

# THEY WERE TOGETHER IN ONE ACCORD

## When will the Body once again be “in one accord”?

May 23, 2010 Feast of Pentecost/Shavuot

by Philip Shields

[www.LightontheRock.org](http://www.LightontheRock.org)

\*\*

**SUMMARY:** What was the first thing said about those assembled on Pentecost in Acts 2:1? They were together, in one accord. That is the theme of this message today: the body of Christ is to be one, together, working to the Eternal God’s glory in one accord. We are not one today. The Holy Spirit wants us together, working together in love and harmony. It is God’s stated will, and it will happen. Be a part of the One Body in truth, in fact, in deed and in heart. We discuss HOW and WHO in this message.

\*\*

Greetings, dear brothers and sisters in Messiah. It’s an honor to be here with you today by internet. Thank you for accepting me as your brother in Messiah, Jesus the Christ.

I’m recording this as the message I gave on a very special feast – the Feast of Pentecost, or in Hebrew - Shavuot, which means “weeks” or Pentecost, which refers to “50”. I was invited to speak to a group of Messianic brothers and they had asked me what I would speak on. Without hesitation, “In Acts 2:1, they were together, in one accord, as one. I would speak on that”, I replied. And so I did, and this is what I said.

This day is about the smaller late spring harvest of God’s people, before He sets His hand to convert the whole world. True. ***But there’s another message in Pentecost: it’s about God’s people being one, acting as one, worshiping as one, working as one, glorifying Father as one... one, one, one.***

It was on this day, as we know, when our Creator and head of His family gave some great gifts to His church, the one body of Christ. It was on or at the time of this day that Boaz, a Jew – married Ruth, a Moabitess and they became one flesh. She had earlier said “your God will be my God”. Jew and Gentile becoming one – on Pentecost. In one accord.

It also seems that it was on this day of Pentecost (Shavuot), according to the time line in Exodus and also by rabbinic literature, when the Almighty gave His Torah and married Israel. Among those receiving the Torah were non-Israelites that day. That day, they were together.

On Shavuot – the Hebrew name for Pentecost – the Eternal also gave His downpayment of the Spirit. It is called “the earnest – the downpayment – of the Spirit”. The Greek word is “arrabon”, which is almost identical to the modern Greek word for engagement ring, “arrabona.” They were together in Acts 2 as well.

That’s the goal of WHAT this day is supposed to picture: How God’s children come together, in one accord, as one people, one body, serving one God, with one faith, by one Spirit – as one.

The church of God composed of believers in Jesus Christ – or Yeshua the Messiah – who are led by His Spirit – is a much broader body and a much deeper body than many of us have supposed up til now. It started small, with just 120 disciples in Jerusalem, and spread to all corners of the earth.

Along the way, there have been many divisions, splits, family feuds, battles against outside influences – and the body of believers has become scattered into many groups and fellowships. Not all those fellowships are of God, but many individual believers are among them.

The Body was one on that Pentecost in Jerusalem, as we read in Acts 2. (I will also refer to Pentecost as “Shavuot”, the Hebrew word for this day, meaning “weeks” or “sabbaths”). The Body of Christ will be one again, this time as His Bride, when we marry the King of Kings. Those who refuse to become one simply will not be part of His Bride. Do you want to be in – or will you be outside that wedding supper? If you want in, you and I have to start being one and acting as one body in such total unity and love that the world takes note. You and I are supposed to be as one as Jesus and God the Father are – as we shall see in John 17. We have a ways to go, don't we?

This is the day when two leavened loaves picturing the people of God, are lifted together at the same time. Here we see two loaves as one, being presented before God's throne by the High Priest to be accepted by Him. Those 2 leavened loaves represent all of the people of the Eternal, Yahweh the one true God, coming before Him together in one accord.

Also remember that though those loaves are leavened, once leavening is baked, *it is done leavening*. It is useless to leaven anything else. *We* also should be done with sin as a way of life. I know, I know, we still sin. But our hearts should no longer be there but in righteousness and living the way of our great God.

- In the first Pentecost (Shavuot) at Mt Sinai, Almighty God gave His Torah, His great law to a newly freed nation of slaves. In that first Shavuot, the Torah was written externally, on stone – and was immediately broken, literally, by Moses at the base of the gold calf image. Yahweh had to re-write them.
- At the first Pentecost after the death and resurrection of Messiah, He gave 120 faithful disciples the downpayment of His Ruach Ha-Kodesh, His Holy Spirit. Both are incredible gifts. In the Shavuot of Acts 2, the Spirit of God *also* gave them the Eternal's Torah – but this time, because of His Spirit, God's Torah is now written internally, on the soft tissue of our hearts, not on hard rock. So God's law is still involved, but now His Law we have internally.
- In the Pentecost at Sinai, 3,000 who worshiped the gold calf died.
- In the Pentecost of Acts 2, interestingly that same number -- **3,000** -- were given the right to eternal life when they repented and were immersed in water, then baptized by the spirit into the Body of Messiah (1 Cor. 12:13).
- Rabbinical studies also state that **David**, the future king of Israel was born on Shavuot and died on Shavuot.
- **The Book of Ruth** is traditionally read during Shavuot/Pentecost. What's that about? Jew and Gentile coming together. Boaz and Ruth becoming one, and starting the line of King David and Messianic line. Oh yes, the world will someday be one. Our God is the *God of all the earth* (Gen 24:2; Josh 3:12), as well as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. All the earth will become spiritual Jews and of the seed of Abraham spiritually (Gal. 3:28) as they are called into one family, one body, one people. This is about the end of the barley spring harvest and the beginning of the wheat harvest. God's holydays revolve around the harvest

seasons of Israel to show us His plan of salvation, and to remind us that He wants a harvest of souls and lives.

