The Feast of Tabernacles Revisited

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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.

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God instituted the Feast of Tabernacles (FoT) for the unconverted nation of ancient Israel. Keeping it did not give God's righteousness to them. On the same dates there is the celebration of the Feast of Ingathering (FoI). Which feast should NT Christians observe according to your Bible, the FoT or the FoI or both?

Preamble

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

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

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (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 [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

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

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

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

The Holy Ghost

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

God is a Family

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

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

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

> Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but 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 begnning, 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 following study is rather long as I have included all of the Scriptures referred to in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course (AC BCC) on the Feast of tabernacles (FOT) which forms the core of this study. I have used it as a means of showing exactly what it was the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) taught about God's 6th annual holy day. This then made it possible for me to comment on the Church's beliefs in an organized and methodical way. Unfortunately though, it makes for a rather lengthy document which is not a quick and easy read and which would have to be read over a number of days.

So, let's get on with the study itself.

This study is about God's before last holy day variously called the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Booths and the Feast of Ingathering. In order to understand this study you have to have been reading many of the other studies available on this web site and have proved them with your Bible. Otherwise, I would have to repeat a great deal of information already given in detail in these studies and this would have the effect of greatly lengthening this document which is already sizable. There is just no short and easy way of giving all the applicable Scriptures or to quote them regarding the many different topics which come together in this study to explain the relationship between the feast days and what will happen during the Millennium and by extension, during the Last Great Day.

Whenever necessary I will provide Scriptural references and quotations with respect to new information being provided so you can determine for yourself whether the Bible supports or not what is being said which is the responsibility that God places on you. As Mr. Armstrong repeatedly and forcefully said: "Don't believe me simply because I say it, you must go and prove it with your Bible and if the Bible does not support what I say, DON'T believe me, believe your BIBLE." Paul said the very same thing to the Corinthian congregations "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1). In other words, follow me as I follow Christ and if I'm not following Christ, don't follow me.

You need to know, understand and have proven for yourself out of your Bible through attentive and careful study, the validity of the truth restored to God's Church by Mr. Armstrong (HWA). If you've never done this and simply took Mr. Armstrong at his word then no matter how many years you have been attending services you are still a babe-in-Christ; you are not someone drawn from the breasts to whom God is able to teach knowledge (Is 28:9). You are still at the milk of the Word level in your ability to use the Scriptures (Heb 5:12-13) and you cannot receive knowledge and understanding which Paul calls the meat of the Word (1 Cor 3:2).

Salvation is wholly based on what you do; the only person Mr. Armstrong could ever save was himself. Salvation is not a spectator sport or a question of being a member of the right group. God is judging you now (1 Pet 4:17) on what you are doing with the talent(s) given you (Matt 25). Are you hiding your talent(s) i.e., refusing to consider anything but the literal words of Mr. Armstrong as the criterion of truth because of your great fear of having your mind contaminated by error and ultimately losing your salvation. Will Christ be so very happy with you at His Second Coming to see that you refused to grow your talent (s) and kept it buried; that you refused to grow in knowledge and understanding fearing being misled; that you stayed at the milk of the word level all your life and never grew spiritually. Read it for yourself (Matt 25:26).

Limiting yourself to Mr. Armstrong's writings and voice recordings does not result in growth in knowledge and understanding. If you have been studying and proving with your Bible the truth given the Church by Mr. Armstrong, as a long time member of God's Church you should have mastered it a long time ago and sorted out with your Bible any errors in what HWA taught and you should be ready, using all this information as a base to study your Bible, to see what other truth God has

left for you to discover.

Have you been studying and in the habit of proving the truth from your Bible like the Bereans did when they heard God's truth through Paul (Acts 17:10-11). The Bereans were Jews and what Paul taught was contrary to Judaism. The Thessalonian Jews refused to hear Paul out but the Berean Jews checked out the truth of the matter by doing a Google search, consulting Wikipedia, checking their favorite Bible commentary, talking about it to a trusted minister, holding a meeting with like-minded friends to see what they thought about it.

