

God's Nation Through the Ages

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

God's nation is somethings that has changed with the passage of time. There has been a significant transformation of its essential nature as we go from the Old to the New Testament. This means that all verses in the Bible cannot be read as being fully applicable to all times. Many are only relevant and pertinent to specific phases in the existence of God's Church. Even the current manner of existence of God's nation will change in the future. God's nation has changed and will continue to change until it becomes spirit and immortal.

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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God's nation has been changing since the creation of mankind. There are stages to its development and each stage is a step being followed by God toward an ultimate goal that God has in mind.

There is a timeline flowing through the Bible and what existed at a particular time and the verses that are descriptive of that time cannot be used to justify the perpetuation of a given stage in the existence of God's nation which was specific to a certain historical time and conditions that then existed and which no longer exist today. The development of God's nation is a dynamic process and God's nation has gone through many changes, and will go through many more, before reaching its final form. The Bible is an all encompassing book covering the creation of angels and spirit beings, the creation of the material universe and of the earth up to the time of the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind when there will be the creation of a new heaven (universe) and of a new earth, and the establishment of God's immortal, spiritual kingdom.

Let's get started with our analysis.

The Creation of the Universe and Man

The universe did not always exist. How do we know? The Bible tells us that it was something that was created. If it was created then it means that it didn't exist before.

When and who created the heaven and the earth? In order to find out we have to go back to the very beginning which contrary to popular belief is not Genesis 1:1 but John 1:1-3.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

At that point in time, nothing had been created. There were only 2 beings in existence with one of them called, God and the other one called, the Word. Both were God beings which is to say, composed of spirit, holy, and eternal with the power to create.

Joh 1:2 The same [the Word, a God being] was in the beginning with God. [another God being]

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; [God the Word] and without him was not any thing made that was made.

God made or created all things by the Word who is the holy spirit used by God to carry out His will and commands.

Col 1:15 Who [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn [by a resurrection from the dead] of every creature: [mankind]

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

God the Word is the holy spirit by whom God the Father created all things.

Col 1:17 And he is [existed] before all things [created], and by him all things consist. [by His power all things are maintained in existence.]

The existence of this present heaven (universe) and earth is temporary and will come to an end when it has served the purpose for which it was created.

At the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind, a new heaven (universe) and a new earth will be created.

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the

night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

The material universe (the heavens) and the earth were created as an essential part of God's plan to reproduce Himself. This physical creation provided a place suitable for God to create a material, mortal being made in their (God's and the Word's) image (with mind power and free will) and after their (God's and the Word's) likeness (physical appearance).

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, [with mind power and free will] after our likeness: [in their general physical appearance] and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Mankind was created male and female. First Adam was created then Eve was created from a rib taken out of Adam.

Gen 2:20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Gen 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

Gen 2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

A woman is a female man and a man is a male man; together they constitute the man kind.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be

fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

They were to reproduce and replenish the earth.

Gen 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called **Woman**, because **she was taken out of Man**.

An interesting bit of information given us in Gen 2:23 is the origin and meaning of the word “woman.” The human being created by God to be a helpmeet to Adam God called “woman” because she was taken out of man. In other words, the word “woman” means “from man.” Why were these 2 different but similar beings created? Because man was physically incomplete; he could not reproduce by himself; another complementary being was needed, and this being God called “woman.” And, God’s intention in creating mankind was as a means of reproducing Himself so mankind had to be created in such a way as to make it possible for them to reproduce.

And, in what context was this reproductive process to occur:

Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

The male and female children of men, upon growing up, are to leave their families and have families of their own. This is the reason why God created mankind male and female as shocking as this may be to many.

The World Before the Great Flood

God looked at what mankind was doing since the creation and banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. After some 1,000 years of mankind’s existence, things were not working out as God thought they would.

Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Gen 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Gen 6:7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and

the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

Gen 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

God was sorry He had created mankind and displeased with it. He decided to start over with Noah and his family. He chose Noah because he was a preacher of righteousness (2Pe 2:5), walked with God, was a just man and perfect in his generations (Gen 6:9).

Gen 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Noah and his family survived the Great Flood and from them the earth was replenished. From their lineage, were born the men who would continue mankind through their families and children.

After the Great Flood

God still wanted to reproduce Himself through mankind and decided He had to start over as men's thoughts had become wicked continuously. A new nation had to be created who had not known and would not be influenced by the evil of the world that came before them. This is why God put an end to that world in the Great Flood.