**Today I'm going to tie in two concepts – of many – that we see on Pentecost – and both are ultimately possible, at least permanently, only by the Holy Spirit.** Neither one of these concepts will be possible without the Spirit. Nothing truly spiritual from the Almighty will be possible on our own. Yeshua says that in John 15: “you can do nothing of yourself” – but “in Him”, we can do all things. It takes God's Ruach Ha-kodesh (Hebrew for Holy Spirit) to do things of God's spirit. That is why we have to seek His leading as we start and end each day.

Shavuot – or Pentecost – comes after 7 sabbaths of weeks 49 days, then the following day is Pentecost, hence 50 (Lev. 23:15-20). Most of you hearing this count it from the day after the *weekly* Sabbath that falls during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The Jews count it from the first holyday of the Feast of Unleavened bread, an annual sabbath, so they are always a few days earlier than when we keep it. Most of us don't follow them at least on this point in their calendar.

It is interesting to note that **John 20:1-2** speaks of, in the original Greek, that the day after the *weekly* Sabbath was when Mary Magdalene went to the now-empty tomb. The original Greek says, “Now on the first of the weeks...”. It does not say, “on the first *day* of the week”. It was the first day of the week, a Sunday, but more importantly, it was “**the first of the weeks**” and that is what the Greek says.

Which weeks? The 7 weeks, the 7 Sabbaths, which we count leading to Pentecost! So Pentecost is the “feast of weeks”. Shavuot means “weeks”. It was on the “first of the weeks” that Messiah revealed Himself as resurrected and it was on *that* day when He ascended to heaven as the First of the firstfruit spiritual harvest. *This sanctifies the rest of the harvest, or, as Lev. 23:11 puts it, “the sheaf is waved, to be accepted for you”.* Though the *day* of firstfruits during the Days of Unleavened Bread is not a holyday, but a work day, we should not ever neglect it.

Then exactly 50 days later, also always on a Sunday, when the Day of Pentecost had *fully* come, we read in Acts 2:1 the following:

**Acts 2:1**

**“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”**

Other translations say they were together, unified. The disciples were “together, as one, in one accord” – getting along, meeting together, working together. And what wonderful work Yahweh was able to do with them as they were as one, in one accord.

Who were those who were unified and in one accord, and in the same area at the same time— together? The 120 disciples of Messiah we read about in Acts 1 who had remained faithful – and are about to receive God's Spirit, His Ruach Ha-Kodesh.

You know how moments later they received God's Spirit, they spoke miraculously in unlearned tongues, Peter gives his sermon – and 3,000 were baptized and given new life in the Spirit.

How do you think our heavenly Father, Abba, felt -- watching His new family of 120 coming together, boldly, strongly, happily, together – in one accord – and then welcoming 3,000 more into

His family? The baths people would use – called the Mikvahs -- were kept busy! How else could 3,000 be baptized so quickly in a very dry land?

**ABBA was happy! Father was pleased, I'm sure.**

I can't describe our own joy when my wife and I experience our kids and grandkids laughing, playing, eating together, and being as one. There is nothing better than being in middle of kids and grandkids giggling, running, having a ball. And nothing's worse than being with kids who won't get along. Nothing is sadder than to realize some of your children have been shunned by others in the family. I know families experiencing that. How sad.

Well, Abba (our Father in Heaven) has children right now as well. Are we bringing Him the joy of one family I spoke of earlier? Are we in one accord? Or are we taking away some of the joy He could have? There should be absolute oneness in the Body of Messiah today. And we should continue the "one accord" we read of in Acts 2:1 if we are truly parts of the Body of Messiah.

***Remember, Yeshua teaches us over and over, that the way we treat one another, the Family of God, children of the Almighty – people who are parts of HIS body – is the way He takes us treating Himself personally.*** So if we are shunning anyone with God's spirit, wherever they are, we are shunning the Savior Himself. Let me repeat that. Whatever we are doing to one another is what we are doing to Messiah Himself. Matthew 25 is all about that – in as much as you did or didn't feed me when I was hungry, visit or not visit me when I could have used a visit, clothed me – gave me cover – or not – "you did it unto Me", He says in Matthew 25, in the parable of the goats and sheep.

