

Fellowship

I've heard many, many teachings and religious concepts regarding the term "Fellowship" over the years! There are a lot of terms we routinely use in the Body of Messiah, lingo that reveals whomever is saying it is usually a believer. The terms are so commonplace that few delve into the root and meaning of what the terms actually mean! One such word is "Fellowship", a term that's often used but most times not in its true biblical meaning. Fellowship in **Hebrew is chabar {khaw-bar'}: to unite, join, bind together, be joined, be coupled, be in league, heap up, have fellowship with, make an ally of, to join oneself to, make an alliance!** So, in Torah, Fellowship is to be in alignment with each other, unity, echad, to be joined together, in league with one another!

In our contemporary world and society today, the meaning of fellowship tends to range from gathering together for food, a movie, a party, or a worship service. Fellowship is mostly connected and associated with a gathering centered around eating! Inherently if there's nothing else going on here, if there's no agendas or subversive motives there's nothing wrong in calling these gathering fellowship. Interacting with each other and building relationship is important and foundational to who we are as Messianic Believers. It allows us to better know, relate, and understand each other! It allows us to break down the walls of separation and partition so that we may truly be united in one accord. The word shares that God desired fellowship with His creation, fellowship is a HEART issue, relational, spiritual, something to be felt and expressed, not a program, service, schedule, or religious activity. It's in the prevue of this last statement that fellowship becomes corrupted and prostituted with motives and agendas.

Genesis 3:1-9. Now the serpent was more crafty than any wild animal which ADONAI, God, had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You are not to eat from any tree in the garden'?" ² The woman answered the serpent, "We may eat from the fruit of the trees of the garden, ³ but about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, 'You are neither to eat from it nor touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "It is not true that you will surely die; ⁵ because God knows that on the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it had a pleasing appearance and that the tree was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her; and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together to make themselves loincloths. ⁸ They heard the voice of ADONAI, God, walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, so the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of ADONAI, God, among the trees in the garden. ⁹ ADONAI, God, called to the man, "Where are you?"

God daily walked in the garden with Adam and Eve during the evening breeze in fellowship and communion with His creation. Adam, and Eve, created by Adonai were originally immortal. Adonai, the God of the living had no plan or design for death. They disobeyed the known will of God (They sinned) by eating what they were specifically told not to eat:

Genesis 2:17. except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You are not to eat from it, because on the day that you eat from it, it will become certain that you will die."

Dietary laws and knowledge, the recipe for original sin and the fall of Humanity.....which altered God's original design of fellowship with His creation. It also corrupted and changed our DNA resulting in death! God never desired or intended to have mediators, religion, or any other substitute fellowship between He and us. He desired intimate, direct fellowship with His creation. He always has and always will. The original sin reveals a 5-step pattern or process that has plagued mankind since Adam and Eve's fall.

- 1. God Says: When God speaks it is ALWAYS a REVELATION to both Man and creation.** "Except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You are not to eat from it, because on the day that you eat from it, it will become certain that you will die."

The mandate to listen and obey is deeply rooted in the character of God as a relational being who desires communion with His creation. Obedience is not a burdensome requirement but a response to God's love and grace. The word presents obedience as a pathway to blessing, wisdom, and spiritual maturity. It is an expression of faith and trust in God's sovereignty and goodness

- 2. The serpent said:** "Did God really say, 'You are not to eat from any tree in the garden'?" **The serpent falsely interprets what God says which contains partial truths but is still a lie, this is how fellowship is corrupted and destroyed:** "because God knows that on the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God". **God's instructions regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were clear and firm:** "You are not to eat from it".
- 3. The lie is believed, and God is disobeyed:** "she took some of its fruit and ate." **The corruption is set; she was infected with sin and became mortal. Eve was created in God's image and had the free will ability to choose obedience or disobedience.**

4. The lie is shared with others and counterfeit fellowship is birthed. Others are brought in and they are infected with the same lie and deceit. "She also gave some to her husband, who was with her; and he ate". Adam became mortal! His passivity enabled the serpent to pervert Adonai's creation order!

5. They are immediately separated, estranged from God destroying true, heavenly fellowship. Beset with guilt and shame from their disobedience, their sin they immediately cover themselves, hide from Adonai and start performing their own agendas vice Gods word: they realized that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together to make themselves loincloths

Every religion, doctrine, motive or agenda not from the throne room results in counterfeit fellowship! HaSatan strives to pervert, corrupt, and destroy true, biblical fellowship with Adonai and between us! Fellowship is often used as a ploy, a guise for personal agendas and motives contrary to Adonai and His outpouring. We've experienced it here many times! Every Congregation has a mix of believers! Some mature, some immature, then some that are saved but not obedient to Adonai, not following His word. Both cases can be issues as they often attempt to force their ideas, agendas, and motives upon the congregation and Leadership. I've had people many, many times blatantly stand before me and try to force me to accept their own agenda, to influence me to bend to their will. The Rabbi and the Congregation MUST stand on biblical truth and principles which will place us at odds with dissenters and those who are divisive. I'm often misunderstood when I mention this but scripture is clear:

Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV). And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

Then the lie expands, often, weaker Congregates will side with those that are in error and divisive to side against the Rabbi, leadership, and Congregation without any discussion or reasoning. This can lead to a congregation split, destroying fellowship. This is an extremely effective tool and tactic of HaSatan, placing disgruntled, divisive people in congregations. Through them heresies, false teachings, manipulation, and rebellion are released, often in small meetings hailed as fellowships where directives and teachings are released contrary to biblical, congregational, and biblical authority. This results in separation from Adonai, fellowship is cut off! Like Jezebel, only true biblical authority counters this. The dissenters will depart from a healthy congregation.

We must investigate the true, biblical foundation of Fellowship and search out what true fellowship (chabar) is and what Adonai desires we experience with Him and with each other. Fellowship appears in the First Century Messianic movement and gives us profound revelation and understanding of true meaning:

Acts 2:42-46. They continued faithfully in the teaching of the emissaries, in fellowship (koinonia {koy-nohn-ee'-ah }:**fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, the share which one has in anything, participation, intimacy, the right hand as a sign and pledge of fellowship**) in breaking bread and in the prayers. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many miracles and signs took place through the emissaries. ⁴⁴ All those trusting in Yeshua stayed together and had everything in common; ⁴⁵ in fact, they sold their property and possessions and distributed the proceeds to all who were in need. ⁴⁶ Continuing faithfully and with singleness of purpose to meet in the Temple courts daily, and breaking bread in their several homes, they shared their food in joy and simplicity of heart,

Fellowship wasn't an occasional or even regular gathering, party, or foodie event. It was community, support, in association and communion with each other! Fellowship signifies a deep spiritual connection among believers, emphasizing mutual support, shared faith, and communal engagement within the greater body. They were unified, moving and flowing together in fluidity as a single body, united by a common bond through Yeshua for a unified purpose!

Their fellowship wasn't crafted upon religion or control of the masses, fellowship wasn't a release of personal motives or agendas that differed from Ya'accov, James the leader and authority of the First Body of Messiah! Fellowship was necessary for their survival! Fellowship was a way of life for the first believers! In fellowship they shared among themselves provision and sustenance, to help and support each other both physically and spiritually. If one of the members were hurt, in need or suffering, all shared the burden! This true understanding of Fellowship profoundly relates to us today!

The first century Messianic movement was birthed into a hostile society that loathed and hated them! Sha'ul, Paul was persecuting Messianic Jews on the authority of the Sanhedrin. Rome was persecuting, arresting, and murdering early believers! It was not popular or healthy to be a Messianic Jew in the first century.

The first Messianic Jews had to be close and lean on each other due to their unacceptance as believers in Yeshua by the Sanhedrin and Orthodox communities. The Kehillah, the Ecclesia was the source of their strength, provision, safety, and sustenance. Their primary resource for the trust was the Tanach-The New Testament was 350 years in the future, all the first believers were Jewish and only had the Tanach.

Acts 2:42-26 records specific foundations of fellowship among the first messianic movement/outpouring 2,000 years ago that kept them together, strengthened

them, empowered them, and brought forth explosive fruit. Acts 2:41 revealed 3,000 were saved that Shavuot day! Then Acts 4:4: 5,000 saved! There's something supernatural to this!

1. They were together in one accord, shared all that they had with each other, and had singleness of purpose.

Their strength was in their coming together! The power of the Congregate is in the Congregation, the power of the Congregation is the Congregate! Their committed loyalty and discipline in meeting together bound them together through the blood of Yeshua and the Word of God! Their trust and faith in Yeshua alienated them from the rest of Jewish society just like today! Their very lives were in danger, the Kehillah, the congregation was their support network!

Verse 44 states they "stayed Together", they had "singleness of purpose" in verse 46 " Then, later on Hebrews when these early Jewish believers were waning in their trust, discipline and steadfast commitment to unity Adonai tells them:

Hebrews 10:25. not neglecting our own congregational meetings, as some have made a practice of doing, but, rather, encouraging each other. And let us do this all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Adonai combines fellowship with meeting together and holding fast to our trust! Congregating together encourages us, we lift each other up in prayer and support. Why is regular attendance so hard for so many? I mean with rare exception to be here every week? To many are focused upon the things of the world, work, finances, leisure!. Yeshua and Adonai are supposed to be number one in our lives, not 5 or 6 or even lower down the list of priorities.