NO, they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

> Act 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

They kept an open mind, "…. they received the word with all readiness of mind…." They did not stick their fingers in their ears and run away screaming in horror refusing to listen to Paul out of fear he would mislead them. It was different from what they up to that point had thought was the whole truth and it was shocking to them but it was essential new truth being given them which would make a huge difference in their spiritual lives. Would they remain with their Old Testament understanding of the Scriptures or would they check out the truth of what Paul was telling them with the Scriptures and become part of God's New Testament spirit-begotten Church. Would their heads explode like old wineskins in which new wine had been poured or would they be new wineskins that could receive new wine (information) without coming apart.

Receiving the truth Paul was teaching them required that they adjust their thinking as what Paul was teaching them was not compatible with what they had always thought. Are we able to adjust your thinking as may be required to receive truth not taught us by Mr. Armstrong or are we old wineskins ready to explode if anyone should try to expand our knowledge of the truth; truth which we can prove with our Bible if we are open-minded enough not to reject it outright and are willing to make the effort to check it out with our Bible. The Thessalonians would not and lost out on becoming members of God's New Testament Church while the Bereans did.

Christ through Paul came to the Jews to advance their understanding of the Scriptures, He knocked at their door and very few of them let Him in

and heard him out. Christ through Mr. Armstrong came knocking on the door of the Sardis Era remnant congregations. As a whole they refused to hear him and they lost out on all the truth God restored to His Church by him.

Mr. Armstrong said that God revealed truth to him all throughout his life and that sometimes he has had to change some of his earlier teachings because later on, through more understanding given him, he realized that he had been wrong. The most notable change was regarding the day on which Pentecost was to be celebrated. For a long time the Church taught that Monday was the right day but this had to be changed as it was an error in understanding and the day was changed to Sunday.

Was Mr. Armstrong infallible and did he teach that the members had to blindly trust him in all that he said and give it the same value and importance as the words of your Bible?

What about the apostles and Paul in the early days of God's Church, were they telling the members of God's Church that they had to take them at their word; had they not been personally trained by Christ? Were they telling their congregations that they had the truth and that the members were bound to believe everything they taught them.

> 2Co 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

What does it mean **not** to have dominion over someone else's faith? It means that they do not have the power nor the authority (the dominion) to force anyone to believe what they teach as being the truth. In God's Church, individual Christians are responsible for determining the truth of what is taught them by checking it out in their Bible. If anyone simply believe what the ministry teaches because it is the ministry then they are followers of men who are fallible and many of which will lead them into error. Paul before going off to Rome warned God's Church that false teachers would arise right among the very elders of the Church who had been appointed to protect the church from false teachings (Act 20:30). Does this sound like Christians are to have blind faith and rely on the ministry as an infallible source of truth. Peter also warns the Church that false teachers would arise out of its own ranks (…..even as there shall be false teachers among you…… (2nd Pet 2:1). Have we seen this occur in the days of HWA and after his death; we certainly have if we have been paying attention to what has been going on in the Church.

Mr. Armstrong always taught that we were all responsible for always

checking out his teachings with our Bible and proving them for ourselves and this from the time we entered counseling for baptism. The Bible, Christ in writing, was to be our one and only criterion in verifying what he and the ministry taught us.

Now, as we should know, God sometimes works through men in carrying out His great master plan of salvation for mankind. The Logos or Spokesman Himself became a man for the purpose of training His disciples; the disciples were not taught by spirit beings appearing to them in non-scary human form. Christ was a man born of woman under the law and subject to the second death. In the first century church He worked through the apostles and what they taught was shocking to Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and the Jews (the Southern Kingdom). Many doors were slammed in the apostles' faces. What they taught was different from the full and absolute truth they were so sure they had. There was nothing that could be added to it by anyone; they had it all. They were close-minded and rejected and ridiculed anything and anybody including Christ that said anything that didn't fully agree with the total and absolute truth they thought they had.

Does that describe some of you reading this study?

The Pharisees and the Scribes, the religious elite of the day, resented Christ's superior knowledge of the Scriptures and were afraid to lose their status as great teachers of the truth. The leaders of the Sardis Church were so sure they had the whole truth that they completely shut their minds to hearing anything except what they had been believing all along thinking that there could never be nothing else added to it.