God's goal since the creation of mankind was to have a nation who would want to obey Him and from which He could have a family, a nation and a kingdom. In Genesis 10 and 11 we are given a detailed genealogy of the descendants of Noah. After many generations, we come to Abram. You can easily read through Gen 10 and 11 and see for yourself, that Abram is a descendant of Noah.

God called Abram and changed his name to Abraham because he was to be the father of many nations.

Gen 17:4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Gen 17:5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but **thy name shall be Abraham**; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

Gen 17:6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

Gen 17:7 And I will establish **my covenant** between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Gen 17:10 **This is my covenant**, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; **Every man child among you shall be circumcised**.

Gen 17:11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin; and it shall be a **token [a physical sign]** of the covenant betwixt me and you.

Abraham begat Isaac and Isaac begat Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

Gen 32:28 And he said, Thy name shall be called **no more Jacob, but Israel**: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

Jacob had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes that constituted the nation of Israel.

God's Nation in the Wilderness

Israel became slaves under the Egyptians and was delivered by God. He took them to Mount Sinai and gave them the 10 commandments. He spoke to Moses and Moses gave the commandments to them. They were then to go into the Promised Land. Men were sent into the land to determine what is what like. Their report was that indeed it was a land flowing with milk and honey but that also its inhabitants were strong and they didn't think they could defeat them. They refused to go into the land not trusting God to be able to bring them in.

Num 13:27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

Num 13:31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

God was greatly angered and punished them.

Num 14:30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb

the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Num 14:31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

Num 14:32 But as for you, your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness.

Num 14:33 And **your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness.**

Num 14:34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Act 7:38 This is he **[the holy spirit God the Word who for a time became Christ]**, that was in the **church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

While Israel wandered aimlessly in the desert, they lived in tents and they would unexpectedly be made to move from one place to another never knowing how far they would have to travel, what was their destination, and how long they would stay there. They had no crops, God fed them with manna.

Aaron and his sons were their priests who offered the sacrifices of the children of Israel as commanded by the law of offerings. God was in the holy of holies which was a tent in the tabernacle of the congregation.

God's Nation in the Promised Land

After having spent 40 years in the desert, Israel was allowed to go into the Promised Land. They then had flocks and herds, orchards and vineyards and fields in which to raise crops. The Levitical priesthood continued to exist and performing the work of offering the sacrifices of the children of Israel.

God for a time reigned over them through prophets and judges administered the law. However, Israel tired of being ruled by God and asked for a king to rule them so they would be like the other nations. Their first

king was Saul, followed by David and then Solomon.

Up to that point there was no temple in Israel and God allowed Solomon to build it. After the death of Solomon, Rehoboam (Solomon's son) took over as king of Israel and Jeroboam ruled over the cities of Judah (2Ch 10:17).

1Ki 11:26 And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king.

1Ki 11:28 And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.

1Ki 11:29 And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field:

1Ki 11:31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

The nation of Israel split into 2 parts: the Northern Kingdom, Israel with its capital city Samaria made up of 10 tribes and the Southern Kingdom, Judah with its capital city Jerusalem being made up of the tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin.

The Northern Kingdom (Israel; 10 tribes) was first to go off into captivity (721 BC) under the Assyrians (2King 17) followed by Judah [Benjamin, Levi and Judah) some 100 years later (604 BC).

Both kingdom went into captivity because of their disobedience.

Jer 3:6 The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

Jer 3:7 And I said after she had done all these things, Turn

thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

Jer 3:8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet **her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.**

Jer 3:9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. **[worshiped idols]**

Jer 3:10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.

Jer 3:11 And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

Judah's Return from Captivity

God made it possible for Judah who was in captivity under the Persians to go back to Jerusalem.

2Ch 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, **the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia**, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2Ch 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. **Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.**

Those who came back are listed in Ezra 2:1 -61.

Ezr 2:1 Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city;

You can read the detail of who and how many they were by going

through Ezr 2:2-61 which for brevity sake I am not quoting in this study.

They built God's 2nd temple and restored the walls of Jerusalem. Judah was re-established and is the people to whom Christ came at His First Coming. Though the Jews are only a part of Israel (tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah) they are referred to as being Israel in the Gospel writings of Matthew, Luke, Mark and John.

The Spiritual State of God's Nation

After its return from captivity and God's law having been restored to Judah by Ezra and Nehemiah, Judah went back to being disobedient to God. The book of Malachi gives us a description of the spiritual state of the nation.

Mal 1:10 Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

Mal 2:11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

Mal 3:13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

Mal 3:14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

Mal 4:4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

This is the state of the nation of Israel that God the Word made flesh came to as the promised Messiah.