***So it's time for the body to come together. It's time for believers to start working together.*** There's a big harvest to harvest and we're not working as a family, as a close team. I haven't either until recently. It's time. It's time to forgive one another and worship together. It's time to look past some doctrinal differences – which I'll say more about later in the sermon – and start opening the doors to other believers. It's time to find the lost sheep, for there are thousands upon thousands who have just plain quit, gotten discouraged and have just plain quit. They've quit on God, quit on one another, quit on assembling, don't feel welcomed, and have lost interest. They're "lost".

**Yeshua sought out the lost and rejected sheep like He did in John 9**, when seeking the healed blind man who had been thrown out of the synagogue because he confessed the Messiah. Your body does what your head wants. You and I should be making phone calls, sending emails, finding people we know have quit. We should be visiting others who have God's spirit.

You see, as part of His body, we will be doing what the Head of the Body wants – just as much as your arms and legs go into action when your head decides it wants a cup of tea, or a shower, or anything your head wants. *We are the "body parts", which together, should be doing what our Head – Yeshua – wants.*

**So the first thing I mention about the Pentecost of Acts 2: they were in one place, in one accord. They were unified, working together, harmonious, one group.** Then they received God's Ruach Ha-Kodesh. **Now turn to 1 Cor. 12 please.**

**What happens when we receive God's spirit?** A lot of things happen, but I want to focus on just one of the many wonderful things at this time, to focus on my 2<sup>nd</sup> point. I said they were together, in ONE accord. Now the 2<sup>nd</sup> point. Please turn with me to 1 Corinthians 12:13.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-14**

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized (or immersed) into ONE body** — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

***Into One Body, HIS Body, His Sheep***

By one spirit we are *immersed* into *one* body—and if we are to learn anything from Acts 2:1, that one body is together, working together, in one accord. It's not divided; it's not at war with itself. Nor is it a man-made corporation. It is simply whoever has and is led by God's Spirit (Rom. 8:14), wherever they are. But the problem is: we don't like to be at-one with those folks "over there".

*So don't be looking for one organization to be the "church of God". Everyone says they know that, but few of us are acting like we know that.* So in fact, "God's church" is anyone led by God's spirit.

*Pastors get possessive of the sheep in "their" flock, forgetting these are not their sheep and really not their flocks. They're minor shepherds under the Great Shepherd – as 1 Pet 5 teaches. The brethren are sheep of the Master's flock, of His pasture (Ps. 100:3). Brethren are not our sheep. Jesus told Peter in John 21:15-17, "feed My lambs, feed My sheep." Whose sheep? Let's get it straight.*

We call it "growth" when some brethren – or sheep -- move from someone else's flock to our flock. That's nonsense. Many of God's sheep are undoubtedly scattered right now all around the world in various fellowships and organizations. But somehow, some way, *we must* and *we will* find each other and start working together. I don't fully understand *how*, but we are told a fair amount of "how". Some of the "how" I've already been discussing.

**WHEN they did act as one body, look at the incredible POWER that was unleashed. They saw miracles, healings even from mere shadows. People were raised from the dead. God's holy angels appeared to them. They witnessed the ascension of the Christ. There was powerfully effective preaching. Conversions came by the thousands. There was growth in the body and the gifts of the Spirit were evident. Now turn to Ephesians 1. As you turn there, let's ask ourselves: are we seeing the kind of power in the Body as we do in the book of Acts? NO. Has the Almighty God lost some of His might? Has the All-powerful Creator lost some of His power? NO. The problem is not with Him. It's with us. He's holding back power, in my opinion, because He is not pleased with the way His children are acting with one another.**

***Not recognizing other Sheep and Flocks of God***

**I think it has become too easy for us, all over the world,** to be content with the group we attend with, wherever that is. But also very ***easy to dismiss some of the children of the Almighty who don't look like us, don't dress like us, don't talk like us, don't do all the things we do or you do – and don't fit in to OUR way of doing things, but THEY, TOO, ARE the children of the Living God. I will admit: this isn't going to be easy,*** to mix with people quite different from you, but united with you in common beliefs, in professing Jesus or Yeshua as their Savior, and who obey Him as they seek Him each day.

Now let's read again Whose Body we are baptized into.

**Ephesians 1:22-23 NKJV**

And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to **the church**, 23 **which is HIS body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

**Colossians 1:18 Apologetics Bible**

**HE** is also **the head** of **the body, the church** – (the called-out ones, the ekklesia, holy ones of God -- -- the body of believers, Messianics, Christians...) He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything.

**Or**, "That in all things HE may have pre-eminence."

So the church - or ekklesia, called out ones – is called the body of the Messiah. He is the Head of that body. It is His body, not mine or any man's. He Holy Spirit immerses us all into that body as one, together. *We start off, at least by the Spirit, together from God's point of view. Somehow men put us into little boxes, their denominations and organizations and get nervous if we fellowship too much with other believers who obey and believe in Christ.*

**Who do we "belong" to? Who are you "of"? Drop the labels.**

The church is His body. I also know **He bought and paid for me. If you pay for something, you own it. He paid for me, so He owns me (1 Cor. 6:20)**. You and I belong to Him (Mark 9:41). **You and I do not belong to any of the incorporated churches of God.** I am not a part of United Church of God, or Living Church of God, or the Church of the Great God, or Pacific Church of God, or Sovereign Church of God, or any of the hundreds of other man-made corporate bodies all claiming to be "the" church of God, or at least a part of it! Neither do I *belong to* any Messianic group, any protestant group, I'm certainly not a Catholic, or anything like that – *but I DO belong to God and to His Son*, my soon coming Husband and now my master and Lord and King and God!

