

The Priesthood of Melchisedec

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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.

The Old Testament Levitical priesthood ended with the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem and the scattering of Israel in AD 70. Israel had rebelled against Rome and armies were sent who destroyed Jerusalem. Those who survived scattered all over the world bringing to an end Israel as an identifiable nation in the world. Was it part of God's plan that in New Testament Times His plan of salvation would be administered by a priesthood of men? What about the priesthood of Melchisedec?

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 (Php 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 [I,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 firstborn 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 biblical 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 o 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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The ancient nation of Israel had a priesthood of men. Its high priest was Aaron and the priests were Aaron's sons. Why did God have a priesthood over His Old Testament physical nation of Israel?

When Israel, after having been liberated by God from its bondage in Egypt, was taken to Mount Sinai, God wanted to make a covenant with them or, as we would say today, an agreement. If Israel would commit to obey Him, they would become His nation and He would bless them with peace, safety, security and abundance of food. The detail of God's covenant with Israel is found in Ex 20-23 and in the blessings for obedience and the cursing for disobedience enumerated in Lev 26.

Moses was God's prophet to Israel and Aaron his brother, was his spokesman. Moses had a speech impediment and God chose his brother to be his spokesman. God would speak to Moses and he would provide his brother with the information God gave him, and Aaron would speak to the people.

Exo 4:10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

Exo 4:11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

Exo 4:12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

Exo 4:13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

Exo 4:14 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

Exo 4:15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

Exo 4:16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

This relationship between God, Moses and Aaron is the very same kind of relationship that God used when freeing Israel from its Egyptian bondage.

Exo 7:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Basically, a prophet is someone who speaks on behalf of another. It is what we would call today a spokesman. If someone has been given a message from God to give to others then that person is a prophet of God or a spokesman for God.

So it was that when God made the old covenant with Israel, He gave Moses the Ten Commandments and the words of the covenant and Aaron spoke them to the people.

What was the covenant God made with Israel.

The Old Covenant

Exo 19:3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

Exo 19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

Exo 19:5 Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant**, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

Exo 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

In Ex 19:6 God says something we should note: the people, all of them, were to become priests if they entered the Old Covenant and remained faithful to it. Israel would be a kingdom of priests. It would also be a holy nation to God because of their obedience to Him. God would not be in them as He would be in His New Testament saints as Christ had not yet then died as God the Father's perfect sacrifice for sin. If Israel had not broken the covenant it would not have been necessary to have a separate group of people appointed as priests to teach them and to conduct worship ceremonies on the weekly Sabbaths and annual holy days. Their worship of God would be through their obedience and in obeying God they would be serving Him and be priests and holy. The word "holy" according to the Hebrew word used means "sacred" and this word means to be set apart for the worship of a deity which in this instance is, the one and only true God.

THE ONLY THING GOD WANTS FROM MEN IS THEIR WILLING OBEDIENCE TO HIM NOT THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS OF MEN CLAIMING TO BE GOD'S CHURCH.

Let's continue with our reading of Ex 19.

Exo 19:7 And Moses [through Aaron] came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

Exo 19:8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

Moses through Aaron told Israel what was the covenant God wanted to make with them and the people all said that they would do what the Lord asked of them. Please notice that it is not repeated every time that God gives Moses instructions for Israel and that it is Aaron who speaks to the people. The verses we have just read are written as though Moses was speaking directly to the people but we know from Ex 4: 15-16 that Aaron is the one speaking to the people God's message given him by Moses.

The actual making of the covenant would occur on the third day after Moses gave Israel the terms of the covenant.

Exo 19:10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the peo-

ple, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

Exo 19:11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

The people gathered at the foot of the mount as they had been told to do but they were greatly frightened by what they saw and heard.

Exo 19:17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

Exo 19:18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

Exo 19:19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

Exo 19:20 And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

The people were so scared by what they saw and heard while at the foot of Mount Sinai that they thought they were going to die if they stayed there so they went and stood far away from the base of the mount and asked for Moses to tell them what God wanted them to do.

Exo 20:18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.

Exo 20:19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Exo 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

Exo 20:21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

Moses told them what God expected of them and they said they would obey Him.

Exo 24:3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, **All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.**

Exo 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Exo 24:5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

Exo 24:6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

Exo 24:7 And he took the **book of the covenant**, and read in the audience **[hearing]** of the people: and they said, **All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient**

Israel was to obey God and teach their children to also do so.

Deu 4:10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, **that they may learn to fear me** all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

God wanted to personally give Israel the words of the covenant He wanted to make with them that they may learn to fear Him which is to say, obey Him.

Israel Broke the Covenant

Jer 11:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

Jer 11:2 Hear ye the words of **this covenant**, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

Jer 11:3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, **[the Old Covenant]**

Jer 11:4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I **brought them forth out of the land of Egypt**, from the iron furnace, saying, **Obey my voice**, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, **and I will be your God:**

Jer 11:5 That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O LORD.

Jer 11:6 Then the LORD said unto me, [\[Jeremiah\]](#) Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.

Jer 11:7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that [I brought them up out of the land of Egypt](#), even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, [Obey my voice](#).

God brought Israel out of the land of Egypt. Pharaoh did not willingly let them go.

Jer 11:8 Yet [they obeyed not](#), nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, [\[the curses for disobedience starting at Lev 26: 14\]](#) which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.

Jer 11:9 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Jer 11:10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods [\[idols\]](#) to serve them: [the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers](#).

Obedience not Offerings and Sacrifices

What did God want from Israel? He wanted their obedience. They were to live their lives according to the terms of the covenant God had made with them. They all had said they would do everything God was asking of them but according to the following verses of Jeremiah and many others, Israel didn't obey God.

Jer 7:21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

Jer 7:22 [For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:](#)

This is a particularly important verse as it makes clear that God has no interest in ceremonial and symbolic burnt offerings or sacrifices; rath-

er, God wanted Israel's obedience. In order to examine what was the purpose of the law of offering and sacrifices commanded by God for physical Israel we have to go to the 3rd chapter of the book of Galatians.

Law of Offerings and Sacrifices

In his epistle Paul is addressing 2 different groups of people who had come to conversion and were part of the Galatian congregations: Gentiles and Jews. Old beliefs like old habits die hard and some of the converted Jews wanted to maintain their former beliefs and practices and some of the Gentile converts wanted to continue with some of their former beliefs. Some of us have seen the same thing happen where those who were given to know the truth refused to let go of their former religious beliefs and sought to somehow in some way, make them compatible with the truth they were learning.

Paul is speaking to both groups simultaneously which is what makes it difficult, if we don't keep in mind that this is what he is doing, to understand the arguments and explanations he makes in his letter to the Galatian congregations.

Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? [\[This would be directed at the Jewish converts as Christ came among them at His First Coming.\]](#)

Gal 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye [\[Jewish converts\]](#) the Spirit by the works of the law, [\[the OT offerings and sacrifices\]](#) or by the hearing of faith? [\[believing God\]](#)

The "works of the law" are the offerings and sacrifices God had commanded for ancient Israel after they sinned and broke the covenant. Faithfully doing them never gave Israel access to the holy spirits of the God family: the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. It was only because (Jewish converts) BELIEVED the truth taught them by the apostles that they gained access to the holy spirits of the God family.

Gal 3:3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, [\[by believing God\]](#) are ye now made perfect by the flesh? [\[by continuing to observe the OT law of offerings and sacrifices\]](#)

Gal 3:4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

The Jews considered Christianity to be a heresy and they persecuted new Christians whenever they could find any. Jewish Galatian converts like other Christians had suffered persecution for their beliefs but yet were returning to some of their pre-conversion beliefs and practices.

