

GOD IS GATHERING HIS PEOPLE IN EVERY LOCALITY

December – 2010 - ekb

One of the present activities of God in Christ, is **to gather His People in each locality**, so that through them He can fulfil His purposes of bringing Glory to His Name and extending His Kingdom Rule and fulfilling His will. *Matthew 6:9,10.*

Matthew 12:30, Luke 11:23. Jesus said, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and who does not **gather with Me** scatters abroad.”

John 10:16 Jesus said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, **them also I must bring**, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be **one fold and one shepherd.**”

Micah 2:12,13. **I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of the fold**, as the flock in the midst of their pasture: they shall make a great noise by reason of the multitude of people. **The One who breaks open is come up before them:** they have broken out, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: **and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord at their head.**

Isaiah 49:18. Lift up your eyes round about, and see: **all these gather together and come to you.** “As I live,” says the Lord, “You shall surely clothe yourself with them all, as an ornament, and bind them on you as a bride does.”

Scriptures on gathering.

*Genesis 32:1,2, Genesis 49:10 KJV, Exodus 19:6, Deuteronomy 33:5, Psalm 47:8,9, Psalm 102:15-22, Psalm 126, Psalm 133:1-3, Isaiah 34:16, Isaiah 43:5,9, Isaiah 48:14, **Isaiah 49:5,6,18,22**, Isaiah 55:5, Isaiah 56:8, Isaiah 60:4, Isaiah 65:8, Jeremiah 29:14, Jeremiah 31:7-14, Ezekiel 20:34, Ezekiel 36:24, **Micah 2:12,13**, Zechariah 1: 18-2, Zechariah 2:11, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 12:25, Matthew 16:18, **John 10:16**, Ephesians 2:14-18, Ephesians 4:3-6, Hebrews 10:25, 1Corinthians 1:10-17, 1Corinthians 3:1-4, Galatians 3:28, Philippians 1:27, 2:2.*

Jesus’ 6 commands for maintaining the oneness He has given to us, Ephesians 4:3, and of loving one another as He has loved us. John 13:34, are:

*Mark 11:25,26, **Forgive** one another, and be forgiven.*

*Matthew 7:1,2, **Release one another** from condemning judgment. (But evaluation is good. *1 Thessalonians 5:21.*)*

*Luke 6:28, **Pray blessings** for those who have hurt you. (As in *Colossians 1:9 – 11* or *Acts 26:18.*)*

*Matthew 5:23,24, **Apologise** to those you have hurt.*

*Luke 6:27, **Do good** to those who hate you. (By the leading of the Holy Spirit and out of a secure identity in Christ.)*

*Matthew 18:15, **Sort out issues** in a godly way.*

When difficulties arise in our relationships, we can maintain unity and oneness by obedience to Jesus.

[This is expanded fully in 311 Pastor Notes.]

When God’s people are gathered as the Body of Christ, in servant - hearted humility, prayers of faith, open hearted honesty, the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the Word of truth, they become the channel by which God works to establish, and extend His Kingdom rule in the earth, *Romans 5:17*, fulfil His will and bring glory to His Name. *Luke 11:2.* (This was God’s intention for Adam. (*Genesis 1:28.*))

The gathering of God’s people in each locality with their leaders, is to act as:

1. **The Body of Christ**, through which He acts on the earth. This is “the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” *Ephesians 1:23.* The Body of Christ has many members, each of us with our own different function. *1Corinthians 12:12 – 31, Romans 12:4 – 8, 1Peter 4:10.* The Body moves and acts to fulfil the purposes of the Head, Christ. “But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the Body just as it pleased Him.” *1Corinthians 12:18.* As the Body of Christ, He directs us to worship the Father, win the lost, care for the poor and needy, disciple others to maturity, and fellowship together with the Bread and the Wine.
2. **The House of God.** This is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. *1Timothy 3:15.* This is the place of God’s dwelling. “This is My rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place – home. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.” (*Psalm 132: 14, 13, 15,16.*) Other Scriptures: *Psalm 122:1, 1Corinthians 3:9,12, Ephesians 2:19 – 22, 1Peter 2:5, Hebrews 3:6.*