I am not "of" Herbert Armstrong. I am of Jesus Christ. I am not of Billy Graham, Ellen G. White, Rod Meredith, Roy Holladay, Clyde Kilough, Flurry, or any other man. I am not of the Pope. I am of the One who was crucified for me, and lived and died for me, and bought me with His own blood. I am of Yeshua, the son of God. That's what Paul taught in 1 Cor. 1:10-13. He was astonished that anyone would say, "I am of Paul". We're doing the very same thing today.

I am a part of the body of Christ. I am a part of the church of *God*, period. Let's dump the explanative addendums. Drop the labels. **I say drop the LABELS** like United, Living, Philadelphia, Pacific, Sovereign, Church of the Great God and on and on – and simply be a believer and a member of His Body. Period. Man-made labels divide. Labels label. Drop them. Be what you are called to be: a child of God, a member of His church with Jesus as its leader.

**Hear this please: as difficult and challenging as it was for newly converted Jews to accept repentant Gentiles into their fold, as equals – is as difficult as it is seeming to be to get Sabbath keepers together, to get the churches of God together. And when that's done, to take the next step: get them to accept Spirit-led Messianics, or for spirit-led Messianics to accept church of God folks.** We need to be accepting of anyone who obviously is being led by the Spirit. Have we not learned *anything* from the example of Cornelius, and the other Gentiles? Now it's not about Jew accepting Gentile as much as it is one corporate body of believers – Christian or Messianic – accepting one another!

**Is One Body even possible?**

Many pastors may push back at this idea of being “one body” because they still picture it as one big organization, rather than a spiritual organism. They’ll tell you it’s impossible – too many doctrinal differences (which I’ll speak on soon). I personally suspect the real reason pastors push back against the one body concept is that they don’t like losing control. Pastors like receiving tithes and offerings. Pastors like being in charge. Being one body will take a lot of humility. It will take a lot of work. It will take a lot of discussions – and forgiveness.

**Is one Body possible before we marry Christ?** Some teach we are already one body, as long as we have God’s spirit. But that’s a fallacy. Paul called the Corinthian brethren Saints, and said they had the Holy Spirit – but he also accused them of not *acting* like one body.

- I’m fairly certain that Messiah is marrying a Bride that is already acting as one, plus all those who are yet to be resurrected.
- He commands us: No divisions (1 Cor. 1:10). He wouldn’t give us a command we couldn’t obey with His divine Holy Spirit.
- Nothing is impossible with our Eternal God. But if we disbelieve, then perhaps *we’ll* never see oneness. But those who believe will see it and experience it.

**WHO IS, AND WHO ISN’T, A PART OF THAT BODY OF Christ**

So who is part of that One Body?

**TRUE: NOT all Christians have accepted Christ as their Savior, NOT all sabbath keepers are true believers, not all “church of God” brethren are spirit filled, not all Messianics are parts of the body,** so there’s that caution too, which we’ll discuss as we go along. I understand that. I know that. But that doesn’t mean we can’t be trying to find the true believers at least! *And the decision of who is, and isn’t, a part of the Body is not mine to make so much as it is Christ’s decision to make.* My decision is to treat all people with love and peace – going forward. I haven’t done that so well in the past, but am working hard to be more like that going forward.

**Not everyone who professes the Messiah is a true believer if they don’t live as He lived.** I’ll read you scripture that clearly says that very thing in a minute. Jesus Himself said “FEW” people are on the right road (Matthew 7:14; 22:14), and He will tell many to leave His presence. “I never knew you”, He will say to those who are living a life of no law (Matthew 7:21-23). Those who speak against Torah, by Jesus’ own words, will be least in the kingdom. Anyone who claims to know Christ and does not walk as He walked – obediently – is a liar, according to 1 John 2:4-6. That passage says we have to keep His commandments, keep His word and walk as He walked – or you are a liar if you claim to know Him. Let’s read it.

**1 John 2:4-6**

He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

So when I say you or I have been immersed into His body, that assumes you and I are obedient. That assumes we understand we are a new life in Him, but that new life in Him obeys HIS word and HIS law, the Torah. How else can you read the scriptures I’ve just given?

**Matthew 7:21-23**

"*Not* everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who **does the will of My Father in heaven**. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 *And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

**Matthew 5:19-20**

Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

What are the signs of God's true people? We know the "big one" in John 13 – that we must love one another. The "one another" is not limited just to people we usually fellowship with. But what other signs are there? Please turn to John 8:31. Another one is that true disciples will follow the Word, obey the truth and be true to the true teachings of the Bible.

