

ACTS 2:1 NOT THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH ERA

When reading in Acts we must always keep in mind who the letter of Acts was written to? Who was the intended audience?

The person Luke wrote to in the book of Acts, Theophilus the High Priest, (in the year 34-31AD), was the same person that Luke wrote to in the book of Luke. He was writing to someone who knew all the temple services, a person who was familiar with the torah, tenakh, and the prophecies pointing to the coming of the Messiah. This letter was written to one particular person with whom he was sharing the acts of the apostles. He was not writing to the general public.

Acts 2:1 *And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.*

Many claim that this was the beginning of the church age. The answer to that is "No" and here is the rest of the story. The word "church" is a mistranslation of the Hebrew word 'Kahal' which means assembly. There was no such thing as the "church" as it is known today in the Scriptures or in the 1st Century when the "new" Testament was written. The Congregation, another name for Kahal started at Mt. Sinai. In Deut. 18:16 God calls the day that Israel gathered around the mountain to receive the Torah as "Yom Kahal", the day of the assembly, or congregation. This assembly was made up of Jews and Gentiles who were to follow God's ways. What was seen, not only in the Torah but also the Nevi'im, or Prophets, was that when Messiah came there would be what was called the "Eschatological Congregation" empowered by the Ruach (power) of God. Let me explain.

When Adam sinned, he lost his authority to rule over the Kingdom of God. He lost the Kivod (glory, radiance), the Shek'inah (presence) and the Ruach(power) of God. These were to be restored by the work of the Messiah. These manifestations would appear at times among certain individuals, but not among groups of people. But, the Scriptures predicted a time when they would. In Num. 11:14-35 we have the story of Moses asking for help to rule the people. God says to bring 70 elders to Him and God would take the Ruach (power) that was upon Moses and give to the 70. Two of the elders were not there, but God placed the Ruach upon them also. Joshua complains and Moses says that he wished all the people had the holy spirit.

This was seen as prophetic. Joel 2:28-29 prophesies about a time when the Ruach will be on many people, and Peter quotes this verse to explain what happened in Acts 2. Shavuot, or Pentecost, is the day that Yahveh gave the Torah on Mt Sinai, and it was the day Yeshua said to wait for in Acts 1:8-9. Wait for what? The Ruach (power) to come upon them, which was part of the restoration.

The translators didn't understand the concepts, so this eschatological congregation was now the "empowered" (by the Ruach) congregation, made up of Jews and Gentiles. What they did not see at that point was the "grafted in" concept which was the basis for Paul's teaching, based on the Shema in Deut. 6:4. Another thing which was never seen, nor should it have been, was a "gentilized church" that did not follow the Torah, the biblical festivals, that ate unclean foods and divorced itself from Israel and the Torah of God, actually calling themselves "replacement Israel". This "eschatological congregation" was to believe in Yeshua as the Messiah and show evidence of that faith by obedience to the written Torah commandments.

This concept was rejected by the so called "church fathers" and eventually was the

basis for the theology formulated and consolidated by Constantine in 325 A.D. This was the beginning of the "catholic (universal) church" and is the "mother church" for every protestant denomination thereafter. In short, The Kahal Israel (congregation of Israel), made up of Jews and Gentiles, began at Mt Sinai, continued up to Acts 2, when in fulfillment of prophecy is now the "eschatological Kahal" empowered by the Ruach. The "church" most see today is counterfeit to this, which actually had its official beginning at the Council Of Nicaea in 325 A.D., headed by a known sun-worshiper named Constantine who remained a sun worshiper until the day of his death.

Those who are truly born again and believe in and follow Yeshua, are **"People of the Way"**, they are **"The Assembly of the People"**, they are **"Natsarim"**, the **"Set apart"**, **"Remnant"** of the Holy One of Israel. In biblical times these people had fellowship and bible studies in the Temple Courtyard and in the homes of Believers, not in so-called church buildings.

It's true the Sadducees and Pharisees had synagogues established in many places, but they did so mostly to keep control of the Judaist Believers, not for teaching the torah. They assembled their people to teach them the Rabbinical manmade laws, Talmud, Mishna, etc. rather than to teach them torah. They did read the parashah's and sometimes discussed the torah, but their main emphasis was the Talmud and other Jewish writings. They proclaimed to be torah observant, as today's Orthodox Jews likewise claim, but they taught that their Talmud superseded the torah and tenakh.

The reason many people attended these synagogues was simple, the scrolls were not available to the common people in those days. Only the rich could afford to have scrolls of the torah and tenakh. So the only way people could pursue torah, other than by oral teaching, was by attending these synagogues and hearing it read out loud. One of Yeshua's famous quotes was: "you have heard", this is one of the things He was referring to when He said that (Matt. 5:21, 27, Eccl. 12:13).

<u>Where did the church meet?</u>	
Acts 2: 46	"House to house"
Acts 5: 42	"House to house"
Acts 8: 3	"House after house"
Acts 10: 20	Cornelius' house
Acts 12: 12	Mary's house
Acts 16: 32	Jailer's house
Acts 16: 40	Lydia's house
Acts 18: 7	Titius Justus' house
Acts 20: 20	"House to house"
Romans 16: 5	Prisca + Aquila's house
1 Corinthians 16: 19	Prisca + Aquila's house
Colossians 4: 15	Nympha's house
Philemon 1: 2	Philemon's house

Let's have a quick look and see what the bible says about fellowshiping in those days. **Acts 5:42** *"And not for a single day, **either in the Temple court or in private homes**, did they stop teaching and proclaiming the Good News that Yeshua is the Messiah."*

Acts 16:32 *"Whereupon they told him and everyone in his household the message about the Lord." (CJB)*

Acts 20:20 *"You know that I held back nothing that could be helpful to you, and that I taught you both **in public and from house to house**,"*

1Cor. 16:19 *"The congregations in the province of Asia send greetings to you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you in union with the Lord, **as does the congregation that meets in their house**."*

Col. 4:15 *"Give my greetings to the brothers in Laodicea, also to Nympha and **the congregation that meets in her home**."*

Philm. 1:2 *"along with sister Apphia, our fellow-soldier Archippus and **the congregation that gathers in your home**."*

What it all boils down to is this. In ancient days the people assembled regularly for the Feasts (Hebr. 10:24-25), but only a few assembled together in public places (synagogues). The people got together in small groups in various homes to study the word. They moved from one home to another for bible studies, teaching, and sang hallels to praise and worship Yahveh and Yeshua. They got together for public worship and praise during the three Feast seasons (moedim) as the torah stipulated.

There is nothing wrong with getting together on shabbat to teach, share, learn the word, and bible study, but that should only take place after the individual Believers of the community establish their personal relationship with the Father. It is our personal relationship that is most important, not a corporate relationship. If one has a personal relationship with Adonai, he will fit in anywhere, anytime, in his community of torah observant people, it will not have to be as organized religion. Yahveh and Yeshua are the way and those who are truly born again are "People Of The Way".

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