Gal 3:5 He [I, Paul] therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Did you receive access to the holy spirits of the God family as a result of I, Paul, continuing the offerings and sacrifices of ancient Israel or was it by you believing the truth I taught you as God made it possible for you to accept it and understand it?

Gal 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Abraham was considered righteous by God because he believed God not because he made offerings and sacrifices.

Gal 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

Those who believe the truth when given to know it are the children of Abraham whether Jews or Gentiles.

Gal 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel [the good news] unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

The good news here is that all nations shall be blessed if they, like Abraham, believe the truth when God reveals it to them. The words “good news” here are not used to refer to the kingdom of God which is something that would only become known when Christ would first preach it. The word “gospel” simply means good news. For example, if someone won a lot of money, they could be talking to their friends about the gospel or good news of their having won money. The gospel of Christ, the good news Christ brought is the good news of the Kingdom of God. The word “gospel” by itself does not refer to the Kingdom of God.

Gal 3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

God considered Abraham justified because he believed Him and all those who believe God like Abraham did are justified of their sins as Abraham was.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

There was no way for transgressions of the law to be forgiven under the Old Covenant. The offerings and sacrifices only symbolically forgave sin. There was no actual or real forgiveness of sin possible under the Old Covenant.

Gal 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law [the performance of offerings and sacrifices] in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. [believing the truths God gives them to know and then living their lives accordingly]

Believing God is what makes it possible for sin to be forgiven not the making of symbolic offerings and sacrifices. Old Covenant Israel was still under the curse of the law which is the second death (Rom 3: 23; 6: 23). Israel will be given its first opportunity for salvation after Christ's 2nd Coming (Rom 11).

Gal 3:12 And the law [of offerings and sacrifices] is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

In other words, if you choose to live by the requirements of the Old Covenant you are under a curse which is to say, there is no way for your transgressions to be forgiven.

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, [the result of breaking the law is death] being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Christ who never sinned died to make it possible for the sins of men to be forgiven upon repentance and belief (believing and applying in their lives as best they can the truth given them by God).

Gal 3:14 That the blessing [justification of sin by believing God] of Abraham might come on the Gentiles [these are all those who are not physical Israelites which in this case included some of the Galatians] through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. [The justification of sin because we believe and obey God as Abraham did.]

Gentiles upon being called and chosen receive the spirit because of their believing the truths God reveals to them. Salvation is not merely

for physical Israelites as ancient Israel thought it was. Believing and applying in their lives, as best as is possible for human beings to do so, the truth God gives us is why our sins are forgiven.

Gal 3:15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; [Paul here tells the Galatians he'll give them a human level example to explain how God does things] Though it be [Even if it is] but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

When men enter into a covenant or an agreement, today we would say a contract, once it is finalized and signed, nothing can be added to it and it is binding.

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

God made a covenant with Abraham that one of his descendants would be the Christ or Messiah.

Gal 3:17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, [of offerings and sacrifices (Lev 1-7)] which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

God had made a covenant with Abraham that through his seed, Christ, that as Abraham was justified because he believed God so would those who would believe Christ. The covenant God made with Abraham cannot be changed or annulled by the law of offerings and sacrifices God had imposed on ancient Israel because of its unwillingness to obey Him.

In other words, the forgiveness of sin or justification is by faith, believing God, which means we live our lives according to the truth given us and not by the works of the law of offerings and sacrifices God instituted for ancient Israel 430 years after the covenant He made with Abraham. Justification or the forgiveness of sin is by faith, believing the truth God reveals to us, and not by the works of the law of offering and sacrifices commanded Israel by God after it sinned following the making of the Old Covenant at Mount Sinai. As NT Christians, the Galatian converts, both Jews and Gentiles, were under the covenant made by God with Abraham.

Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance [justification of sin] be of the law, [of offerings and sacrifices, works] it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

It was something Abraham was to believe without actually seeing it happen in his life time; he had to believe without seeing, by faith (Heb 11: 1).

Gal 3:19 Wherefore then serveth the law? [What is the purpose of the OT law of offerings and sacrifices] It was added because of transgressions, [ancient Israel did not obey God] till the seed [Abraham's seed, Christ] should come to whom the promise was made; [the descendants of Abraham, Israel] and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

The promise made to Abraham was that Christ would be one of his descendants and by believing Him, men's sins could be forgiven. Salvation is by faith (believing the truth God reveals to us) and not by works (the offerings and sacrifices of the Old Testament). The descendants of Abraham is the nation of Israel through Isaac and his descendants.

Gal 3:20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

Gal 3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, [something men could do that would forgive their sins] verily righteousness [the forgiveness of sin] should have been by [keeping or observing] the law.

Gal 3:22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, [God says all have sinned (Rom 3:23); this included ancient Israel whose observance of the law of offerings and sacrifices never forgave their sins] that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. [Christ's perfect holy righteous (sinless) character could be imputed to those who believe God like Abraham did]

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, [Christ's sacrifice] we were kept under the law, [of offerings and sacrifices] shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. [at Christ's First Coming to Israel]

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law [of offerings and sacrifices] was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. [That our sins may be forgiven by believing that Jesus was the son of God and promised Messiah whose sacrifice makes the forgiveness of sin possible.]

Gal 3:25 But after that faith is come, [there is no longer any requirement to follow the law of offerings and sacrifices] we

are no longer under a schoolmaster. [the law of offerings and sacrifices]

The purpose of the OT law of offerings and sacrifices was to teach Israel the habit of obedience. This is why Paul calls it a schoolmaster.

Gal 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. [by believing that Christ's sacrifice forgave the sins of mankind and that Christ was the son of God in the flesh.]

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [you have become Christians]

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. [you are all Christians and members of God's one spiritual nation of Israel]

Gal 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, [a son of Abraham] and heirs [are to become inheritors] according to the promise. [God made to Abraham]

The law of offerings and sacrifices was added onto ancient Israel because of sin, their unwillingness to obey God and be faithful to the covenant they had made with Him at mount Sinai. Also, God instituted the priesthood of the order of Aaron to administer on behalf of the people the different offerings and sacrifices and to teach them the physical laws He had given them.

PHYSICAL MEN TAUGHT THE PHYSICAL LAWS OF THE OT TO THE PHYSICAL AND UNCONVERTED NATION OF ANCIENT ISRAEL. THERE IS NO SUCH REQUIREMENT UNDER THE NEW COVENANT WHERE GOD'S LAW IS SPIRITUAL AND CAN ONLY BE TAUGHT TO MEN BY THE HOLY SPIRITS OF THE GOD FAMILY.

There is no need for a ministry of men under the New Covenant. Even in the days of the apostles, it was God who made it possible for those they taught to accept and understand their teachings.

1Co 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.

1Co 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase [in knowledge and understanding].

Men don't have the ability to make understandable to men the spiritual

truths of the Bible; this is something only God can do and as Paul says, it is not in any way the doing of men nor can it be. IF KNOWING SPIRITUAL TRUTHS IS BY REVELATION FROM GOD THEN IT CANNOT BE BY MEN, NOT EVEN THE APOSTLES, IF WE WILL BELIEVE PAUL WHO WAS AN APOSTLE.

Now going back to our reading of Jeremiah.

Jer 7:23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, **Obey** my voice, and **I will be your God**, and **ye shall be my people**: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

That was God's covenant with ancient Israel and is also the covenant with NT Christians; simply stated, God is the God of those who choose to obey Him when given to know the truth and who remain faithful all their lives in doing so.