**John 8:31-32**

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed**. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

So those who claim to be followers of Christ but who don't abide in His word, are deceived. They are not disciples. In fact, the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32- read it!).

*So, I hope you're hearing this: I'm not saying all Catholics and all Protestants should come together as the body of Christ. Most professing Christians are not true Christians*, because they aren't changing, they aren't obeying, they aren't walking as He walked. **They aren't in the body – yet**. *But those who have deeply repented, who have accepted Yeshua as their savior, who walk as He walked, who study His word to keep it, and who have received the Holy Spirit and have been immersed into the holy body of Christ – these are the people of God wherever they are.*

Then why aren't we together – those of us who are part of His body, who keep sabbath, who teach and obey Torah (God's laws) by His Spirit and who profess the risen Son of God?

Having said all that, I do believe Father is working in far more places and far more mysterious ways than most of us realize. I do believe we're going to see all kinds of His people coming out of the woodwork, in unexpected places. People different from us in so many ways – but we have this in common: they have accepted the Lord Jesus as their Savior, their lives are changing and they are obeying His word.

And are we ready for the many thousands of Jews and Israelites who will be come to Messiah at the very end time? Plus the Innumerable multitude mentioned in Rev. 7? I know, there are dozens of interpretations about who all these people are – all I'll say is that it appears there will be scores of thousands coming to salvation at the end.

Will you and I be ready to welcome them with open arms?



*I follow Christ. I follow men and teachers only as far as they follow the Christ and his Scripture. I am a Christian, one who believes in the risen Christ. Or if you prefer, I am also a “Messianic” in that I believe in Messiah – though each “title” carries a lot of baggage with it that I don’t subscribe to. All I’m saying is I am a follower of Messiah. I follow Christ. Both words – Messiah and Christ – mean “The Anointed one”. **He is whom I follow. I will follow along with you if you inspire me to follow Him – and not you. Quit looking to men** and start looking to our real head and leader: Yeshua the Messiah, Jesus the Christ.*

I keep saying this because I don’t see evidence that enough of us are seeing this yet to cause us to ACT on it. We’re not grasping it enough yet to cause each of us to DO something about the splits.

**I come back to the premise of all of this: It’s Pentecost.** We’ve been told for years that Pentecost – or Shavuot - is about the early, smaller late spring harvest – representing those being called now, as contrasted with the billions who will be called during the Millennium and beyond, which is part of the great Fall harvest. That’s all true.

But today I’m focusing on another aspect that has not been emphasized as it should have been: ***THIS feast is also about that small early harvest of believers being together as ONE***, working together, loving one another profoundly, recognizing one another as members of Jesus’ Body. It started as one tightly knit group and will end up as one tightly knit group represented by the Bride of Christ. I’m calling on all of us to get with the program of being one.

We’re not there right now. But we are going to be there. Either that, or you or I won’t be part of His one, holy, loving Body. It’s that simple.

### **HOW We Become One**

**HOW are we going to become one? HOW? Let me first say this: I will list a few ways we can start coming together. But in the end, I don’t need to know all the ways how we will end up as one body. I only need to know WHO.** It is in Him that we shall be One. It’s all about Him. It’s not about us.

**Again: I don’t need to understand fully HOW. I do need to fully understand WHO.** I will give the one biggest point now – and at the end of today’s teaching will examine other points. But this is the biggest one:

John 17:20-23 tells us how *unified* we should be and also how we get there. Jesus is speaking:

**John 17:20-23** "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, [that’s the key!!!] that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one. [there’s the standard] 23 **I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one**, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

There are two things here:

\* **It is IN HIM that we shall be one.** “v. 21 – “...that they may be one in Us...”

\* **We are to be as one with one another as the Son is one with His Father. Wow. Read v. 22 again.** “That they may be one just as we are one.”

Now that is oneness. Somehow Yeshua and His Father are so unified that Yeshua can say, “I and my Father are ONE” (John 10:30). He says “ARE” – plural – then “ONE”. Both are God (John 1:1-3), but somehow scripture tells us over and over there is but one God. That is the model of how united we are supposed to be: end of verse 22—“that they (plural) may be one as we are one.” Incredible!

**It is “in Him” that we will see past the things that divide us.** I gave a series of sermons about being “in Him”. When we are In Him we forgive one another, as we receive His forgiveness. When we are In Him, we long for one another and for Him – and we come together.

#### Explaining “in him”

I have people who say we are too evil to be in Him who is perfectly holy. But that’s missing the point. When we are immersed, we are buried with Him in baptism and come up the other side with Him in His resurrection. Romans 6 is all about that. That is referring to coming through Jordan River – when? You can find all this in Joshua 3-4-5. This happened on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (Josh 4:19). What day was that? That was when God’s children selected the Passover lamb, and cast our lot in with Messiah and the people of God – and that was the day they crossed over into the Promised Land. We were buried with him in the Red Sea, in the Jordan also – and crossed over into new life on the other side, so to speak. Paul was likely referring to all that in Romans 6, since this was part of the rabbinic teaching he also received.