But, the Scriptures make it clear that God at different times acting through men, not spirit beings, has provided greater understanding of the truth contained in the Bible. The Jews thought they had it all. Paul, a flesh-and-blood man, came to them to share with them the wonderful new understanding given him by Christ and he was soundly rejected; they would not hear anything of what Paul wanted to share with them and they lost out on becoming part of God's New Testament Church.

The splinter groups from the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) as well as former members of the WCG who are limiting themselves to listening exclusively to Mr. Armstrong's sound recordings and reading his literature have in common for the most part to be as completely close-minded as the Thessalonian Jews of Paul's days and the Sardis Era congregations that came into contact with Mr. Armstrong.

WHY?

They were afraid to lose out on salvation by being misled by false teachers.

WHY?

They have never got into the habit of doing the work of proving out for themselves with their Bible the truth given the Church by Christ and which many of them were restored to God's Church. They believed it because they trusted Mr. Armstrong. As a result they are unable to verify with their Bible the truth or error of something different being told them from what Mr. Armstrong taught. No matter how long they have been in God's Church they are still babes-in-Christ not able to absorb the meat of the word. They are not drawn from the breasts (Isa 28:9) and remain at a milk of the word understanding of the Bible (Heb 5:11-13).

But Christ said, if we will believe Him, that the elect cannot be deceived .

> Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible**, they shall deceive the very elect.

And God says that true Christians have not been given a spirit of fear nor of an unsound mind.

> 2Ti 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

A sound mind doesn't mean that Christians have been given the ability to rote memorize everything Mr. Armstrong said and need to keep on reviewing it over and over again until the end of their lives.

A sound mind is the mind of someone who can reason correctly from the Scriptures (2 Tim 2:15). It is the mind of someone that can link together the different truths restored to God's Church by HWA and have growth in knowledge and understanding which is not a simple repetition of the individual truths taught the Church by Mr. Armstrong. Increased knowledge and understanding are occurring in their lives.

Will you lose your salvation if as a result of keeping an open mind you come to believe something that was in error? Did those individuals in God's Church who died in the days when Pentecost was kept on Monday lose their salvation?

What does God have to say about it?

> 1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
>
> 1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
>
> 1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;
>
> 1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
>
> 1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
>
> 1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Paul gave the churches of his days the truth he got from Christ. This truth he calls the foundation (1 Cor 3:10) and which he and the apostles taught to all newcomers to the faith. As a foundation, Paul says it is something that they who have received it are to build on. God's message to Christians is that they are to build on the foundation of truth they received from the apostles and restored in part to the Church in the end-time by HWA. They are not to just keep on reviewing it and reviewing it without any growth occurring in their understanding of the Scriptures. However, in building on the foundation, the Christian has to be careful, not close-minded, careful. God says that some of the discoveries true Christians make by studying the Bible and in fellowship with other true Christians will sometimes be in error somewhat in the same way Mr. Armstrong's belief that Pentecost was to be celebrated on Monday was an error.

Errors made in good faith will not cause loss of salvation.

Remember God looks on the heart, the attitude of the person; is it one of genuinely seeking to grow in knowledge and understanding or is this person scrutinizing the Scriptures to try to find ways and means of jus-

tifying his sinfulness or to try to find the brick in the wall that can be pulled to make the whole building of truth come crashing down? The Christians of 1 Cor 3 were not trying to undo truth that is clearly proved from the Bible and though some of the things they uncovered in the Bible as a result of their personal study of the Bible turn out to not have been true, they will not lose their salvation. However, hiding in a corner and refusing to try to grow in knowledge and understanding because we fear losing the truth we have does lead to loss of salvation (Matt 25: 24-28). God fully expects and requires Christians to grow in knowledge and understanding; not to hide in a corner with the truth they have and never grow from there because they fear losing the truth they already have.

Christ clearly said that the elect cannot be deceived (Matt 24:24) in other words, they cannot lose the truth that they have but by themselves knowingly making the decision to leave it. If the elect could again be deceived then God would not be able to hold them responsible for their actions and could not judge them. A deceived person does not know he is deceived otherwise he would not be deceived as redundant and self-evident as it may be to make this statement. The world is deceived (Rev 12:9) and so is not under judgment (1 Pe 4:17) as it is incapable of submitting to a law they do not know exists (Rom 8:7). True Christians cannot be deceived as to what is the truth.

