wrote His WORD upon the HEARTS of His people through the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit** (Acts 2).

### **Ezekiel 36:26-27**

(26) A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put WITHIN YOU [Acts 2]: and I will TAKE AWAY the STONY HEART out of your flesh, and I will give you a HEART OF FLESH.

(27) And I will put my spirit WITHIN YOU [Acts 2]: and cause you to WALK in my statutes, and ye shall KEEP my judgments [LAW] and do them.

The prophet Ezekiel writes about a stony heart being replaced with a heart of flesh. This he indicates is when a rebellious man allows the engrafted Word of God to become part of what he is. Such a heart transplant changes removes “old man’s Adam-like” nature, and replaces it with a nature made after the “last Adam,” Jesus Christ. Such a change of spirit allows the man’s mind to be more focused on the Word and Will of God, and thereby to be not only filled with God’s Spirit, but also led by it as well. Such a miraculous occurrence changes a rebellious sinner who sins all the time, into a Born Again saint that is not easily entreated by the old temptations of this world anymore.

### **STORY**

“While sitting on the bank of a river one day, I picked up a solid round stone from the water and broke it open. It was perfectly dry in spite of the fact that it had been immersed in water for centuries. The same is true of many people in the Western world. For centuries they have been surrounded by Christianity; they live immersed in the waters of its benefits. And yet it has not penetrated their hearts; they do not love it. The fault is not in Christianity, but in men's hearts, which have been hardened by materialism and intellectualism.”

—Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889-1929)

The Apostle Peter’s name means “a stone.” Peter walked with Jesus during the full time of His ministry on Earth, yet Peter was still dry inside. Jesus basically told him that the Spirit (living water) had to go from "with you" to "in you." He told Peter that it was more than just being with Him that gives a person purpose and salvation; it was the intimacy of knowing Him that made the difference! So God takes our impersonal, unknowing, blemished, self-centered, and self-serving heart of hardened stone and gives us a heart transplant which gives us His perfection and wholeness.

### **Luke 22:32**

(32) But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

### **QUOTE**

"Where the blood flows it causes the heart to be softer."

—Cambodian Proverb

God is a gentleman. He doesn’t “cause” a person to serve Him; instead He looks for willing and obedient people to serve Him out of their love and devotion to Him. How then does He “cause” a person to walk in His statutes? He does this by giving us His Spirit, which is also known as “the Holy Ghost.” This Spirit will “cause you to walk” in the ways of God by introducing us to the

statutes' Author. With this new intimate relationship with the Author, we better understand His Word's relationship to our lives and thereby our relationship to Him and His creation.

## EXAMPLE

What does Albert Einstein's theory of relativity (or  $E=MC^2$ ) and its mathematical equation mean to you? What if you could have asked Albert to explain the formula to you and how it affects your personal life? His personal remarks and touch would focus your view and then change the way you walked by adding that view to your life. We all have the same sunset, but we do not all have the same horizon. The Holy Ghost puts us all in the same place (God's presence) so that we can all share in the same view of the same horizon—the Truths of Jesus!

So the "cause" is the effect that the Holy Ghost's presence has in and on your life. The Bible says this of the Holy Ghost's purpose.

### **John 16:13**

(13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

When we come together, our main purpose is to meet with Jesus; it is to see Him operate His will in our midst.

## RESTORING BIBLICAL FOUNDATION TO THE FAMILY

Even predating Sinai, God always desired to operate in the midst of an Assembly of people who desired to obediently and worshipfully walk in His Will. In the Garden of Eden, God made a man and a woman. This was the first Church. Then He moved into an ark with a family through which He would repopulate a world, and also raise up a Church. We then see God operating the same through the patriarchs and their offspring, until eventually we see them becoming the various tribes and nation of Israel.