3. **The Church of God.** *Ephesians 1:22,23, Matthew 16:18.* (The Greek word translated “Church”, is “ekklesia”, which means – “what is called out or forth” – Young’s Analytical Concordance. It occurs 112 times in the New Testament.). This is the assembly of God’s people gathered by the Holy Spirit, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to worship the Father in Spirit and Truth. *Matthew 18:19,20, Matthew 16:18, John 4:23.* Christ is present at the centre of the “ekklesia”, or gathering, in His Name. *Matthew 18:20.* This is the Lord’s ruling, governing body in the earth. The authorities of hell will not prevail against the Church. *Matthew 16:18.* The keys of the Kingdom are given to the Church. *Matthew 16:19.* (The keys are: The Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.) Whatever we ask for, in agreement, we receive. *Matthew 18:19.* (In Greek/Roman society, the word “ekklesia” was used of an assembly of free citizens, in a city state, called together to make decisions governing the life of the city state. In *Acts 19:32,39,41*, “ekklesia”, is used of the assembly of the free citizens of Ephesus.)
4. **The Family of God.** *Ephesians 3:14,15, Ephesians 2:18-22.* God is our Father and we are all His children. *Galatians 3:26.* “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has **begotten us** again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” *1Peter 1:3.* We have been “**Born again**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever.” *1Peter 1:23.* God, by His mercy and grace, has caused us to be **born into His family.** We are all one and equally loved and blessed by God. *Galatians 3:28.* As our Father, God loves us, cares for us, provides for us, protects us, disciplines us, corrects us, teaches us, and leads us in His ways. *Isaiah 43:4.*
5. **The Army of the Lord.** *Ephesians 6:10-19, Genesis 32:1,2, 2Kings 6:16.* Clothed with the armour of God, and by prayer, praise, preaching, witnessing, proclamation of the Word, and by powerful works of the Spirit, we extend the Kingdom of God on the earth. The Church, as the army of God, is referred to in the Song of Solomon. “Who is she that looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an **army with banners?**” *Song of Solomon 6:10.* In verse four, the Beloved, who in this allegory represents Christ, also says of the Shulamite maid, who represents the Church, “You are beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, **terrible as an army with banners.**” Paul, writing to Timothy, says, “You therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that goes to war entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him **who has chosen him to be a soldier.**” *2Timothy 2:3,4.*
6. **The Temple of God.** *Ephesians 2:21,22.* The Temple of God emphasises God’s holiness and the Presence of the Holy Spirit. We are to be His holy people and separate from all evil unto Him. “Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” *1Corinthians 3:16,17.* “But as He who has called you is holy, so you be holy in all manner of living. Because it is written, “Be holy for I am holy.” *1Peter 1:15,16.* Previously we lived in all manner of sin, *Ephesians 2:1 – 3*, “But now we are washed, we are sanctified, (set apart – made holy), and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”. *1Corinthians 6:11.*
7. **The Bride of Christ.** *Ephesians 5:25-32.* Being, “the Bride”, implies **our devotion to our Bridegroom, Christ**, so that we desire to be with Him in all things, and at all times, and in all places. **Our desire is to please Him, Christ**, in everything we do. “My Beloved spoke and said unto me, **Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away.** For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of the birds has come, and the voice of the dove is heard in our land; The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. **Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away.**” *Song of Solomon 2:10-14, Colossians 3:17.*
8. **The New Creation of God.** *Ephesians 2:10, 2Corinthians 5:17.* This is **God’s One New Man.** *Ephesians 2:15.* We, the believers in Christ, are **the Lord’s new creation in Christ**, to fulfil the works of the Lord, which He foreordained for us. *Ephesians 2:10.* In the Word of God there is the “first man Adam, **and the second Man, Christ**, who is the Lord from heaven.” *1Corinthians 15:45 – 47.* The first man Adam fell into sin and failed to fulfil the purpose that God had planned for him and his wife, Eve. *Genesis 3:1 – 7.* The plan is expressed in *Genesis 1:28.* The plan was, that Adam and his wife and descendants, were to rule over the earth, as God’s representatives and servants. Their task was to bring the whole of the earth under God’s government and rule. *Genesis 1:28.* There were things in the earth to subdue, such as the serpent. *Genesis 3:1.*
In the course of time, God called Abraham, his descendants, and the nation of Israel, to fulfil this plan. *Genesis 12:1 – 3, 13:14 – 18, 15:4 – 7, 17:1 – 8, 22:16 – 18.* These promises made to Abraham, that he would be the “heir of the world”, *Romans 4:13*, were confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. *Genesis 26:3,4, Genesis 28:13 – 15.* The nation of Israel was to be an example to the whole world, and all the other nations, of the blessings of being under the government of God. *Exodus 19:5,6.* However, Israel as a nation turned away from God and followed its own ways. *Isaiah 5:1 – 7, Jeremiah 2:1 – 13, Matthew 21:33 – 43.*