If the physical nation of Israel had obeyed God, they would have received abundant physical blessings but they would not have become God's spiritual nation with the possibility of becoming part of God's Kingdom if they remained faithful to their calling until the end of their lives. There was no possible real forgiveness of sin under the OT law of offerings and sacrifices.

Jer 7:24 But they hearkened not, **[didn't obey God]** nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

Jer 7:25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day **I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets**, daily rising up early and sending them:

Jer 7:26 Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. **[They were even more disobedient than their father's had been.]**

Spiritual Condition of Ancient Israel

In the book of Malachi, which is specifically addressed to OT physical nation of Israel, God gives us a summary of its spiritual condition before Christ's First Coming to them.

The tribe of Levi had been chosen by God to transport, maintain and set up the tabernacle of the congregation and to carry the ark of the

covenant. Aaron and his sons, who were also Levites, were chosen by God to be the priests who would minister in the tabernacle of the congregation. Only Aaron and his sons were priests. Collectively, they were all the sons of Levi but they were not all priests. So when in Malachi, God speaks about Levi, it includes both the priests, Aaron and his sons, and all the other Levites who were not priests. In Malachi He addresses the priests directly.

Mal 2:1 And now, **O ye priests**, this commandment is for you.

Mal 2:2 If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, **I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.**

God says He has already cursed the priests (the descendants of Aaron) as they are not obeying Him.

Mal 2:3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of **your** solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it.

The priests that God is talking about here are priests that were not observing God's feast days as given Israel but their own solemn feasts. After the death of Solomon, Jeroboam became the king of Israel (the Northern Kingdom whose capital city was Samaria) and Rehoboam, Solomon's son, became the king of Judah (the Southern Kingdom whose capital was Jerusalem]

1Ki 12:6 And king Rehoboam **[the son of Solomon]** consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

1Ki 12:7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

1Ki 12:8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

1Ki 12:9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

1Ki 12:10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

1Ki 12:11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

1Ki 12:12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

1Ki 12:13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

1Ki 12:14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

1Ki 12:15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, rather than follow the advice of the elders who had advised Solomon, followed the advice of the young men who had grown up with him. Their recommendation was to make Israel's yoke even heavier and to chastise them with scorpions, a harsher punishment than whips. The result was that Israel divided into 2 kingdoms: the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah chose Rehoboam to rule over them and the other tribes chose Jeroboam as their ruler.

1Ki 12:17 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, [Benjamin, Levi and Judah] Rehoboam [Solomon's son] reigned over them. [The Southern Kingdom.]

1Ki 12:18 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute [collected taxes]; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

The Northern Kingdom of Israel did not accept the authority of the

Southern Kingdom and stoned to death the tax collector Rehoboam had sent to them.

1Ki 12:19 So Israel [the 10 tribes that split from Rehoboam, the Northern Kingdom] rebelled against the house of David [the Southern Kingdom] unto this day.

1Ki 12:20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel [the Northern Kingdom]: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.[the Southern Kingdom whose king was Rehoboam]

Jeroboam, [king of the Northern Kingdom, Israel] then created his own priesthood choosing the lowest people to be priests to celebrate the new holy days he had instituted.

Ki 12:25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

1Ki 12:26 And Jeroboam [Northern Kingdom] said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: [Southern Kingdom]

1Ki 12:27 If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

Jeroboam feared that if the people (Northern Kingdom) were to go to Jerusalem (capital city of the Southern Kingdom) to keep God's feast days, they would turn against him and return to Rehoboam.

1Ki 12:28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Jeroboam instituted idol worshiping in Israel to keep the people from going to Jerusalem to celebrate God's feast days. He feared they would turn against him if they were to do so.

1Ki 12:29 And he set the one [golden calf] in Bethel, and the other [golden calf] put he in Dan.

1Ki 12:30 And this thing became a sin [idolatry]: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

1Ki 12:31 And he made an house of high places, [a place where religious ceremonies were carried out] and made priests of the lowest of the people, [who were not descendants of Aaron and who were not the highly educated. The Levites had remained under King Rehoboam.]

Jeroboam created his own priesthood to lead the people in serving the idols he had made and to lead the people in worshipping them as their god.

1Ki 12:32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.

1Ki 12:33 So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

Jeroboam established his own feast day and priesthood to replace God's feast days and God's priesthood. God's feasts of Trumpet, Atonement and Tabernacles are celebrated during the 7th month not the 8th one. Jeroboam changed the month so that the people would not think of going back to celebrating God's feasts but rather look forward to the celebrations of the 8th month.

1Ki 13:33 After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he [Jeroboam] became one of the priests of the high places. [places where religious ceremonies are conducted]

This is why God says in the book of Malachi that:

Mal 2:3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts [weren't God's feasts]; and one shall take you away with it.

God tells Israel, the Northern Kingdom under King Jeroboam, that it will come to an end because of its idolatrous ways. Effectively, it went into captivity under the Assyrians and lost its identity, its language and ceased to exist as an identifiable nation in the world.

Mal 2:4 And ye [Israel] shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, **that my covenant might be with Levi,** saith the LORD of hosts.

God tells them that the time will come when Israel, the Northern Kingdom, will know that God's priests were to be the sons of Levi and more specifically, the descendants of Aaron who were Levites. Jeroboam just consecrated anyone who wanted to be a priest (1Ki 13:33).

Mal 2:5 My covenant was with him (Aaron a son of Levi, a Levite) of life and peace; and I gave them to him **for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.**

Aaron obeyed God after his ordination and correctly taught God's law to the people.

Mal 2:6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

Mal 2:7 For the **priest's lips should keep knowledge,** and they should seek the law at his mouth: **for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.**

Those chosen by God to be His priests in Israel were to preserve the law as given them by God through Moses, teach it to the people and in this way be God's messenger to Israel. It was a physical priesthood of men teaching the law God gave Israel through Moses to a physical and unconverted people. The priesthood of the order of Aaron never taught Israel the spirit of the law WHICH IS SOMETHING ONLY GOD CAN DO and would do for His future spiritual nation of Israel that would begin on the day of Pentecost.

Mal 2:8 But ye **[the priests of the 10 tribes of Israel under King Jeroboam]** are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; **ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi,** saith the LORD of hosts.

Here God is talking about those who were made priests by Jeroboam, king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. They were not Levites and they did not faithfully teach God's words to the people. This is why he says they have corrupted the covenant made with Levi and more specifically with Aaron.

Mal 2:9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but **have been partial in the law.**

These priests of the Northern Kingdom who were not Levites didn't administer the law with impartiality; there was not an equal application of the law to everyone.

Recapitulation

Before continuing, I think it would be good to summarize the points made up to now.

Israel after the death of Solomon became a divided nation. Solomon's son, Rehoboam told the people they would be treated more harshly by him than they had been by his father. This caused a split in the kingdom. There were 10 tribes who remained under Jeroboam and the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, broke away and accepted Rehoboam, Solomon's son, as their ruler.

Jeroboam fearing the people may want to join the tribes ruled by Rehoboam, instituted his own priesthood, holy day, and idolatry. This is what God is talking about when He says in Malachi:

Mal 2:3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of [your](#) solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it.

And, He is also making a contrast between the Levites who were priests, Aaron and his sons and the priests appointed by Jeroboam who were not of the order of Aaron. The priests appointed by Jeroboam were not following what God had commanded Israel before it became a divided nation. God made Aaron and his sons priests of Israel; Jeroboam had no authority to appoint priests.