So, the Kahal, Ekklesia, Assembly, or Church, is and always will be a people. Now, this may come as a shock to some, but Jesus did not come to fill buildings; He came to change men. A religious spirit causes a person to complain they have yet to find the perfect church. Their "church" is spelled with a lowercase "c," and refers to a building full of people. But when folks immerse themselves in a relationship with Jesus, they instead begin seeking to become a perfect part of *the* Church. This type "Church" is spelled with a capitol "C," and refers to the Body of Jesus Christ!

How a congregation spells "CHURCH" is mostly up to how they hear it explained from the pulpit. The lower case "c" is a place where men and their ministry can reign over other men. These congregations find men consumed with promoting their own ministry and seeking to receive self-serving rewards. But those Churches, who do not have ministers acclimatized to such behavior, will have ministry whose main purpose is to serve both another man's ministry

and another man's needs. This latter type congregation spells "CHURCH" with an upper case "C," since they see it as the Body of Christ gathering together under its true headship, Jesus.

So, let me ask you a question, where is the proper place for "the Church" to meet? How about, wherever the family comes together in Jesus' Name? The Church is an assembly of family units. What this means is, if the Family fails, so also fails the Church, and consequently, so also fails society.

## A THREE STRANDED CORD OF MARRIAGE. . . NOT EASILY BROKEN

### **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

(9) Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor.

(10) For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

(11) Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

(12) And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

So what do we see here? One man and one woman...but who is the third? God.

### Genesis 2:23: Called woman

#### **Genesis 2:23-24**

(23) And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

(24) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

The Jewish Talmud says God considered from which part of man to create woman. He said, "I will not create her from the **head** that she should not hold up her head too proudly. Nor from the **eye** that she should not be too curious. Nor from the **ear** that she should not be an eavesdropper. Nor from the **mouth** that she should not be too talkative. Nor from the **heart** that she should not be too jealous. Nor from the **hand** that she should not be too acquisitive. Nor from the **foot** that she should not be a gad about. But from a part of the body that is **hidden** that she should be **modest**.

**In Hebrew, man is an "Ish" and the woman is an "Isha."** Ish (Man) is "Aleph Yodh Shin." "Isha" (Woman) is "Aleph Yodh Shin He." Two important consonants, the "Yodh He," come from the Covenant Name for God: Yod, He, Vav, He. This name represents God's influence with man in the earth. So in a proper marriage there will be the influence of the presence of God. Aleph Shin is what's left is you remove the other letters (Yodh and He) of the Covenant Name from man and woman. "Aleph Shin" spells out the Hebrew word for "**fire**." Fire, or conflict is what occurs without God, and in this instance, the opposite sex becomes the opposing sex. It is true in the family and in the Church. It is only when the family is joined one to another and then harmoniously adjoined to God is when the Church truly finds peace and strength!

## QUOTE:

Mozart's play, Amadeus said: "Making music is easy, but marriage is hard."

## WHAT IS GOD'S PATTERN AND PURPOSE IN MARRIAGE?

The evidence of the difficulty of marriage is everywhere—even in Christian homes. The answer is to experience God's Shalom (Completeness) in our homes from the "Sar Shalom" (Prince of Peace). Consumerism and careers have become more important than people: a new Buick or house is more important than a child; lust and leisure have misplaced biblical love. Think of this, an average 16 yr. old sees 50 R-rated movies a year, and by the time a child is 16, he has witnessed up to 400,000 immoral sex acts by biblical standards. And we wonder why there is no peace? You might think that a Christian's home is immune from such chaos, but the Gallop Poll found that there is no noticeable difference between secular and Christian homes. What we must remember is that the battle begins in the mind, and then it goes to the flesh. Because so, we must focus on that which brings harmony and structure to our mind is we are going to win this war for our souls and for those of our family and friends.

A bank teller is trained to spot counterfeit money by continually handling only genuine currency. We must do the same here; we must not focus on the counterfeit church, but what makes the true Church, real.

