

Numbers 19:20 -- "But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself from uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the Lord; the water for impurity has not been sprinkled on him, he is unclean."

I Kings 8:14 -- "Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing."

II Chronicles 6:12 -- "Then he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands."

Ezra 10:1 -- "Now while Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very large assembly, men, women, and children, gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept bitterly."

Nehemiah 5:13 -- "I also shook out the front of my garment and said, 'Thus may God shake out every man from his house and from his possessions who does not fulfill this promise; even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.' And all the assembly said, 'Amen!' And they praised the Lord. Then the people did according to this promise."

Psalms 149:1 -- "Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, And His praise in the congregation of the godly ones."

Jeremiah 31:8 -- "Behold, I am bringing them from the north country, And I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth, Among them the blind and the lame, The woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together; A great company, they shall return here."

NOTE: The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (TWOT) asserts that "QAHAL and EDAH seem to be synonymous for all practical purposes" (Volume 1, p. 388).

2. Summary of Old Testament data

In the Old Testament the congregation of the children of Israel was chosen, called out of Egypt, and redeemed by the blood of the Passover lamb, which looked forward to the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. The congregation was to be God's special treasure, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, the Lord's portion, the people of God, the allotment of His inheritance, and His servant.

The congregation was led by elders, Levites, and priests; assembled regularly and on special occasions for instruction and public worship; and exercised discipline when it became necessary.