God's Nation in the New Testament

The Israel that Christ came to was a nation living under the authority of the Roman Empire. As long as its leaders observed the laws imposed on them by Rome, the nation was free to administer itself. The religious elite of the day were the Pharisees and the Scribes who prided

themselves in being the great teachers of God's law to whom honor and respect were owed by all.

Mat 23:1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

Mat 23:2 Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:**

Mat 23:3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Mat 23:4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

Mat 23:5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

Mat 23:6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

Mat 23:7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

The Pharisees and the Scribes were not converted and their behavior is indicative of the way the unconverted religionists of the world conduct themselves toward their followers. The people saw that Christ knew the Scriptures better than they did putting in peril the status of the Pharisees and Sadducees as great teachers of the law and this is why they conspired to have Jesus put to death.

God the Word at His First Coming only came to teach the men God the Father had given Him, His disciples. They would constitute the beginning and foundation of God's **new spiritual nation of Israel** after Christ's ascension to His Father. In the epistles of Paul, John, James and Peter we are given some of the knowledge Christ gave them which allows us to understand the great differences between God's physical nation of Israel and God's spiritual nation of Israel.

God's First Century Church

After Christ's ascension to His Father, God's Church or spiritual nation of Israel began. It was then composed of apostles appointed by Christ. Preachers, teachers, elders and deacons assisted them in ministering to those whom God the Father called and who followed their calling. The faithful met in their homes.

Rom 16:5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house.
Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of
Achia unto Christ.

1Co16:19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla
salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their
house.

The new Christianity was considered a heresy by the ruling religious elite of the day, the Jews whose religion was Judaism. Christians had to remain out of the public eye to avoid being persecuted which included being imprisoned and/or put to death.

Act 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his [Stephen's] death.
And at that time there was a great persecution against the
church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered
abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except
the apostles.

Act 8:2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and
made great lamentation over him.

Act 8:3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering
into every house, and haling men and women committed
them to prison.

Act 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter
against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

Act 9:2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the syna-
gogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were
men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

The assault against Christianity continued with men trying to come in among the small congregations of the truly converted to try to get them to follow them.

2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, [the small scattered congregations of true Christians] who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2Pe 2:2 And many [of the truly converted] shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

And, why would there be all of these false prophets?

2Pe 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

Religion is a good way to make a lot of money. A quick survey of the great number of churches in our present day world should allow you to easily identify many church organizations, including among the several churches of God, who have multi-million dollar budgets. They own impressive buildings on beautifully landscaped properties, live the lives of the rich and famous, travel the world in their personal executive jets doing what they call "The Work" and are constantly asking for more generous donations from their followers so they can preach the Gospel to the world.

Opposition also came from within the congregations of God's Church where certain men took over local congregations.

3Jn 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

3Jn 1:10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.

The intensity of persecution increased with the advent of a new, great, false Christian church which succeeded in wearing out God's saints.

Dan 7:20 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

Dan 7:21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, [members of God's Church] and prevailed against them;

Dan 7:24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings [kingdoms] that shall arise: and another [kingdom] shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

Dan 7:25 And he [the head of that 11th kingdom; a great false church] shall speak great words against the most High, [the true God] and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

This religious kingdom would persecute God's saints for 1260 years; a time and times and the dividing of time is 3 1/2 years where a day in fulfillment is a year; 360 days x 3 1/2 = 1260 years. (Num 14:34; Rev 12:6; 14).

After Christ's ascension, Israel rebelled against the Roman government wanting to return to being a sovereign nation. The Roman armies came and besieged Jerusalem in 70 AD. The city fell, its walls and the 2nd temple were destroyed. The Jews were scattered along with the new converts to Christianity. They fled into the wilderness and loss touch with each other and their teachers. As First Century Christians died out and because of continuing persecutions much of the truth they had received was lost but for a few outstanding requirements such as keeping the 10 Commandments and the Sabbath.

God's Church After its Scattering

The dispersion of the members of God's Church broke the connection and continuation that normally would have persisted between God's First Century Church and those who would be called and chosen by God the Father in the future.

The knowledge given the apostles and through them to the men they trained to be ministers should have been transmitted unchanged, over the centuries, from one generation of true believers to another. This did not happen and consequently, there are no men today who can claim to have the knowledge given the First Century Church.

The manner of existence of God's apostolic Church cannot be replicated today as men no matter how deeply converted and filled with zeal they

may be only have their personal interpretation of the truths of the Bible to teach to others.