## ISAIAH 59:19 ". . . THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL LIFT UP STANDARD"

### **Isaiah 59:19**

(19) So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. **When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.**

As the enemy attacks the church, i.e. the family, God will raise up a standard, so that men and women and their households to withstand the assault.

### **Thought for the Day:**

There are those who don't suffer from insanity; they enjoy every minute of it!

## SCRIPTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAMILY

Creation was culminated with the creation of the first family—Adam and Eve. Look at the large amount of scriptures that dealt with the first families: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Look how God many times interceded so they could have children and wives. They were called the Fathers of our faith—not leaders, etc. They were the Children of Israel. They were a family. They were the Assembly or the Church. Even the Temple, where the people of God were to gather and communion with the Lord, was known as the "House of God." God wants us to see Him as Father; He desires a close family relationship with each of us.

## PRINCIPLES FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOME AND CHURCH

### 1. The home takes precedence over the church.

- The center of religious life should be the home.
- Sabbath—Spend time with family as you all spend time with God
  - Some say the Jews “keep sabbath.” But really, the Sabbath kept the Jew.
  - At the normal church, families separate at the door and go to their various seats, classes, and etc.
  - But the biblical plan is for the family to come together as one to worship and praise their God. Such togetherness strengthens the individuals with their God, and brings strength, stability, structure, purpose, and peace to a home.
- The Passover Seder meal is a time when the dining table becomes an altar where the entire family gathers around to bless each other and to talk in unity about the things of God.
- The festival of Tabernacles is a time when a family is to commune collectively in a hand built hut, where they are to read scriptures and to eat all their meals.
- The home is considered a little sanctuary, and the table is considered an altar.

### 2. Ministry is a matter of the lay people, not just professional preachers.

- On Sabbath, families would go together to Synagogue. Each man went ready to speak about the Torah if they were called on.
- **I Peter 2:9** You are a royal priesthood.
- **Luke 22:26** Serve the needs of one another.
- **Deuteronomy 6:4** Teach God’s Word.
- **Proverbs 22:6** Teach your children.
- **I Thessalonians 1:5** Teach by word and deed
- **Romans 16:19** What values are we teaching?
- **Deuteronomy 5:29** Both parents are responsible for instilling moral values and discipline in their children.
- **Genesis 33:5** Children are a gift from God.
- **Proverbs chapters 1-6:** 1-3 Mother speaks to her child; 4-6 Father addresses child.

The answer to a successful home and Church is to make both a haven for Jesus. If you want Jesus to have His way in the Church, you must first allow Him to have His way in your home.

Fathers, it is first YOUR responsibility to see this happen. You are called to be the priest of your home. It is your God-called task to call the family together to worship, praise, pray, and study the things of God. The preachers are NOT called to rear your kids, or support your wife; you are. What is proper child rearing? What is correct spousal support? Jesus is the answer to both! That means, it is YOU, and not another man or minister that is responsible to bring this stability to your home; and it is you that is also responsible to bring Jesus into the congregation of the believers...starting first with the members of your own home.

### **Psalms 127:1-5**

(1) A Song of degrees for Solomon. Except the LORD build the house, **they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**

- (2) It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.
- (3) Lo, children are a heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.
- (4) As **arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children** of the youth.
- (5) Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, **but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.**

### **Psalms 127:1-5 MSG**

- (1) A pilgrim song of Solomon. If GOD doesn't build the house, the builders only build shacks. If GOD doesn't guard the city, the night watchman might as well nap.
- (2) It's useless to rise early and go to bed late, and work your worried fingers to the bone. Don't you know he enjoys giving rest to those he loves?
- (3) Don't you see that children are GOD's best gift? the fruit of the womb his generous legacy?
- (4) Like a warrior's fistful of arrows are the children of a vigorous youth.
- (5) Oh, how blessed are you parents, with your quivers full of children! **Your enemies don't stand a chance against you; you'll sweep them right off your doorstep.**

### *Next Lesson: Is God in the House? Men that Love*

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