Christianity requires work. It's more than attending services and holy day celebrations with individuals you like and a minister you trust, stopping off for a good meal with friends on the way back home and starting over the following week. Christians must have growth in knowledge and understanding throughout their life.

> Pro 4:5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.
>
> Pro 4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.
>
> Pro 8:11 For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.
>
> Pro 16:16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

If from year-to-year you have no growth; if you do not have more knowledge and understanding today than you had in your early years in God's

Church; if as a long term member you are still at a milk of the word level of understanding of the Bible and a babe-in-Christ not drawn from the breasts then you have a very serious problem putting in peril your salvation about which you have to be concerned.

Only you can decide what you will do about it; salvation requires that you engage in regular, attentive, quality studies of your Bible (not of books written by men about the Bible) with an alert mind to allow God to talk to you; that you talk to God in prayer and maintain a personal relationship with Him and with other true Christians through spiritual fellowship. Remaining hidden in a corner and refusing to have spiritual fellowship (1 John 1:3) in an iron sharpens iron attitude (Prov 27:17) with other truly converted Christians will not satisfy God's requirements (Matt 25:30).

Christians are spiritually begotten by God the Father and are living spiritual organisms whose ability to remain alive and have growth requires continuously feeding on God's truth. This occurs through prayer, regular quality Bible study and spiritual fellowship with other true Christians when some are known. Live spiritual organisms are growing in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. God likens spiritual growth to the human growth process where we start life as babies needing to be cared for by adults but who in time become adults able to provide for themselves. They no longer need to be fed and dressed by others; they're no longer in short pants sitting in their high chair waiting for someone to feed them. They have learned to tie their shoes by themselves, are quite able to feed themselves and, their training wheels are off their Bible; they know how to use it to prove things out by themselves.

Does that describe you?

True Christians do not have the option of remaining babes-in-Christ all their life. They have to be growing and if not growing then it means that their spiritual life is not producing growth and if no growth occurs year after year, then spiritually-speaking that person is dead. The spiritual embryo that they are is dead and cannot be born at Christ's Second Coming.

God requires growth and has provided us with the means to have growth but it involves time and effort in regular Bible study and in spiritual fellowship with other true Christians. God leaves us completely free as to what we will do. We can put the time and effort required to study

our Bible to have growth in knowledge and understanding and have the courage to engage in spiritual fellowship with other true Christians or we can remain hidden in our corner because we fear being misled by others as we think our only protection from being deceived is isolating ourselves from everybody and refusing to engage in spiritual fellowship with other Christians.

We are then like the world where everybody keeps to themselves because no two persons have the same point of view on child raising, education, family, marriage, politics, the economy, etc. No one wants to anger anyone or get on their bad side so all subjects which could be controversial are avoided and all talk is about sports, food and the weather. Unfortunately, this is also the case for far too many Christians.

This may be fine for the world but it definitely is not so for Christians.

The Jews in Jesus' days, the Sardis congregations visited by Mr. Armstrong, all the so-called Church of Gods that have arisen following the death of Mr. Armstrong and most of those who say they are holding on to the truth today suffer from the same affliction: close-mindedness. Not even Christ coming to them as a young man of thirty would be accepted; they would refuse to listen to Him because the new knowledge He would bring to them was different from what they believe. He would be cast out of their assemblies and they would congratulate themselves for having done so.

If we are to have growth in knowledge and in understanding we have no choice but to have the strength of character, courage, confidence and the will to expand our spiritual horizons. We need to be first solidly grounded in the truth which will give us the tools and confidence to critically review all we have learned with a view to weeding out any inaccuracies or errors that may have inadvertently found their way in the teachings of the Church and expose ourselves to ideas and thoughts coming from other true Christians, discuss them in an iron sharpen iron attitude and then check them out with our Bible like the Bereans did whether these things be true which will result in growth in knowledge and understanding as required of all of us by God.

God has given man absolute free moral agency (Deu 30:19) which simply stated means that there is no power on earth or in heaven that can force someone to believe something against his will. The only power that can remove the veil of spiritual blindness over men is God. He is the one who calls men out of the world; not men preaching to the un-

converted. This is why God's Church does not proselytize i.e., it is not sending missionaries all over the world to try to make converts.