In that immersion, we symbolically die – and symbolically come up fresh and new in the life of Christ. I covered this carefully in the sermon on baptism. We are now new. We are now a part of the body of Christ. What I’m saying now has everything to do with oneness and being one body, so listen carefully. Please turn to Colossians 3. If someone is a part of the body of GOD, for Christ is God (John 1:1-3), he and she can only be holy! For that is the way Father in heaven sees us now. He doesn’t see the old me, the old sinful me, He sees the new life in Christ.

#### **Colossians 3:1-4**

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 **For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

If we see one another this way, the way we should see one another, how can we stay apart? So Colossians 3:3 explains in one verse how Philip Shields – or you, whoever you are – can be “in God”. WE have to die to the self, empty ourselves, but not remain empty. We must be filled with the Spirit – and we become a part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13) and of one another (Romans 12:4-5). As part of the very son of God, we indeed are now also in the Father (John 17:21-23) because we are in Christ, who is in the Father. Get it?

What I’ve just said is not being taught this way very much in the Church of God groups and we therefore stay apart. But when we see this, we will have to come together.

So Pentecost is about God’s people being together, of the same mind, in one accord.

**It was during the days of Unleavened bread, before Pentecost, that another Gentile became part of Israel – Rahab, an ancestor of David.** *How* did she come to be one with Israel? By openly displaying the scarlet cord down from her window. Hmm. Why scarlet? Why red? You and I must also display the scarlet cord, accept the blood of our Savior that protects us (Joshua 2:21). It was the same principle as the lamb's blood that was splashed on the lintel and doorposts of the homes in Egypt.

**What unites us? When we are “in Him”. The scarlet cord unites us – whether repentant Jerichoite or Israelite. The lamb's blood on the doorposts.** The Lamb of God purchased us with His blood, and so we are His. Song of Solomon 6:1-2 says, “I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.” Wow. Let that sink in. “And my beloved is mine”. I – and you – and anyone with God's Spirit – now belong to Him....and to one another.

Israel in Egypt was a loose federation of tribes at first. They became one nation as they together under one leader and together accepted the Passover blood, and together came out of sin and Egypt, and together were immersed in the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10), and together fought the Amalekites.... For a while they were often one. It was when they quit acting as one under Moses that their carcasses were left in the wilderness.

*But it all started with the blood of the Passover lamb.* For Rahab, it all started with the scarlet cord. For Ruth, it was about Passover time when she said, “your God will be my God”. We know that, because the barley harvest was about to start. It's all the same. We become one in Him. It's all about Him.

***It's only in Him that we can get over our divisions and become one. It's all about HIM. It's when we focus on His glory rather than focusing on expanding our church denomination's impact that we begin to realize HE is our true leader.***

It's in Him that we can get past the annoyances, the fights, the arguments, the forgiven sins we still hold against one another – Rahab, after all – had been a harlot inn-keeper – and she still was able to be forgiven and be one with the holy nation of God.

**Division is not of God.** The Head of the Body commands “there must be no divisions among you” (1 Cor. 1:10). He goes on to say there that we should be ‘perfectly joined’ to one another and “of the same mind”. What mind? Whose mind? Phil. 2:5 tells us “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”. *When we are in Him, we will be of His one mind.* It's another way of saying that our unity will come by being in Him, by having His mind, by being led by His spirit.

***I feel strongly led to tell you, by the Spirit of Yeshua Messiah, the body is acting like it is temporarily “out of its mind”. We're not displaying the “be of one mind” and not displaying “let HIS mind be in you..” We're not seeking HIS mind or we would be working hard to be coming together.***

Again, on Pentecost, they were all together, in one accord. Where did the Body lose that?

**Pt #2 --UNITY TAKES ACTIVE GATHERING**

**So point #1 in how we shall be One again: it will be in HIM, through Him, and because of Him, because it IS all about Him, and not about us,** not about our church groups and fellowships, not about our human leaders and the labels we have. It's about HIM. When we get back to focusing on HIM, we will come together.

**Point #2 – Unity takes active gathering.**

Yeshua says something very powerful in Luke 11:23. There's no middle ground. Our king wants us in – or out. He wants us hot or cold (Rev. 3). He doesn't like fence-sitters. Read it with me:

**Luke 11:23**

He who is not with Me is against Me, **and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**

If you're not able to show things you're doing to bring common ground, if you're not able to show things you're doing to promote One Body – instead of splinter groups happy to stay apart – then you, according to your Master, are scattering the flock.

Are you a gatherer, or a scatterer? Read it again. “He who does not gather with me scatters.”

**Who will be the leader who will gather people together? Scripture is clear that Yeshua Himself will do it (Jer. 23:3; 31:10; John 10:16, etc.)**

But how does any body work? Will He do it by Himself? Any body works through its limbs, hands, feet, all its parts coming together. Yeshua does His work by using His Body – you and me. HE does the miracles, but He gets us all involved. Israel had to march through the Red Sea. They had to encircle Jericho for 7 days and then all shout. God does the miracle, but He uses His body. Yeshua will speak by speaking through His body – the church. **Yeshua will gather His flock into one, by the members of His body seeking the lost and gathering them.** Yeshua will find the missing and the forlorn – by using you, His body part to make that phone call, to reconnect, to reunite. You will be the way HE does it.