Mal 2:4 And ye [\[Israel, the Northern Kingdom\]](#) shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, [\[that the priests in Israel were to be Levites, the descendants of Aaron not just any member of any other tribes of Israel\]](#) that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

Mal 2:5 My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

Mal 1:7 Ye [\[the priests of the Southern Kingdom, Judah\]](#) offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.

We know this verse is referring to Judah who had stayed with the Levitical priesthood because God says they are offering polluted bread on [my](#) altar. In the Northern Kingdom, Israel, Jeroboam had set up his own priesthood and they were worshiping golden calves. It was not God's priesthood nor his altar on which they were making offerings.

Mal 1:8 And if ye ([the Levitical priests of the Southern Kingdom, Judah](#)) offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

Mal 1:9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

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.

The law of offerings and sacrifices (see Lev 1-7) had been given Israel so that they would learn to fear (obey) God. In Malachi God tells (the priests of the Southern Kingdom, (Judah) to cease their offerings as they were not obeying Him which was the whole purpose for which God had them make offerings.

So 2 things of importance to note: God was comparing the faithful Levitical priests (Aaron and his sons) with those of Jeroboam and His holy days with the one created by Jeroboam which was their feast and not God's. And, God is also passing judgment on the priests of Judah who were not teaching correctly the law to the people and who were reluctantly offering sacrifices to Him as they were saying it was not worth their while to do so as God was not blessing them.

God's Message to OT Israel

In the book of Malachi God was not speaking about the modern-day organizations of men claiming to be God's church and that some of them had departed from the truth. He was talking about Israel [the Northern Kingdom] and its priesthood and feast day established by Jeroboam and His feast days and the priesthood established by Him under Aaron who had remained under Rehoboam [the Southern Kingdom]. The Northern Kingdom went into idolatry and the Southern Kingdom kept God's holy days and the Levitical priesthood but were offerings their sick and lame animals rather than the best of their flocks and herds.

The focus of the Bible is the nation of physical Israel in the Old Testament and God's spiritual nation of Israel in New Testament times. In the physical nation of Israel it was possible to not obey God and still remain part of God's nation but one must be called, chosen and remain faithful to become and continue to be part of God's spiritual nation of Israel.

This means that it is not possible for anyone who for example is knowingly teaching falsities to be a member of God's spiritual nation of Israel which is His Church. In other words, and this is of the greatest importance for all of us to realize, there are not nor can there be anyone in God's spiritual nation who has been called and chosen who is not remaining faithful. There can be no false prophets who are part of God's Church. As soon as someone who has been called and chosen makes the decision to no longer obey God in all things as best he can, that individual ceases to be part of the body of Christ.

IN GOD'S SPIRITUAL NATION OF ISRAEL THERE CAN BE NO FALSE PROPHETS, NO FALSE PRIESTS, NO MEN DECEIVING GOD'S ELECT. If someone has not been called they are not members of God's spiritual nation, if they don't follow their calling, they're not part of God's Church and if they don't remain faithful, they are not part of God's spiritual nation. The condition for being a member of God's spiritual nation is remaining faithful to the truth received at the time of our calling and to the truth God is revealing to us as we study God's holy Bible our ONLY reliable source of truth.

This means that when God is talking about priests that have not been faithful in Jeremiah and in Malachi, He is talking about OT priests in God's physical and unconverted nation of Israel, and where even if not obeying God, everybody still remained part of God's [physical](#) nation.

God's NT Spiritual Nation of Israel

But some will say, that false prophets can indeed come within the congregations of God's one true Church. Let's examine this statement.

After Christ's ascension to His Father and the coming of the day of Pentecost, the apostles became the founding members of God's NT spiritual nation of Israel which for a relatively short time existed side-by-side with the OT physical nation of Israel. For a relatively brief time in the existence of God's Church, God's spiritual nation of Israel had small congregations of faithful which could be victimized by false teachers seeking to get a following for themselves from which they could make money.

But there arose a great new false religious organization calling itself

Christian who persecuted all other religious groups who would not accept its doctrines. God's church had to flee into the wilderness to escape being put in jail or killed. They were scattered, lost contact with each other and over the years lost many of the truths they had been given by the apostles and the early ministry as the truly converted died out. Persecutions went on against true Christianity for hundreds of years.

The Preservation of Spiritual Truth

A very important point for us to realize, and which we have a tendency to forget, is that God is the only one who can call men and open their minds to understand spiritual truth. This is why, as many of you who have tried it have come to realize, it is not possible to teach spiritual truth to children. This is why most of the time, though one or both parents may be converted, their children even though taught by them, in just about every case, do not become converted. Even, they come to hate religion and as soon as they are of age, they totally refuse any of their parents' religious teachings. This is why the early church's truly converted and their families who fled into the wilderness could not through their children ensure the retention of the truth they had received. This is why the truth they had got lost but for a few outstanding requirements such as keeping the Sabbath and the 10 Commandments. God is the only one who can decide who is to be called and when. Unless called, men, including their children, are hostile toward God. They cannot be taught spiritual truth which can only be known by revelation from God and this only happens when one is being called by God.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Gal 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

God's church after its scattering remained invisible to the world. It then became very difficult to know who were true Christians with whom it would be possible to have spiritual fellowship or to form a group. Conversion is something that occurs in the mind and is not visible to others and it is God's doing, not organizations of men calling themselves churches of God. In a given crowd it is impossible to know if there are any truly converted Christians in it. Truly converted Christians live unknown among the unconverted. God's spiritual nation is not a large visible-to-the-world organization doing all it can to come to the attention of the world and attract people to its organization. It is only relatively recent in human history, and not in all countries even now, that freedom

of religion is protected in law. Today, in many countries, mainstream Christians are under attack and are being murdered for their faith. Religious freedom in the Western world is increasingly being attacked by groups who want to impose their supposedly more humane and inclusive approach on everybody.

Malachi never had a message for the organizations of men of our times claiming to be God's Church. God's focus in the Bible is the nation of Israel both as a physical nation (OT) and as a spiritual nation (NT). God is not concerned about organizations of men calling themselves churches of God which have arisen following the end of the organization called the Worldwide Church of God or even those who appeared through the centuries until our times and which will exist during the Millennium.

Men's Churches of God

All will be called during the Millennium but not all will become converted just as it is not all who are called today who become and/or stay converted. Many will not follow their calling and remain in the world. Few will accept their calling and remain faithful until the end of their lives. There will be ample opportunity for false Christian religions to continue until the beginning of the Last Great Day. There will continue to be many men's churches of God organizations as they are today.

GOD'S ONE TRUE CHURCH IS THE RESULT OF GOD THE FATHER CALLING MEN, GOD THE WORD TEACHING THEM AND THOSE CALLED AND CHOSEN REMAINING FAITHFUL. And according to Christ Himself, it is a little flock.

Luk 12:32 **Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**

It is small and invisible to the world and exists by the power of God and not that of men.

Writing a book which supposedly explains how God through the book of Malachi is speaking to and has a message for modern-day organizations of men claiming to be God's church demonstrates the extent to which its author grossly misunderstands the Bible. All these different organizations of men calling themselves "churches of God" are using religion to enrich themselves and their close inner circle of enablers and supporters. They are all busily building their little empires of land holdings, campuses, schools, impressive and costly buildings, buying executive jets to do the "work" and seeking to grow their organizations by making themselves as visible as they can on television and the internet. The leaders of these MEN'S CHURCHES OF GOD all hope that after their

death, people will remember them as great men of God. Unsurprisingly, the lessons of the book of Ecclesiastes have not been understood. Men amassing progressively greater amounts of wealth as a means of getting lasting satisfaction and trying to be kept alive in people's minds after their death by their accomplishments is grasping for the wind. It is vanity, it is futility.