I fully know and understand that my words for the most part will fall on deaf ears and that most of you will remain unconcerned and continue to be sure that you do not need to change anything to bring your spiritual life more in line with what God requires of you; that like the Jews of Paul's days and the members of the Sardis Church, you are confident you know it all and nothing can possibly be added to your current understanding.

Whatever your decision may be, God leaves us all completely free to choose and will not change our decision whether it be unto life or death.

Salvation is between God and you; not between you and a trusted minister which is just another man.

You are personally responsible for having spiritual growth and for being able to prove all things with your Bible as a spiritually mature Christian.

Now, let's move on to reviewing the Church's teachings about the Feast of Tabernacles keeping an open mind and checking out with your Bible whether what is said is true or not.

The Feast of Tabernacles

You will recall and you can verify in the literature of the Worldwide Church of God produced in the days of Mr. Armstrong that he taught that the Feast of Tabernacles pictured a coming Millennium of peace, prosperity and happiness that would engulf the whole world as God the Father calls all men during the Millennium (Joel 2:28) and mankind as a whole becomes converted. This is particularly evident and plainly stated in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course (AC BCC) 37 lesson on Atonement where it is stated God's First Resurrection saints will become the Bride of Christ and together with Christ will rule over the nations of the world. It will be a perfect government based on a perfect law administered by perfect spiritual beings and enforced all over the world over nations zealous to obey God following their conversion after Christ's Second Coming. In other words, it will be the Kingdom of God on earth.

However, it should be noted that the Feast of Tabernacles is a commemoration, a yearly reminder to ancient Israel of the death penalty that came upon it when it refused to trust God to be able to bring them safely into the Promised Land and to establish them there. They were

condemned to spending 40 years wandering aimlessly in the desert until the generation that refused to go into the Promised Land had died. It was not a happy time living as nomads in tents who were never sure how long they would stay in one place or of when they had to leave, who didn't know how long they would travel and where they would stop again. It is hardly a reminder of, or a foretaste of the kind of living conditions that many say will exist during the Millennium. It was severe punishment from God resulting in the death of the adult generation that refused to enter the Promised Land. For more information on this topic, I would recommend that you spend some time reading the following study available on this site which you can go to by clicking on the following hyperlink: OT and NT Feast Celebration Differences

For the remainder of this study I will do a detailed review of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course (AC BCC 38) on the Feast of Tabernacles and include comments from me in blue and in brackets "[ ] " as we go through the lesson. When my comments are lengthy, I will precede them with the following statement:

Study Author Comment. This AC BCC lesson contains the Church's teachings on the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and using it integrally will allow me to cover just about the totality of the Church's understanding of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and of how the Church thought things would be during the Millennium. AC BCC 37 whose subject is Atonement is also very informative and I would recommend the reader go through it. Of particular interest in BCC 37 is the following information which is quoted integrally below. The text from BCC 37 is in italic and turquoise throughout to distinguish it from the author's comments.

From BCC 37

"But Satan is NOT stronger than Jesus Christ! Jesus is returning to RULE THIS EARTH WITH A ROD OF IRON –

Study Author Comment The world cannot be subject to God's law (Rom 8:7) and God will not rule by force over the unconverted nations of the world (Rom 8:14) nor will He force men to convert or stay converted (Heb 6:4-6).

to depose Satan

Study Author Comment To depose Satan is to remove him from office i.e., from sitting on the throne of the government of the earth; Christ in the great temptation overcame Satan and qualified to replace him on the throne of the earth; the end of his reign had already been determined.

and set up the Kingdom of God.

Study Author Comment God's Kingdom cannot be entered by flesh-and-blood human beings nor can it be seen by them; they must be born again as glorified spirit beings by a resurrection from the dead. God's Kingdom cannot be established over flesh-and-blood human beings.

When Christ returns He will not leave this world in the hands of the Devil.