So, you and I are either gathering or scattering (Luke 11:23).

**John 10:16**

And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

**If you, through your head, decide you want coffee – what do you do? You use your body parts to get that coffee!**

Christ will also unite His body by waking up the parts of His body to work together. He will heal us so we can! The Body that is connected to a head does what that Head wants. The body of Messiah is no different.

You're either gathering, or scattering (Luke 11:23). Think hard and long about it, and then make a plan to start gathering God's people together. You, yes you, do it.

A house divided against itself will not stand (Luke 11:17). We are the house of God. But we're also assured that gates of hades will not prevail against the Church that Jesus builds (**Matthew 16:13-20**).

I've heard stories about how people will work hard to gather their missing fingers or limbs torn off in a bomb blast, or ripped off by a shark or accident – in the hopes their body can be reunited by surgery.

We have limbs of the Body, brethren, torn off by the Roaring Lion (1 Pet. 5:8), our enemy the Devil. Are we being like David, and going after those missing parts of the body? Remember how David said he would fight the lion and the bear to free the lamb they'd snatched (1 Sam. 17:37)?

**Romans 12:4-5 CJB**

For just as there are many parts that compose *one body*, but the parts don't all have the same function; 5 so there are many of us, *and in union with the Messiah we comprise one body*, with *each of us belonging to the others.*

NKJV Rom. 12:5 –v. 5—“so we, being many are one body in Christ”. How many bodies of Messiah? One!

**What are you *doing* to bring people together?**

**It's going to take an attitude of being humble, being a peacemaker, finding common ground,** not insisting on your view of every doctrine. We'll maybe have to accept people we don't particularly like. It will take some forgiving.

Example: “a great many” of the early converts were PRIESTS, according to Acts 6:7. Who were the priests? They were the Sadducees. Many of the chief priests were ones calling for Jesus' crucifixion. Would you really want them in your congregation? But the rank and file priests at least came.

How about the Pharisee Paul – called Saul, who had arrested, beaten, apparently even killed some early believers? He himself said, “I persecuted this way to the death” (Acts 22:4; Acts 9:1). Would you have wanted Him as your fellow brother in church, or your pastor? Would it have even seemed fair? But God brought people into the group who had to be forgiven first! Will it be any different with us? Some will have to forgive me. I'll have to forgive others. But isn't that what salvation is all about? Isn't it realizing we all need forgiveness and we all need to be offering it to others? “One body” won't happen until we get over some bad stuff in our hearts, dear brothers and sisters.

If this is striking a chord with you, tell people about this message. Spread the word.

- attend other groups from time to time. Your pastor might accuse you of being disloyal. Not true.
- Invite people from other groups to your home and to your fellowship
- Pray for all who need prayer, wherever they are attending
- Tell your pastor you wish your fellowship could meet with other groups from time to time. This is scary, very scary, to most pastors, because they want to stay in control of you. So we find pastors forbidding the reading of other's information, tracts, booklets, etc. I would AGREE with that, when helping people to steer away from wolves in sheep's clothing. However pastors: let's be careful that not every other pastor in other groups are wolves!

- Call people you haven't talked to in years. Mal 3:16-17 – those of God are talking often to one another, and He took note.
- Do your best to win people back who have given up!

**#3 – True One Body Unity will Take actions of love and restoration**

Now let's read again the command given us in John 13 again.

**John 13:34-35 CJB**

“I am giving you a new command: that you **keep on loving each other**. *In the same way that I have loved you, you are also to keep on loving each other.* 35 **Everyone will know** that you are my talmidim *by the fact that you have love for each other.*”

We know this verse. But do we really practice and know it that way? We can love those in our same community and church – but when we're told to love **“one another”**, **it's not limited to just those we know**. To just Messianics? To Just “church of God” people? Or even to just sabbath keepers?

**Elsewhere, end of Matthew 5 – Yeshua said if we greet only those we know, if we love only our friends, if we care for and about only those who are part of our circle – we are no better than the pagans!! (Matthew 5:43-48)**. But He teaches us that if we are really children of our heavenly Father Abba, who sends the rain on the just and unjust, who gave His Son for the world – we will be acting just like He acts: with love. We have a way to go, don't we?

**I preach to myself**. I have a long way to go in this.

Mal 3:16- says God's people spoke often to one another and God heard it.

**James 5:19-20**

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

**Daniel 12:3**

Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament,  
And those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

So reach out to people....

As they respond, our goal is not just to bring them to our group, church or fellowship – but more importantly, back to fellowship with their MESSIAH.

This is active love.... ACTIVE. As if we're doing it to Messiah.

**Grass Roots**

In the end, I wonder if this is something the pastors will do so much as it will be grass-roots.