A New High Priest

In the book of Hebrews, Paul explains to us what is the new priesthood that REPLACES the Levitical priesthood of men of the order of Aaron following the coming into being of God's new spiritual nation of Israel which began on the day of Pentecost.

Heb 7:11 If therefore perfection [the forgiveness of sin] were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

God's priesthood is no longer men whose priesthood is after the order of Aaron but one which is after the order of Melchisedec; Christ, a holy spirit being is that priest, not men.

Heb 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

Heb 5:2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

Heb 5:3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

Men as priests of the order of Aaron remained sinners and had to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people and for their own sins.

Heb 5:4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Men do not become priests of God by suddenly, themselves, deciding they want to be a priest. They have to be chosen by God like Aaron was in order for them to be a priest of God. This, however, was true only for OT Israel which had a priesthood of men and for the time in God's First Century Church when there were congregations of God's Church.

Heb 5:5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he [God the Father] that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

God the Father made Christ, God the Word made flesh, a high priest He didn't appoint Himself.

Heb 5:6 As he [God the Father] saith also in another place, Thou [God the Word who was made flesh, Christ] art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Heb 5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, [when God the Word, for a short time, was the human Christ] when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him [God the Father] that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Because Christ fully was in obedience to His Father, God heard him and saved him from death which is to say, God resurrected Christ after his death on the stake.

Heb 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

Christ who was fully God and fully man (His Father was God and His mother was Mary). He learned how difficult it is as a man to obey God by the things which he suffered which is to say, He experienced how hard it is for men not to sin as He had the same nature dwelling in Him.

Heb 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Psa 103:10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Psa 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Psa 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

Psa 103:14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we [men] are dust.

Now, continuing with Heb 5.

Heb 5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

God the Father made God the Word a high priest of the order of Melchisedec for all truly converted NT Christians who are remaining faithful to their calling. God's church or spiritual nation of Israel's high priest is not any man but God the Word and Spokesman Himself.

A New Priesthood not of Men

Christ after His resurrection, glorification and ascension was made the great high priest of all truly converted Christians by God the Father which resulted in a change being made in the priesthood of God's nation.

Heb 7:12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. [The law is to be kept in its spirit and the OT law of offerings and sacrifices ceased to exist.]

Heb 7:13 For he [Christ] of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. [No members of the tribe of Judah were priests. Aaron and his sons were Levites, they were the priests of OT Israel but God made Christ, a jew, a member of the tribe of Judah, the high priest of his NT spiritual nation of Israel.]

Heb 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; [Christ is a descendant of David through Mary] of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. [There was no priesthood of the tribe of Judah established by God through Moses for OT Israel.]

Heb 7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, [A different high priest who would not be a man was needed and that high priest is Christ who since His resurrection and glorification has returned to being the holy spirit God the Word.]

Heb 7:16 Who is made, [a high priest] not after the law of a carnal commandment, [not ordained by a man] but after the power of an endless life. [God the Father who is eternal made Christ who is immortal, the great high priest of the order of Melchisedec for His NT spiritual nation of Israel]

Heb 7:17 For he [God the Father] testifieth, Thou [Christ] art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. [A never ending, God level priesthood.]

Heb 7:18 For there is verily a disannulling [a cancellation] of the commandment going before [the priesthood of the order of Aaron made by a carnal command; Moses anointed Aaron as a priest (Ex 29:7)] for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. [Could not make possible the forgiveness of sin.]

Heb 7:19 For the law made nothing perfect, [the law of offerings and sacrifices never forgave any sin] but the bringing in of a better hope did; [the new priesthood of Melchisedec makes it possible for those called and chosen if remaining faithful to be saved] by the which we draw nigh unto God. [not to men who say they represent God]

Heb 7:20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

Heb 7:21 (For those priests [order of Aaron] were made without an oath; but this [order of Melchisedec] with an oath by him [God the Father] that said unto him, The Lord [God the Father] sware and will not repent, [change His mind] Thou [Christ] art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec: [the God level priesthood administering God's plan of salvation for mankind])

Heb 7:22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament [covenant].

Jesus as the Christ or Messiah, by his perfect life as a human being and death on the stake as God's perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind, made sure God's plan of salvation for all those who would repent and believe upon being called by God the Father. The first covenant (the Old Covenant) was that if Israel obeyed God, they would become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The second covenant (the New Covenant) is that upon maintaining an attitude of obedience to God in all things, we can become glorified, immortal spirit beings and part of God's eternal Kingdom.

Heb 7:23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

Heb 7:24 But this man, [Christ] because he continueth ever, [forever] hath an unchangeable priesthood.

Heb 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Salvation is by and through Christ who made it possible for the sins of men to be forgiven; those committed before their conversion and those committed after their conversion.

Heb 7:26 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; [Christ who is sitting at the right-hand side of God as the holy spirit God the Word who is responsible for teaching all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones who are the members of His spiritual nation of Israel.]

Heb 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those [OT] high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. [Christ never sinned and being God in the flesh, by His death on the take, He made possible the forgiveness of mankind's sin]

Heb 7:28 For the law [under the Old Covenant, the priests were men, Aaron and his sons and their descendants] maketh men high priests which have infirmity; [these are the infirmities of the flesh or weaknesses of the flesh which made it impossible for them to be faithful teachers of God's law. The lust for fame, power and money corrupts and few if any are those who can resist their influence. Priesthoods of men use their authority over the people to satisfy their lust for fame and power. The Pharisees and Sadducees make this evident.] but the word of the oath, [God the Father ordaining Christ as the great high priest according to the order of Melchisedec.] which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. [Christ will always be God's high priest to His spiritual nation of Israel, not men.]

Heb 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Heb 8:2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

God's true tabernacle, the place in which He dwells, are His called and chosen ones who are remaining faithful; NOT ANY BUILDING MADE BY MEN NOR BY BEING PART OF ANY ORGANIZATION OF MEN CLAIMING TO BE GOD'S CHURCH.

Heb 8:3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat[[something](#)] also to offer.

Heb 8:4 For if he [[God's high priest](#)] were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests [[men](#)] that offer gifts according to the law: [[the OT law of offerings](#)]

Heb 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, [[it was not the real thing](#)] as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern [[a model to be followed in making something](#)] shewed to thee in the mount. [[Sinai](#)]

Heb 8:6 But now hath he [[the true high priest, the resurrected Christ](#)] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also [he is the mediator of a better covenant](#), which was established upon better promises. [[the forgiveness of sin and eternal life](#)]

Heb 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, [[Israel was unable to keep the Old Covenant](#)] he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: [[a New Covenant that they will be able to keep but not in their own strength as was previously required by the Old Covenant. It will be through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them upon their maintaining their attitude of wanting to obey God in all things as best they can.](#)]

Heb 8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when [I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt](#); because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

God freed Israel from their Egyptian captivity; Pharaoh did not make the decision to let them go. God lead them by the hand out of the land of Egypt.

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; [I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:](#)

The New Covenant to be made with Israel will be God putting His law into the minds of those that will be called. God's government defined by God's law will be in their mind; it will be God's government in their lives. This is something only God will and can do, not men. In OT Israel, God's law was in the ark of the covenant which was in the holy of holies which only the high priest could enter once a year on the day of Atonement. It was not part of the people.

