



**ויקהל *Vayak'hel* And He Assembled**  
[Exodus 35.1—38.20](#)  
[1 Kings 7.40—50](#) / [Mark 15](#)



**Assemble** In [Genesis 3.8](#), Adam and Eve hear the **קול *qol*** voice of God in the garden. [Exodus 35.1](#) says of Moses **ויקהל *vayak'hel*** and he assembled Israel together. The root is **קהל *qahal*** assemble/summon an assembly/call together, a kindred root to **קול *qol***. **קהל *qahal*** is also the root for **קהלת *qohélet*** the preacher or teacher (one who calls the people) of [Ecclesiastes 1](#), and **קהילה *qehilah*** assembly. We see **קול** and **קהל** again in [Deuteronomy 18.15-16](#), when Moses promises that God will send another Prophet like him, and he refers back to the **קהל** at Horeb/Mt. Sinai when God's voice was too much for them. **ישוע *Yeshua*** Jesus/salvation makes it clear that He is this promised Prophet:

- [John 7.16](#) My teaching comes from the One who sent Me
- [John 8.28](#) I speak just what the Father has taught Me
- [John 8.40](#) (I have) told you the truth I heard from God
- [John 12.49](#) The Father who sent me commanded me what to say
- [John 14.10](#) The words I say to you are not just My own
- [John 14.24](#) These words you hear...belong to the Father who sent Me
- [John 17.8](#) I gave them the words you gave Me

**ἐκκλησία *ekklesia*** a calling out/synagogue/church/community or members on earth or saints in heaven, is the source of the title of the book of Ecclesiastes. **ἐκκλησία** is derived in part from **καλέω *kaleo*** to call. Hear the similarity to **קול**, **קהל**, and **קהילה**? It's interesting to see how **קהל** and **ἐκκλησία** are translated into English in our Bibles.

For example, In Stephen's speech in [Acts 7.38](#), he speaks of Moses, who was in the **ἐκκλησία** church in the wilderness. Moses is "good," so this passage is translated church. Stephen's speech continually narrows down the scope of this **ἐκκλησία**. In [Acts 19.32](#) and again in [Acts 19.41](#), **ἐκκλησία** is translated assembly when speaking of the mob that worships Diana of the Ephesians. It gets more interesting...

**קהל, ἐκκλησία, and the Church** Although ישׁוּעַ and His apostles undoubtedly spoke Greek, the commercial language of the time, they would also speak Hebrew, the language of Scripture, and Aramaic, the local tongue. So when ישׁוּעַ talks about building His Church in [Matthew 16.18](#), for example, which Matthew translates ἐκκλησία, what word would ישׁוּעַ have been using? And is there another connection between קהל and ἐκκλησία that would have been in common use at the time?

The Septuagint is the original Greek translation of the תנ״ך *Tenach*, what is called the Old Testament. It was complete about 250 years before ישׁוּעַ, was widespread throughout the Roman empire, and is often quoted directly by both Matthew and Luke in their Gospel translations, according to Rev. D. McDougall, M.A. the former Examiner in Hebrew at the Free Church of Scotland College and six years Lecturer in Christian Evidences, Vancouver Bible School, BC. He says that it is “as near as possible a moral certainty” that ישׁוּעַ actually said, “On this rock I will build My קהל.” Septuagint examples of the translation of קהל into ἐκκλησία:

- [Genesis 28.3](#) Isaac blesses Jacob to marry and become a קהל
- [Genesis 35.11](#) God assures Jacob that he will become a קהל
- [Genesis 48.4](#) Jacob as he dies relates this blessing to Joseph to become a קהל
- [2 Chron. 23.3](#) The קהל narrows to the southern kingdom after northern idolatry. This is emphasized in the Septuagint—see the phrase ἐκκλησία *Ιουδα* Church of Judah in the Septuagint text of this link—where the authors of the Septuagint add *Judah* to the text to clarify that the northern tribes are now apostate.
- [Ezra 2.64](#) The קהל returns from captivity in Babylon
- [Neh. 5.13](#) The קהל says, “Amen,” promising to release brothers from debt
- [Neh. 7.66](#) A repeat of Ezra 2.64
- [Neh. 8.17](#) The קהל celebrates Sukkoth for the first time since Joshua

Paul explains in [Romans 11](#) that God has not rejected ישׂראל *Yisra'el* Israel. Elijah thinks he is the only faithful one left, but God still has 7,000 faithful. The olive tree that God planted 4,000 years ago with Abraham is the same olive tree that the Church belongs to today. Back then it was called קהל or ἐκκλησία, and today the Church. Cultivated branches have been broken off and wild branches have been added, but it is the same olive tree.



**Christians Met in Synagogue?** ἐκκλησία is translated differently to enhance the Church. The reverse happens with συναγωγή *synagōgē* synagogue/a bringing together/an assembly of men. In [James 2.2](#), he speaks to Christian brothers about their συναγωγή, translated meeting/assembly. The early Church met in synagogues! But this is hidden from the casual reader because of the translation. Based on what you've learned so far, how do you think the same word συναγωγή is translated in [Revelation 2.9](#), when it speaks of a collection of the followers of Satan? That's right, synagogue.



**Tabernacle and Temple** This Torah portion describes the building of the Tabernacle. This portable Tabernacle is first, followed by the stone Tabernacle in Shiloh, then Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, and finally the Second Temple, built by those returning from Exile. The Second Temple is the one ישוע sees. It is destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and there has been no Temple since. But there will be a future Temple, and [Zechariah 6.12-13](#) says it will be built by the Branch. Who is the Branch?



**The Branch** When I was a new believer and trusting in the Bible as God's Word, a man with a different attitude told me that [Matthew 2.23](#) was proof that the Bible had contradictions. That verse quotes prophets as saying that Jesus will be called a Nazarene. But there is no prophecy saying that the Messiah will live in Nazareth, so it's a contradiction. Or is it?