But God has not finished with Israel, despite the nation turning away from Him and failing to fulfil His purposes. There is coming a time when the nation of Israel will wholeheartedly turn back to God and serve Him. *Romans 11:1 – 5, 11 – 33.*

All the privileges of the Gospel, which the Gentiles enjoy, have come to the Gentiles through the Nation of Israel. Jesus and His disciples were of the nation of Israel. The believing Gentiles, are a wild olive branch, grafted into the root of Israel. *Romans 11:12 – 25.*

In the fullness of time, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba Father.” Wherefore we are no more servants, but sons, and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ. *Galatians 4:4 – 7.*

All believers in Christ, Jews and Gentiles, are part of the New Creation of God, the One New Man. *Ephesians 2:15.* See Number 227, Pastor Notes.

To be effective in our gathering together, we need to be aware of, and heed, various priorities God gives in His Word.

If My people who are called by My Name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. *2Chronicles 7:14.* This is our basic responsibility towards God.

Jesus’ 6 commands for maintaining the oneness He has given to us, *Ephesians 4:3*, and of loving one another as He has loved us. *John 13:34*, are:

Mark 11:25,26, **Forgive** one another, and be forgiven.

Matthew 7:1,2, **Release one another** from condemning judgment. (Evaluation is good. *1 Thessalonians 5:21.*)

Luke 6:28, **Pray blessings** for those who have hurt you. (As in *Colossians 1:9 – 11* or *Acts 26:18.*)

Matthew 5:23,24, **Apologise** to those you have hurt.

Luke 6:27, **Do good** to those who hate you. (As the Holy Spirit leads and out of a secure identity in Christ.)

Matthew 18:15, **Sort out issues** in a godly way.

When difficulties arise in our relationships, we can maintain unity and oneness by obedience to Jesus.

[This is expanded fully in 311 Pastor Notes.] These are our basic responsibilities towards others.

Consecrate a fast, call a solemn assembly, **gather** the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the House of the Lord your God, **and cry out to the Lord.** *Joel 1:14.*

Care for the poor and needy. *Matthew 25:35 – 40, Deuteronomy 15:8 – 11, 24:9 – 21, Proverbs 19:17, 14:31.*

Be active in winning the lost. *Luke 19:10, Proverbs 24:11,12, Acts 1:8, Proverbs 11:30, Matthew 28:18 – 20.*

Disciple the less mature to be mature believers. *2Timothy 2:2, Colossians 1:28, Galatians 4:19.*

Fellowship together at the foot of the Cross, with the Bread and the Wine. *1Corinthians 11:23 – 26.*