Heb 8:11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

No one will need to teach others about God because God will call them and they will then all know God and God's law will be written in their minds or hearts. This is happening with those being called by God since the day of Pentecost and it will happen with all those of the nations of the world who come to conversion when God calls all men during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

God will forgive Israel their past sins while not called and give them their first real opportunity for salvation by writing His law in their minds which again is something no man can do. Since the day of Pentecost God has been writing His law in the minds of all those called and chosen and when He does, they become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church.

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. [\[Men teaching men God's law as in the Old Covenant.\]](#)

Heb 9:1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances [\[physical symbolic rituals\]](#) of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. [\[the physical tabernacle of the congregation which is described in the following verses of Heb 9\]](#)

Heb 9:2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.

Heb 9:3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

Heb 9:4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

Heb 9:5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Heb 9:6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

Heb 9:7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

Heb 9:8 The Holy Ghost [spirit] this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

There was not then, in OT Israel, a way for men to have God dwelling in them. It would only occur after Christ's perfect sacrifice for sin which would make it possible for truly converted men to become the living stones of the temple of God and BE God's temple.

Heb 9:9 Which [the first tabernacle] was a figure [a temporary physical and figurative representation of God's temple; not the real tabernacle in which God lives] for the time then present, [that was then used because Christ had not yet died as the perfect sacrifice for sin] in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; [physical offerings and sacrifices as commanded in the law of offering could not forgive the sins of the offerer.]

Heb 9:10 Which stood only [consisted only of] in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. [Until the time of the making of the New Covenant where none of these ordinances would be required.]

Heb 9:11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; [God the Father and God the Word, which was for a time Christ, live not in tabernacles made by the hands of men. They are spirit and live in a spiritual temple composed of all those called, chosen and faithful, God's saints and elect.]

Heb 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. [Christ's death as the perfect sacrifice for sin made salvation possible and those who come to conversion ARE the tabernacle in which God and the Word (Christ) dwell.]

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

The sinner was not put to death for his sins because he offered the sacrifices commanded in the law of offerings. It was a ceremonial and symbolic removal of sin which did not fulfill God's requirement for sins to be effectively forgiven. Only Christ's perfect sacrifice would make that possible.

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, [His death] who through the eternal Spirit [as requested by God the Father (Philippians 2:5-8; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42)] offered himself without spot to God, purge your [truly converted Christians] conscience from dead works [forgive your sins] to serve the living God?

Heb 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator [the means by which the New Covenant can be made with those who repent and believe] of the new testament, that by means of [His] death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, [the old covenant] they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. [of life eternal in God's Kingdom]

Heb 9:16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

Here Paul likens the "...promise of eternal inheritance..." to something to be inherited from Christ whom he describes as having a testament or will. The analogy is that truly converted Christians are children whose father is Christ and who with Christ's death inherit the promise of eternal life if they remain faithful until the end of their lives.

Heb 9:17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

Heb 9:18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. [death, in this instance of animals as made clear in the following verse]

Heb 9:19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Heb 9:20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

Heb 9:21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

Heb 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Sin was figuratively forgiven under the Old Testament by an animal dying instead of the sinner. In New Testament times, the sins of men are really forgiven by the death of Christ. The penalty for sin is death unless there is a sacrifice for its remission or forgiveness:

Rom 6:23 For the [wages of sin is death](#); but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that [all have sinned](#):

Rom 5:15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

Rom 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Rom 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

The death of Christ makes possible the forgiveness or remission of all sin upon repentance, belief and remaining faithful.

Let's keep on with our review of Hebrews 9.

Heb 9:23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens [\[the priesthood and the physical tabernacle of the congregation of ancient Israel\]](#) should be purified with these; [\[the death of animals instead of the sinner\]](#) but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. [\[Christ's sacrifice\]](#)

The pattern of things in heaven are the priesthood and the tabernacle set up by Moses according to the instructions God gave him. They were not the real thing; they were only a physical level model or representation of things in heaven. Their purification was symbolically effected by the blood of animals.

Heb 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, [physical tabernacles such as a building or a temple] which are the figures [a figurative representation; are not the real thing] of the true [temple or dwelling place of God]; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God [the Father] for us: [truly converted Christians]

Heb 9:25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest [the human ones of the Old Testament] entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; [sacrificed animals]

Heb 9:26 For then must he often have suffered [would have had to do it often] since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [until humanity comes to an end and for all humanity that has ever existed] hath he [Christ] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Heb 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, [all men die the first death] but after this the judgment:

All men who were never called will be resurrected to flesh-and-blood existence at the beginning of the Last Great Day. They will then all be called and given their opportunity for salvation. All will live a 100 years during which God will judge them which is to say evaluate their obedience to Him. At the end of the Last Great Day will come the Great White Throne Judgment where God (the resurrected Christ) will make a final judgment as to those who are saved and those who are lost.

Joh 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

Summary

Christ is God the Father's high priest to His spiritual nation of Israel according to the order of Melchisedec and He is the mediator of the New Covenant.

Heb 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

And, He is the one mediator between God and men. There are no men or organizations of men standing between God and His called and chosen ones who are His spiritual nation and His Church.

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

Christ by His death on the stake made it possible for a New Covenant to be made. The Old Covenant could not forgive sin but in a symbolic way. Men's sins remained and no one could ever become part of God's Kingdom. A New Covenant was needed that would make possible the remission of sin.

God makes this New Covenant by writing His law into the hearts or minds of men. The law becomes a part of them while under the Old Covenant the law was kept in the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies. God's law written in the minds of the truly converted is God's government in their lives.

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Jer 31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The requirements of the Old Covenant were the physical observance of laborious, repetitive and symbolic offerings and sacrifices which did not really forgive sin.

Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

A priesthood of men was required for the administration of the many offerings and sacrifices required by God under the Old Covenant. Paul tells us that they were for the purpose of teaching Israel the habit of obedience.

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. [\[and not by the works of the law of offerings and sacrifices given ancient Israel\]](#)

Gal 3:25 But after that faith is come, [after God has revealed Himself to us and made it possible for us to understand the spiritual truths of the Bible which we are to believe] we are no longer under a schoolmaster. [There is no longer any need for physical and repetitive offerings and sacrifices.]

Deu 4:10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear [obey] me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

The very big difference of significance between God's physical nation of Israel and his spiritual nation of Israel is that ancient Israel was never converted and its attitude toward God was to be hostile to Him.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

However, those who are members of God's NT spiritual nation of Israel obey God because they have knowingly and freely chosen to do so when called by Him. Those who are part of this nation and who remain part of it are those whose intention is to follow God's lead as best as they can.

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

No one is forcing them nor has to force them to obey God.

The Old Testament physical nation of Israel and the Levitical priesthood ended with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the second temple in AD 70. Nowadays, the Jews returned to Israel are working at developing the Levitical priesthood that existed under the Old Covenant and to restart offerings and animal sacrifices as they believe this will lead to the coming of the promised Messiah which according to them has yet to come.

Having the Right Perspective

Ancient Israel had a priesthood of men, the Levitical priest, which came to an end with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the second temple. After Christ's First Coming to Israel, His death as the perfect sacrifice for sin, resurrection and ascension to His Father, there existed for a relatively short time a ministry of men and small, scattered congrega-

tions of faithful. Christianity was considered a false religion by the Jews and they persecuted Christians. A great new false Christian religious organization came into being and persecuted all other religious groups who would not accept its doctrines. The members of God's one, true Church had to flee into the wilderness. The knowledge they received from the apostles, for the most part, was lost as they died; spiritual truths are not passed on to unconverted family members. Typically, not all family members are called and it is not possible to teach spiritual truths to children as many have discovered. As soon as they are of age they totally distance themselves from the religious teachings of their parents.