How can we know for sure that this is true?

If we look out onto the unconverted world what we see is a **VERY GREAT NUMBER** of different Christian churches who all have **SIGNIFICANT** doctrinal differences between them which they say are all firmly based on the same Bible they are all reading. In a way this should not be all that unexpected as they are not converted but what about the many different "true" churches of God? Christ said He would found His Church not many churches.

Mat 16:18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

If the truth given the apostles had effectively been transmitted unchanged through the centuries on down to our days, would there be many churches of God such as the Living CoG, the Restored CoG, the International CoG, the Philadelphian CoG, the COG a Worldwide Organization, the Ottawa CoG, the United CoG, the Pentecostal CoG and the list goes on and on? The obvious answer is that there would be only one and, there is only one, as we will see.

God's Spiritual Nation

The truth of the matter is there has always been only one true Church of God. Christ is not divided and neither is the Church of which He is the head.

1Co 1:12 *Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.*

1Co 1:13 *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?*

In other words, are there many different churches of God headed up by different preachers. Was there the Apollos CoG, the Paul CoG, the Cephas (Peter) CoG and the Christ CoG. No, Paul says, there is only one.

1Co 12:12 *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*

Each member of the body does not constitute a body in itself; it is all the members together who constitute "one" body. And, they are one in what

they believe; they all believe the same things.

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

All true Christians are baptized or become part of one body and are all being led by one Spirit.

Col 1:17 And he [the resurrected and glorified Christ now sitting at the right-hand of God the Father] is [existed] before all things, [that were created] and by him all things consist.

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning [of God's immortal spiritual nation being the first human being to ever have been born again by a resurrection from the dead] , the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Zerubbabel was involved in building the 2nd temple when the Jews returned to Jerusalem and God told him, and especially us today, that the temple He would build was not like the one that Zerubbabel was building. It was a spiritual temple which would not made with the hands of men but by His spirit. (Act 17:24)

Eph 2:10 For we [truly converted Christians] are his [God's not men's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

1Co 3:9 For we [the apostles and the ministers they trained] are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

God is the one responsible for the care and growth of Christians as someone responsible for the care, nurturing and growth of crops and animals on a farm (husbandry). Christians are being built (growth in understanding of the Scriptures) by God (not men), who is the only one who can give men understanding of the spiritual truth of the Bible.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Only God the Father can call men. It is not something that can be done by any man; not even the apostles.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, [spirit] whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The teacher of God's spiritual nation is the Comforter. The one who comforted the disciples was Christ as made plain in the following verses.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Christ would not always be with them, He would go back to His Father after having accomplished His mission. Another comforter like Him would be sent to the disciples. This comforter was the Spirit of truth who was with them (the disciples).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye [my disciples] know him; for he [the spirit of truth, I, Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [as the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman]

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you [His disciples and all true Christians] comfortless: I [Christ] will come to you.

How would Christ come to His disciples and give them comfort. This would occur on the day of Pentecost after His ascension to His Father when the promised Comforter, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman would come to the disciples and thereafter, to all truly converted Christians through the ages. The glorified Christ is clearly the Comforter as made plain by John 14:18 who would come to the disciples and Christians and teach them all things (John 14: 26).

The Great Error of Men

For a relatively small period of time there could exist a ministry of men in God's spiritual nation as in the days of the apostles these men had absolute truth which they received from the apostles that they could teach to others without fear that what they taught could be, or was somewhat or completely, erroneous.

More than 1,900 years after Christ's First Coming, it is a sure thing that no one has the truth given the apostles. The many different and competing Christian churches in the world and the many and different competing and doctrinally different churches of God are proof positive of this.

So was is the assumption made by men which is not supported by the Bible?

On seeing how the First Century Church of God was organized they have jumped to the conclusion that there would always be men acting as apostles, evangelists, prophets, preachers, teachers, elders and deacons in God's Church. They also see themselves as having the responsibility of preaching the Gospel to the world as a witness unto all nations. Some "churches of God" say that it is the church who has that responsibility; other "churches of God" say this is the work of apostles. They all look out into the world and say: "Hey, the end has not yet come, therefore we have to keep on preaching the Gospel."

But by what authority can apostles be appointed? Is it something men can do? If so, from where do men get the authority to appoint apostles, and evangelists, preachers and teachers, elders and deacons? Do we have any instructions in the Bible on how men can appoint other men to be apostles and evangelists?