2. They shared the Good News by demonstrating the Power with many miracles and signs, like the result of a lifelong cripple being healed:

Acts 3:10-16. They recognized him as the same man who had formerly sat begging at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, and they were utterly amazed and confounded at what had happened to him. ¹¹ While he clung to Kefa and Yochanan, all the people came running in astonishment toward them in Shlomo's Colonnade. ¹² Seeing this, Kefa addressed the people: "Men of Isra'el! Why are you amazed at this? Or why do you stare at us as if we had made this man walk through some power or godliness of our own? ¹³ The God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Yeshua - the same Yeshua you handed over and disowned before Pilate, even after he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ You denied the holy and innocent one, and instead asked for the reprieve of a murderer! ¹⁵ You killed the author of life! "But God has raised him from the dead! Of this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And it is through putting trust in his name that his name has

given strength to this man whom you see and know. Yes, it is the trust that comes through Yeshua which has given him this perfect healing in the presence of you all.

They're all reading from the same bible, in one accord, in unity, with the word being the foundation of their fellowship! It released the supernatural, signs and wonders! Doctrine does not result in Adonai's presence. God's presence is not spatial like a physical object. It is relational and experiential, which depends on the heart's condition and the work of the Ruach HaKodesh. Far too many congregations are doctrine based not Presence based! A spirit filled Congregation strongly grounded in the word allows that word of God to settle any and all disputes without unforgiveness, pride, or offence.

3. They were unified in committed Fellowship, joined together, in league, allied with Yeshua and each another while seeking more for the fellowship!

I John 1:3-7. What we have seen and heard, we are proclaiming to you; so that you too may have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Yeshua the Messiah. ⁴ We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. ⁵ And this is the message which we have heard from him and proclaim to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him - none! ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him while we are walking in the darkness, we are lying and not living out the truth. ⁷ But if we are walking in the light, as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of his Son Yeshua purifies us from all sin.

Walking in darkness hinders fellowship! To walk in darkness means living a life disconnected from Adonai's guidance and truth. It is spiritual blindness, moral degradation, immorality, and a lifestyle that is oriented away from righteousness, purity, and holiness.

4. They performed communion daily with each other.

Acts 2:42.46 said they broke bread together daily! A covenant act of unity that crosses every socio economic and cultural boundary! Jew, Gentile, Indigenous Natives, Black, White, Hispanic, Oriental, all humanity, all have a seat at the table through the body and blood of Yeshua! It's the blood of Yeshua that binds us together as one!

I Corinthians 10:16-17. The "cup of blessing" over which we make the b'rakhah - isn't it a sharing in the bloody sacrificial death of the Messiah? The bread we break, isn't it a sharing in the body of the Messiah? ¹⁷ Because there is one loaf of bread, we who are many constitute one body, since we all partake of the one loaf of bread.

One body! Not a Gentile body or Jewish Body, not a white body and a Black body, Just one in Messiah!

5. They prayed together daily!

Acts 2:42. They continued faithfully in the teaching of the emissaries, in fellowship in breaking bread and in the prayers.

The only way to develop and sustain a revelation-driven, spirit filled Messianic Congregation is to engage in and sustain repentance, prayer, and intercession. The furnace of prayer is the key to the supernatural, for signs and wonders. We must be devoted to supernatural, prophetic prayer, to dwell before Adonai in the throne room! To hear the voice of Adonai every day

Ephesians 6:18. as you pray at all times, with all kinds of prayers and requests, in the Spirit, vigilantly and persistently, for all God's people.

Fellowship is necessary for successful prayer:

James 5:14-16. Is someone among you ill? He should call for the elders of the congregation. They will pray for him and rub olive oil on him in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer offered with trust will heal the one who is ill - the Lord will restore his health; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore, openly acknowledge your sins to one another, and pray for each other, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Fellowship is essential to spiritual maturity and growth. The development of our spiritual lives depend on being together with other believers like us to share our burdens, share our resources, serve each other, to encourage, teach, and be the support when life comes at us with its trials, struggles, and adversities! In doing so we build the Kehillah, the Congregation, and Bride of Yeshua, our family!

II Corinthians 6:14. Do not yoke yourselves together **(heterozugeo {het-er-od-zoog-eh'-o}: come under an unequal or different yoke, to be unequally yoked, to have fellowship with one who is not an equal, associate discordantly, joined, coupled)** in a team with unbelievers. For how can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness?

Goes hand in hand with

I Corinthians 15:33. Don't be fooled. "Bad company ruins good character."

God places high value upon those who fellowship and think about Him and His plan often, and who inspire each other with sound spiritual conversation. Fellowship reminds us we were not alone, it helps us grow, mature, and makes us stronger. Fellowship is a mutual bond that believers have with Yeshua that positions us into a deep, eternal relationship with Adonai and each another. Fellowship is actively doing, performing, carrying out God's will corporately, together as the kehillah!

God's blessings are released through relationships. Adonai uses people to bless people. When you are in a true fellowship the blessings flow freely. In a fellowship blessings flow to you and they flow through you. Its foundational for us as believers to develop and invest in relationships.