The form and manner of existence of God's First Century Church with apostles, preachers, teachers, etc. WAS NOT TO BE LASTING. If it were God's will that His First Century Church would continue with men acting as pastors, teachers, evangelist, etc. and if it was His will that there would be an unbroken transmission of the truths taught to the First Century congregations of God's Church to our days, He certainly has the power to do so but is this what happened?

A quick survey of Christian churches shows there is a great diversity of beliefs among them which keep them divided. The same can be said for the many churches of God who like the Christians churches of this world, are also divided by irreconcilable doctrinal differences. If the truth received from the apostles by God's First Century church was effectively transmitted unchanged across the centuries, why do we have so many different Christians churches and churches of God?

The simple answer is that the truth given God's First Century Church got lost over the centuries of persecution that came upon it. Religious persecutions put an end to the First Century Church ministry and the congregations that then existed. A new false Christianity dominated the world and true Christians had to remain hidden as sheep among wolves.

And, it was not God's will that His Church should continue with a ministry of men as at the time of its foundation. How can we know this for sure.

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

A prophet is a man to whom God has given a message for transmission to His people which anciently was the physical nation of Israel.

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 the last days, which Paul says are the days he was then living and in which we have been living since then, God has spoken to us, truly converted Christians, by his Son who is the holy spirit God the Word who in the administration of God's master plan of salvation for mankind, is responsible for teaching all things to the holy spirit God the Father's called and chosen ones. ([Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#))

The understanding of the God level spiritual truths of the Bible is possible only by revelation from God.

1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:
for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

It is not something any man can do for any man; and as we have seen, not even the apostles could do it.

1Co 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

1Co 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.

The increase in understanding of the Scriptures by those Paul taught was by and from God.

God's NT spiritual nation of Israel or Church would be taught by the God the Father while being called and by God the Word if they accept their calling. It would not be by the work of men. No man can call another man to salvation and no man can give men understanding of the God level spiritual truths of the Bible.

One last point of importance is that Christians live unknown among the unconverted of the world. Conversion occurs in the mind which is something others can't see. Christians are also invisible to other Christians. It is not possible for Christians to know who, if any, are the true Christians living in their town and country. Christians therefore cannot come together to form large visible-to-the-world groups of people.

God's spiritual nation of Israel will not be found in the congregations of the very great number of organizations of men calling themselves churches of God found all over the world nor in the many churches of God who are splinter groups from the organization that was called the Worldwide Church of God. God's spiritual nation is being taught by God and the Word, not men.

Modern-Day Levitical Priests

Of course, there is no current day Levitical priesthood in God's one and only true Church but there are priesthoods of men in the several organizations of men calling themselves churches of God found all over the world in addition to those who arose after the end of the organization called the Worldwide Church of God.

These priesthoods of men have all generally patterned themselves on the OT Levitical priesthood and the offerings and sacrifices they were responsible for making on behalf of the people and on the existence of a physical tabernacle in which God dwelt. They don't literally copy what the Levitical priests did but rather have modified their ceremonies and rituals to make them better fit with how society has changed over time.

The catholic have daily masses which imitate the daily offerings that were required under the Old Testament. No animals are sacrificed rather a symbolic representation of the body and blood of Christ is used (the host and the wine) in conducting this ceremony. Upon the host and the wine being offered up to God, it is claimed the physical host (an unleavened piece of bread) and the wine, through a miracle of God, becomes the actual body and blood of Christ. This is based on a literal application of Christ saying that those who are to have eternal life must eat his body and drink his blood (John 6: 53-58).

In men's churches of God, tithing has been instituted based on the belief that God had commanded OT Israel to pay tithes to the Levitical priesthood with Mal 3:8 being the key verse used to convince people that tithes have to be paid.

Mal 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

However, the book of Malachi is addressed to the OT physical nation of Israel.

Mal 1:1 The burden of the word of the LORD [to Israel](#) by Malachi.

Malachi is not speaking about or to organizations of men claiming to be God's Church (Philadelphia C of G, United C of G, Restored C of G, International C of G, Global C of G (no longer in existence)) which would arise more than 19th centuries after Pentecost. God's only nation is Israel: the Israel of the Old Testament and His New Testament spiritual nation of Israel which is not an organization of men, or several of them, claiming to be God's Church.

Ancient Israel had been commanded to make offerings and sacrifices but these were not tithes. The offerings and sacrifices had to do with symbolically having sin forgiven and honoring God. The people had to keep a tithe for feast attendance purposes and a tithe to be shared with the Levites, the fatherless, the widows and the strangers who were within their gates. The Levites were only given a part of these 2 tithes and this part was not a certain fixed amount. The people were only told to share with the Levites some of their tithe for feast attendance and some of their 3rd year tithe which was for the widows, fatherless and strangers within their gates. ([Tithing in New Testament Times](#)) ([Will a Man Rob God?](#))

That is all the tithes that were commanded with none of them that were to be **wholly given** to Aaron and his sons who were the only ones of the tribe of Levi who were the priests of Israel.

The churches of God insist its members have the obligation to pay a first tithe to the Church, keep a second tithe for feast attendance and every 3 years, give the church a third tithe which it spends as it sees fit on those who are considered to be the needy of the church. The 3rd tithe was not for the poor. It was for the fatherless, the widows, the strangers within their gates and for sharing with the Levites.

In addition to copying and modifying OT Levitical priesthood ceremonies, they have assumed the responsibility of preaching the Gospel to the world. This task was given by Christ only to the apostles. So, men have decided that more apostles would be needed as it was not possible for the original apostles to have fully carried out the commission given them. They have concluded that they have, somehow, the authority to appoint apostles with NO BIBLE SUPPORT FOR THEIR DECISION.

The Gospel is to be preached to every creature which is something no man or organization of men could ever do especially with respect to those who have lived and died in the first 4,000 years before Christ's First Coming to Israel when the Gospel first began to be preached. Before that time there was no Gospel to be preached as no one knew anything about it.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**

Every creature has to have heard and believed the Gospel to be saved.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of **the gospel** of Christ: for it **is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Only God can reach with the Gospel every creature (men) that will have ever existed since the beginning of mankind to the time of the Great White Throne Judgment. And, the Gospel is spiritual truth which can only be known by revelation from God; it is not anything men can do for other men.

**1Co 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:
for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.**

Men who have appointed themselves as ministers or who were appointed by organizations of men who gave themselves the authority to appoint men as ministers, don't think God has the power to administer His plan of salvation without their participation in the process. Even, they see themselves as being essential to the success of God's plan of salvation that if they weren't there, God could not call men and would not be able to teach them. But, the truth is quite the opposite, **ONLY GOD CAN CALL MEN TO SALVATION AND ONLY GOD CAN REVEAL (TEACH) TO MEN THE HIDDEN SPIRITUAL TRUTHS OF THE BIBLE.**

The success or failure of God's plan of salvation has never depended on men and cannot depend on men for whom power, fame and money always is in the forefront of their minds. They very often, if not always, get corrupted by their lust for power, fame and money no matter how good were their initial intentions. Fame, power and money are like strong drink and all who partake of them, inevitably become drunk. They lose sight of their original objective and begin to exploit those whom they (the ministers) are supposedly to serve (the members of their congregations) to grow their fortunes of which there is never enough to finally satisfy them.