If I am part of that body of Christ, I am not supposed to be separated from you, nor you from me. And Messianics: if there are Christians with the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit), why won't you meet with them? Christians, if there are Messianics with God's Holy Spirit, why do we act like none of

them do have His Spirit? OK, they wear tzitzit - tassels – and read the Torah more than the rest of us might, but does that mean you are better than they, or they than you?

Paul condemned that attitude in 1 Cor. 12. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? We need each other, or we're not a complete body. Our enemies are going to unite against us, so why can't we unite now? Holy Brethren, hear the word of the Lord on this.

In Ephesians 4:1-6, we read about one, one, one. ... and it takes a bond of PEACE. Seeking peace, not division.

Ephesians 4:1-6

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

*One, one, one – are we hearing this? Who is part of that one body? Anyone led by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:14) and anyone who has accepted the Lord Jesus as their Savior (John 1:12-13— where it says “as many as received Him, them He gave the right to be children of God, born not of blood, nor of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

**So Point #1** – it will be done in Christ, in Him, that we will be one with one another (John 17:21-22)

**Point #2** – oneness will take active gathering of the body, by the body. We're either scattering or gathering (Luke 11:23).

**#3 – ACTIVE LOVE will be required to bring us together.**

**Now Point #4 – Becoming one will take a healthy respect for the holiness of one another.**

**That body of Messiah is holy**

**1 Cor 1:1-2**

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, 2 **To the church of God which is at Corinth**, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, *called saints*, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

We are placed into the very body of Messiah by His Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). No body part of Christ is anything but holy. If Messiah is holy, every inch of His body is holy. Every part of His body is holy. You and I are part of His body. What does that make you – and all who are part of that body? Holy. If the Almighty can make even dirt holy (“the place where you stand, is holy ground” Ex. 3:5), He sure can make even me, even you, holy!

How would you treat Yeshua if you knew you could meet Him in person? Would you – when speaking to Him, smile at Him? Of course. Would you praise Him? Of course. But what would He think if, while singing praises to Him, we refused to meet with Him, refused to eat with Him, refused

to ever talk to Him, refused to hear from Him? What would He think if you once in a while kicked Him real hard in the shins? Or punched Him hard in the stomach? Would He still think you were being respectful?

That's what Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the sheep and goats, is all about. How we're treating one another is how Messiah feels we are treating Him.

We can't claim to praise Messiah – and gossip about Him by gossiping about a body part. We can't claim to love Jesus, and then backbite and devour Him by devouring parts of His body. He takes all that personally.

Now, if you or if I have the Holy Spirit, we become the temple (1 Cor. 6:19) – the inner Holy of Holies actually – in the Greek, it's the naos, the inner sanctuary – of God's Spirit. When the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies on the one day of Atonement, how much carefulness did He show? How much respect did He display? Are you with me? That is the way I am to treat you, and you are to treat me, or anyone with God's spirit.

*I am to treat you as I would the King of Kings himself. I am to love you, as I would love Him himself. I am to guard you, as I would defend Him with my life.* I am to provide for you, as I would if I saw Messiah hungry and needing assistance. I am to befriend you, as I would the very son of God Himself.

**Brethren, brothers and sisters, -- I HAVE A DREAM and a hope.** I dream of a time when God's children can and will come together.... Surely we can come together and hash out our doctrinal differences if we're led by God's Spirit. I'll talk about it in more detail soon. Messianics and obedient Christians. Messianics with other Messianics. Surely we can believe this.

But that's not just my dream. It's Abba's dream. I thoroughly enjoyed being one with my children in Panama City at the Feast last year. Like the joy I felt in Panama with my expanded family, I want to bring glory and oneness to our Father and to our Lord and Master, Yeshua – or Jesus the Christ.

Let's wrap it up:

- Pentecost – the early harvest—is also about oneness. Ruth/Boaz; the 120 in Acts 2, 2 loaves lifted up together as one.
- the early assembly of believers were together, in one body
- They were imbued with power, miracles, inspired messages, healings, etc. as they were one
- the church is the Body of Christ, it is HIS body, HE owns it and heads it
- We are placed into the Body by His Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13)
- We are a part of His Body, and therefore a part of one another (Rom. 12:4-5)
- That makes each of us holy, and temples (inner holy sanctuary) of the Spirit
- The way we treat one another is the way we are treating the Messiah Himself (Matt 25:31-40)
- God commands us “no divisions” in His body
- We don't know HOW God will bring about one body so much, as we must know HIM

**We talked about 4 steps we need to become one:**

- We become One in Him, and only in Him (John 17:21). It's when we focus on HIM, rather than on our organization, that we will come together. This is really the only BIG point.



- Oneness takes active gathering. We are either gathering or scattering (Luke 11:23)
- Love will be active as well, as we restore the lost and forsaken sheep
- Oneness takes treating one another with deep respect, recognizing we are holy parts of the very body of the Messiah Himself.

So that's all for today...

I pray with all my heart, that you will be a gatherer, actively thinking of ways to promote common ground and oneness. Let's bring God that joy when He sees His children together. May God's Spirit and love bind us together soon. Until next time, this is Philip Shields wishing you oneness in Him.