God says He is no longer sending prophets to His nation and that He speaks to them by His Son.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners
spake **in time past** unto the fathers by the prophets, **[men
sent by God]**

When God had a physical nation, the OT nation of Israel, He spoke unto them by prophets He sent them.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us **by his Son**,
whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he
made the worlds;

But, in these last days (started on the day of Pentecost) God speaks to His spiritual nation of Israel, by His Son who was the holy spirit God the Word made flesh. After His resurrection, glorification and ascension to His Father, He resumed His responsibility in God's plan of salvation as the holy spirit God the Word who teaches all things to the holy spirit

God the Father's called and chosen ones who are God's spiritual nation and church.

Even in the days of the apostles, it is clear that it was God who gave those taught by them and the men they trained, understanding of the Scriptures.

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. [in understanding]

The world can and does have knowledge of the Bible but it does not have a correct understanding of it. This is why there are so many different Christian churches as well as many different churches of God. Understanding only comes from God, not men.

God tells us that He would not leave the teaching of His spiritual nation to men.

Jer 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

God will not force anyone to obey Him.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Therefore, He will not force anyone to be a faithful pastor.

The historical record of men as pastor is not good.

Eze 34:8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

Eze 34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

The pastors according to God's heart who would never abuse their flock are the holy spirit God the Father (while being called; John 6:44) and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman (if the one called follows God's calling; John 14: 26).

God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church since the day of Pentecost is taught all things not by men but by the holy spirits of the God family. Men, even in the days of the apostles and of the First Century Church, were not the means used by God to call and teach men. The conversion process is entirely between God and the Word and the men called and chosen by God the Father. The whole conversion process is spiritual, it is from the minds of God and the Word to the minds of truly converted Christians wherever they may be in the world, by themselves or in little groups.

God's one true Church in NT times is a spiritual nation. God's OT nation was the nation of Israel and only them. It was one physical nation in the OT and it is one spiritual nation in the NT.

God's NT Spiritual Nation

God's Church in NT times as we have seen is being built by God, not men. The churches of men both in the world and the very many church-
es of God have all created organizations modeled on the organization that existed for a while in God's First Century Church. And, they see themselves as having the responsibility to preach the Gospel to the world but who and what is God's Church?

How is it a spiritual nation?

And, if its essential nature is to be spiritual can it be at the same time physical organizations of men.

The Bible tells us rather clearly what is God's Church and spiritual nation in NT times if we will believe what it says.

The Priesthood

Who are the priests in God's NT spiritual nation?

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a [royal priesthood](#), an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

God the Father's called and chosen ones are the royal priesthood of God's spiritual nation. They are also God's holy nation and they were called by God not men into His marvellous light.

God's Nation

Who are those who constitute God's people in NT times? Is it those attending the services of one of the several churches of God and is being part of these organization of men what makes someone a member of God's Nation?

1Pe 2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

God's people and spiritual nation is all those called and chosen by God from the nations of the world. Before being called they were citizens of the nation in which they were born but after having obtained mercy (having been called and chosen and their sins forgiven), they become part of God's people or nation.

The Old Man

The Bible refers to our previous unconverted life of sin as being "our old man." Once called and chosen, we die (spiritually speaking) to our previous life of sin and participate in the death and resurrection of Christ. We are a new man trying as best he can to live in newness of life which is according to the truth of God we are given to know.

Rom 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Living Sacrifices

NT Christians are the living sacrifices of God's spiritual nation every day working at putting to death their old man and trying to live as best they can as the new man God wants them to be.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

God's Spiritual House

1Pe 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a **spiritual house**, an **holy priesthood**, to offer up **spiritual sacrifices**, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ

Christians are the living stones of God's spiritual house or temple, they are His holy priesthood offering the spiritual sacrifices of dying to their previous life of sin (their old man) as much as they can.

The Teachers of God's Spiritual Nation

Did Christ tell His disciples and all true Christians to come after them, that God the Father would send them men as prophets, teachers, preachers, etc.?

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Christ was the Comforter who was with the disciples. He would abide with them while they were alive and forever in God's Kingdom.

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Christ after His ascension to His Father would come to the disciples and all true Christians to comfort them. He is the Comforter who was to come to them. This is why Christ told His disciples that He had to go away so the Comforter could come to them. He had to return to His Father who gave him back the glory He had before becoming a man which is to be the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. The resurrected and glorified Christ is the Comforter who was to come to them.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

And, what would the Comforter do?