Those of us who at one time or another have been members of one or more of the several organizations of men calling themselves churches of God following the death of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong have personally witnessed so-called men of God pursuing with great zeal and determination the accumulation of power, fame and money which is something they are still doing. And, we have witnessed how tyrannical and pitiless they act toward anyone expressing any doubt whatsoever about what they say and do. In their minds they are mini-gods walking among mere men and their expectation is that the greatest honor and respect is owed them by all but Christ said:

Mat 23:11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

These organizations of men have never been God's Church.

The Fate of Those in Men's Churches of God

What about those who are members of men's false churches of God? What is their fate? They were simply deceived by them and they are not lost nor saved as God would not have called them to be **lasting** members of such organizations. The Bible shows that those truly called and chosen by God do not remain with false churches of God. God would eventually show them that these organizations of men were not His Church and they would then have to make the decision to leave even at the cost of losing friends and family members who may also have been part of these organizations of men. Those choosing to stay even after having been shown these organizations of men are false, could lose their salvation which is something only God can decide.

Those called and chosen by God since the day of Pentecost are being taught by the holy spirit God the Word the great high priest of God according to the order of Melchisedec as they study God's holy Bible, Christ in writing. They are not being taught by men. Those unknowingly following false prophets will live again in the resurrection to flesh-and-blood at the beginning of the Last Great Day along with all those who were never called through the centuries of mankind's existence. They will then all be given their first real and only chance to be saved. They will all be called, and if they accept their calling, they will be taught by the holy spirits of the God family as truly converted Christians are today and have been since the day of Pentecost. Upon remaining faithful until the end of the Last Great Day, they will inherit salvation in the Great White Throne Judgment.

All the so-called Christian churches in the world and the several false churches of God of men are the product of the many false prophets that have gone out into the world following the advent of Christianity with Christ's First Coming. There were then many false, pagan religions in the world and those who were heading them up saw Christianity as one more occasion to make money. For them Christianity is just one more of the illusions pursued by people not wanting to just die and never live again in some way or another. All one has to do is to reassure them that there is an afterlife (a different life or existence following death) that they can have by following them who have been given knowledge and understanding by God that no one else has as to how they can have that never ending afterlife. Most religions promise some kind of after death life in a state of unending extreme happiness and satisfaction.

This is what attracts people to religion and keeps them following different men claiming to be messengers from God with the mission of

teaching them what they have to do to live again after the death of their physical bodies. These false prophets are themselves deceived and are using religion as a money making business. They are selling a product for which they are many eager takers: the hope of life after death. It is no more complicated than that.

Thankfully, their followers are not lost and will yet have their opportunity for salvation during the Last Great Day.

Christ said that false prophets would be known by their fruits. Their focus on buying large tracts of land and turning them into finely landscaped estates with beautiful buildings designed by the best architects available, paying themselves and the members of their inner circle large salaries and living the life of the rich and famous traveling on their private executive jets doing the “work” shows them up to not be who they pretend to be.

True Christianity has never been and can never be a money-making business as it is something that exists in the personal relationship between those God has called and chosen and who are being taught by God the Word because they are maintaining their attitude of repentance and belief given them BY GOD when they were called, NOT BY ANY MAN.

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of [God](#) leadeth thee to [repentance](#)?

Conclusion

In OT times, God had a physical nation as His church, the nation of Israel.

Act 7:38 This is he, [\[Moses\]](#) that was in the church in the wilderness [\[Israel\]](#) with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

Israel is referred to by God as being His church even though Israel was not a converted nation and remained unconverted even after the making of the Old Covenant. Israel was to obey the word of the law as opposed to the spirit because access to the holy spirits God the Father and God the Word would not be possible until there was a perfect sacrifice that would forgive the sins of men upon repentance and belief. This perfect sacrifice would be Christ.

A priesthood of men was instituted by God for His physical nation and church to make offerings and sacrifices on their behalf as commanded

in the law (Lev 1-7). Animal sacrifices were made to ceremonially and symbolically justify Israelites of their transgressions of the law. The penalty for sin is death (Rom 6:23; Rom 5:12) so instead of the sinner dying, the sin of the transgressor was symbolically transferred onto an animal and it died instead of the man.

The priests taught and administered the law over the people as well making their offerings and sacrifices in the tabernacle of the congregation. The 10 commandments given Moses by God for Israel were kept in the Ark of the Covenant in the holy of holies where only the high priest could only enter once yearly.

In NT times, God's nation of Israel and church is spiritual. Its members, whether Israelites or Gentiles, are all those whose circumcision is of the heart. These are all those who have been called and chosen by God the Father because they have made the commitment to obey Him in all things as best they can. This is their circumcision of the heart (mind); a changed attitude of mind from one of being hostile to God to one of wanting to obey Him.

Rom 2:28 For he is not a Jew, [a member of the nation of Israel] which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

God then writes His law in their minds. As they learn it, it becomes a part of them and it is the basis of God's government in their lives.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

It is the New Covenant that God said He would make with Israel.

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

This New Covenant is being made with all those called and chosen by God the Father since the day of Pentecost and it will be made with the nation of Israel that will exist at the time of Christ's Second Coming. It will then be in captivity and scattered across the nations and Christ will

gather them, bring them back to the original Promised Land and there spend 3 1/2 years confirming the covenant with them.

Eze 11:17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

Eze 20:34 And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

Dan 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

All those who will enter into the New Covenant at the end of Christ's 3 1/2 year ministry (not all of them will for many are called but few are chosen (Mat 22:14)) will become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel along with all those whom God will call and choose during the Millennium.

As has been already explained at some length, the high priest of God's spiritual nation of Israel or church is the resurrected and glorified Christ.

Heb 5:9 And [Christ] being made perfect, he became the [author](#) of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Heb 5:10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the [author and finisher of our faith](#); who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Christ is the author and finisher of our faith and the only mediator between God the Father and His called and chosen ones, the members of His New Testament spiritual nation of Israel.

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

Christ as God the Word and Spokesman is responsible for teaching all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones as they study their Bible.

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 [I, Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [after my death, resurrection, glorification and ascension to my Father as the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to God the Father's called and chosen ones.]

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, [the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who for a time was incarnated as Jesus the Christ] 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.

So, in God the Father's spiritual nation of Israel or church, there is no priesthood of men. His high priest is Christ, His mediator between Him and His called and chosen ones is Christ, and Christ is the one who teaches them all things. And, of course, it stands to reason, that this is so as only God the Father can call men and God's spiritual truth is knowable only by revelation. And, revelation is only from God the Father to men while they are being called and once chosen, from God the Word to them. It therefore unavoidably follows there are no men claiming to be priests of God with the mission of teaching God's truth to others nor are there any visible-to-the-world religious organizations of men who are God's spiritual nation of Israel. THEY ARE BUT CHURCHES OF MEN.

Salvation is wholly between you and God the Father through Christ, God the Word and Spokesman and your only sure source of truth is God's holy Bible, Christ in writing, which allows you to grow in knowledge and understanding of the hidden spiritual truths of God as you study it.

God's one and only true church is not a visible-to-the world organization of men advertising itself to the world to grow the size of their membership and increase the amount of money they get to build their personal little empires and give themselves and their inner circle of supporters the life of the rich and famous at the expense of those who follow them.

The OT physical nation of Israel had a priesthood of men who made the offerings and sacrifices commanded by God and as teachers of God's law. The NT spiritual nation of God's priesthood is spiritual, the priesthood of Melchisedec, Christ who is the mediator of the New Covenant, and who teaches all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones.