Messiah ישוע is The Branch/The Root of Jesse referred to by Paul in [Romans 15.12](#), quoting [Isaiah 11.1,11](#). Messiah is the נצר *netser* Branch that will bear fruit and the גוים *Goyim* Gentiles will seek after Him, [verse 11](#). ישוע also speaks of Himself as the Vine and his disciples the ones that will bear fruit,

[John 15.1-8](#). So a verse that says the נצר would come from נצרת *Netseret* Nazareth isn't a contradiction, it's a play on words. נצר also sounds like נזיר *naziyr* Nazarite/consecrated or devoted one, and many prophecies refer to Messiah as consecrated and devoted. What better town for ישוע to grow up in than נצרת, what we might call Branch Town—in fact in English we say He is a Netser-ine! Although there is no prophecy saying Messiah will come from Nazareth, it seems appropriate to pull the prophecies together that refer to Messiah as a נצר and a נזיר and have him grow up in נצרת.

**שבת Shabbat Sabbath** The 1<sup>st</sup> command Moses gives in [Exodus 35.2](#) after the קהל is assembled is to keep the שבת . Anyone who works on שבת must be put to death. The Church has done without this commandment for long enough that it's fair to refer to the 9 Commandments instead of the 10. One argument in the Church against שבת is that ישוע is our rest, our שבת, so this commandment is an unnecessary, and some would even argue, evil shadow of the real Rest, Messiah. Another argument is that we are “free from the Law,” which somehow does not include the other Nine Commandments, such as murder and adultery.

**Kindling a Fire** Verse 3 goes on to say not to kindle a fire on the שבת . The Jewish neighborhoods in Europe before WWII were notable that on שבת, even in winter, there was no smoke coming from their chimneys. Today the various branches of Judaism debate what constitutes kindling a fire. For example, some consider an internal combustion engine a fire starter, so they will not drive on שבת and live within walking distance of synagogue. In the Church we have been



trained to give scarcely a thought to this commandment not to kindle a fire on שבת . But there is another fire to avoid. [James 3.6](#) warns that the tongue is a fire which sets the whole person on fire. This kindled fire is good to avoid anytime, especially שבת .

In the next chapter, [James 4.11-12](#) says that those who slander other believers speak against the Law and judge the Law, which is trying to take God's job. Criticizing other believers or denominations is something to avoid in any denomination, the Hebrew Roots movement included. Otherwise, we could be messy-anic!

In [Matthew 23.23](#), ישוע criticizes the teachers of the Law and Pharisees for focusing on minor points of the Law while ignoring the main ideas. Many in the Church take this as one of the arguments against שבת—that none of this matters any more. But in the same verse, ישוע says that they should have practiced both the major and minor points.

[Isaiah 58](#) describes what God desires for us to do or not do on שבת, plus the promises for obedience. [Verse 13](#) says that if we call the שבת a ענג *oneg* delight, then, [verse 14](#), we will ענג *anag* be happy about/take exquisite delight in יהוה, and He will cause us to ride on the high places of the earth. I can't imagine anything better in this world than to have this relationship with God. Being a king or queen would be a demotion.

**Building a House for God** Since Exodus 25, plans have been made for the construction of the Tabernacle, and now beginning in [Exodus 35.4](#), those with willing hearts make contributions to begin building. The contributions are completed in this chapter, but the building continues until the end of the book, when the Tabernacle is consecrated.

Our lives are contributions to the building of the Church. But the building won't be completed until the end of the Book.



**Willing, but Slow** [Exodus 35.27](#) says, וְהַנְּשֵׂאִים *v'hansee'eem* And the rulers... The root word is נָשִׂיא *nasiy* one lifted up/chief/prince/captain/leader. Notice that the root and the way this word is used in [Exodus 16.22](#) both contain a ך *yod* hand, while in [Exodus 35.27](#) there is no ך. Why would this be? The traditional explanation is that ך symbolizes giving in this case, and since these rulers were the last to bring gifts, the ך is removed from their title.

God loves a cheerful—and prompt!—giver, [2 Corinthians 9.7](#).

Glossary, in order of appearance

ויקהל	<i>vayak'hel</i>	and he assembled
קול	<i>qol</i>	voice
קהל	<i>qahal</i>	assemble
קהלת	<i>qohelet</i>	preacher/teacher
קהלה	<i>qehilah</i>	assembly/calling out/synagogue/church/community
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
ἐκκλησία	<i>ekklesia</i>	assembly/calling out/synagogue/church/community
καλέω	<i>kaleo</i>	to call
תנייך	<i>Tenakh</i>	Hebrew Bible/Christian Old Testament
	<i>Torah</i>	T 5 Books of Moses
	<i>Nevi'im</i>	N Prophets
	<i>Ketuvim</i>	K Writings
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
συναγωγή	<i>synagōgē</i>	synagogue/a bringing together/an assembly of men
נצר	<i>netser</i>	Branch
גוים	<i>Goyim</i>	Gentiles
נצרת	<i>Nazaret</i>	Nazareth
נזיר	<i>naziyr</i>	Nazarite/consecrated or devoted one
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	God's Name, not pronounced Spoken as Adonai, Lord, or Ha Shem, the Name English all capitals: LORD
בית	<i>beit</i>	house
שבת	<i>Shabbat</i>	Sabbath/7 <sup>th</sup> day of the week
ענג	<i>oneg</i>	delight
ענג	<i>anag</i>	be happy about/take exquisite delight in
והנשאים	<i>v'hansee'eem</i>	and the rulers
נשיא	<i>nasiy</i>	one lifted up/chief/prince/captain/leader
י	<i>yod</i>	hand