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, [spirit] whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things**, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Comforter would teach the disciples and all true Christians all things. It is not something that would be done by any man or organization of men as made plain by the following verses of Hebrews 1.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

God in NT times is no longer sending men as prophets to teach His spiritual nation. He is doing it by His Son the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

What therefore does Heb 1: 1-2 mean in practical terms?

It means that but for what occurred in the First Century Church, God is not calling anyone to be an apostle, evangelist, prophet, preacher and teacher. God and the Word are doing it themselves in a very effective way as they have the power to open the minds of men to understand God level spiritual truth and essentially, even when men were used as apostles, evangelists, etc. it was God who called and chose them and it was God the Word and Spokesman who gave men the spiritual understanding of what they taught.

Co 3:5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even **as the Lord** gave to every man?

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God** gave the increase. **[in understanding]**

Understanding of God level spiritual truth is not something that any man can give to any other man whether called or not. Anyone can have knowledge of the Bible but a correct understanding of what it says can only

come from God. The unconverted can, and often do memorize, and quote Bible verses but they don't really correctly understand what they mean. This is why there are so many different Christian religious groups and religions in the world. It is also the reason why those who have been called and chosen and who have the correct understanding of some of God's spiritual truth, cannot make the unconverted believe any of it.

The correct understanding of God's spiritual truth is from God only; not men.

Be Ye Separate

2Co 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

2Co 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

2Co 6:18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The members of God's spiritual nation are not to be part of any of the many false Christian churches in the world nor of any of the many false churches of God.

Conclusion

As we have seen, God's nation went through several different stages over the centuries and each one of them did not continue indefinitely. God's nation as it existed in the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, no longer exists today. Yet, we have many verses describing its creation. Shouldn't we still be using them today to justify that the physical nation of Israel continues to exist as God's nation?

Noah and his family for a time, were God's nation. Noah walked with God and was a preacher of righteousness. Shouldn't there be universal

agreement that Noah and his descendants continue to represent God's nation today. Abraham was a descendant of Noah and from him flowed the generations of Isaac and Jacob whose name God changed to Israel.

Shouldn't we continue to consider the OT physical nation of Israel as God's nation? No, God's nation went from being a physical nation to being a spiritual nation.

God's First Century church had apostles, evangelists, prophets, etc. but that particular stage of the existence of God's nation is no more permanent than all the others that came before it. It was just one more, and relatively brief stage, in the existence of God's nation which only lasted until it was scattered because of the persecution that came upon it and the death of the apostles and of the men trained by them to be ministers.

Even then, God's nation was a spiritual one as since the day of Pentecost it is God the Father who calls men and He is the only one who can do so; it is God the Word who teaches them all things, and He with God the Father, are the only ones who can give men understanding of the spiritual truth of the Bible; the priests of God's spiritual nation are the truly converted Christians, they offer themselves as living sacrifices dying every day to their old life of sin (their old man) and striving to live their lives according to the truth revealed to them by God (the new man); they are the living stones of God's temple; they are God's spiritual house and as a group, they are God's spiritual nation.

There is no role left for men to play in God's plan of salvation as administered in the New Testament. Men are not free to decide on their own that they have a commission from God to preach the Gospel to the world, that they are being called to be apostles, evangelists, prophets, preachers, teachers, etc. Moreover, there are no instructions in the Bible how men can appoint more apostles, evangelists, etc. but God does tell us clearly in Heb 1:1-2 that He is no longer speaking to His church by using prophets or men.

The Bible is clear, if we will accept what it says, that God's NT nation of Israel is a spiritual one in which the individually called and chosen members are its priests, sacrifices, temple, and nation and its teachers are the holy spirits of the God family, God the Father and God the Word.

The members of God's spiritual nation are by themselves or in little groups which are found all over the different nations of the world. Though not being together and in most cases, not knowing each other, they are God's spiritual nation. Their one and only mediator between them and God is Christ; not any men or organizations of men.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

God's Church has not stopped changing. Initially, it was a physical nation of unconverted men, then it became a spiritual nation where each and every member, is a converted person. They are a spiritual nation by the mind power given mankind by God and which allows God and the Word to share thoughts from their minds to the minds of those called and chosen and this is what gives God's saints understanding of God's spiritual truth as they study their Bible.

At the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind, God's spiritual nation now made up of truly converted but physical men will become a fully spiritual nation where all of its members will be immortal spirit beings.

This will occur at the end of the Last Great Day when the Great White Throne Judgment takes place. All of God's faithful saints will become immortal spirit beings and all those who lose their salvation will be burnt up in the Lake of Fire.

The last stage of God's Church is for it to become God's Kingdom.