Study Author Comment Satan will be bound for 1,000 years following Christ's 2nd Coming (Rev 20: 1-3) but God will not rule directly over the nations of the world. Satan's influence over men's minds will be removed but sin will continue to exist all during the Millennium and the Last Great Day as Satan is not the source of sin though he is a contributor through the influence he can exert over men's minds. However, his power is only to influence; not compel. He cannot force anyone to sin. Men's mind power and freedom to think is that source (James 1: 13-15). This is fully explained in the following study which you can access by clicking on the following hyperlink: Your Mind in God's Plan of Salvation for Mankind

Study Author Comment In the last sentence of the paragraph we have been examining "When Christ returns He will not leave this world in the hands of the devil." It is plainly stated that the ministry of the WCG thought that Christ upon His 2nd Coming would set up the Kingdom of God on this earth by taking over the governments of this world. But Christ clearly said that for men to see the Kingdom of God and to become part of it, they must first be born from their current flesh-and-blood existence to a new level of existence as spirit beings possessing and sharing in the very nature of God (John 3) where they will be spirit as God is spirit (John 4:24) and no longer be able to sin (1 John 5:18). The kingdom of God comes not with observation (Luke 17:20); it is not something that flesh-and-blood men can see or enter, or be a part of (John 3); it is a kingdom entirely and only composed of spirit beings.

Only those called, chosen and faithful (Rev 17:14) can become part of God's Kingdom which will not exist in the universe until the creation of the new heaven and of the new earth when there will then no longer be any flesh-and-blood human beings left alive; they will all be dead or born again depending on what they did with their calling and all of mankind will be called.]

So here we go with our review of AC BCC 38.

LESSON 38

(1965, 1969)

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Harvest Time in the World Tomorrow

None of the pictures from the lesson are included in this study; all my comments are in blue and in brackets [ ] or if lengthy they are under the sub-title:"**Study Author Comment**".

Study Author Comment The Feast of Tabernacle does not anticipate the coming Millennium when the holy spirit God the Father will call all men (Joel 2:28) and as a result there will occur a great harvest of souls; rather, it commemorates an historical event in the days of ancient Israel i.e., the severe punishment that came upon the generation that refused to enter into the Promised Land. It is the Feast of Ingathering that looks forward to the
Millennium. Tabernacles and In-Gathering are not the same thing though they are celebrated on the same dates. Anciently, God had a physical nation but since the day of Pentecost God has a spiritual nation made up of individuals from all nations who have been called, chosen and are remaining faithful. The condition for belonging to this nation is to be called and chosen not to be physically born into it as was the requirement for becoming a member of ancient Israel.

Since the day of Pentecost, physical Israelites ceased to be God's nation which is now a spiritual nation. Israel, like the Gentiles, can become part of it by becoming converted and Israel's opportunity to do so will come during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. The Feast of Tabernacles pertained to the physical nation of ancient Israel; it does not apply

to spiritual Israelites who are an entirely different nation which for the very greatest part are not physical descendants of ancient physical Israel. When Israel returned from its first captivity and, more specifically Judah in the days of Nehemiah (Neh 8:14-17), the Feast of Tabernacles was still being kept by ancient Israel but only in a symbolic way. The people did not leave their homes to go live in the desert for 7 days; instead, they made tabernacles or booths on the roofs of their houses and in their backyard and in that manner celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. See the following study for more detailed information: OT and NT Feast Celebration Differences The Feast of Ingathering points to an event yet future to our time; it looks forward to the Millennium and the time when all those then alive will be called. Its meaning is totally different from that of the Feast of Tabernacles. The great ingathering starts during the Millennium and continues with the Last Great Day resurrection of all those who have died without ever having been called; it will be the time of their calling and opportunity for salvation.

The Feast of Ingathering is a step in God's plan of salvation for mankind while the Feast of Tabernacles isn't. During the Millennium God will force the nations to send representatives of the nations to the Feast of Tabernacles but it will not be as a means of nudging them toward conversion but rather to remind them of the destruction that came upon the physical nations of Gog and Magog when they attempted to conquer Israel returned from its 2nd captivity in the end-time. It will be a warning to them not to engage in war with Israel or among themselves lest they also be miraculously and suddenly destroyed as were Gog and Magog. God's spiritual nation of Israel made up of converted individuals from all nations and spread all over the world, during that same time period, will be celebrating the Feast of Ingathering not the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a reminder to a physical nation of their past opposition to God and of the great punishment that came from God as a result. During the Millennium it will be a reminder to the remnants of the nations that came up against Israel (Zech 14:16) not to engage in war against Israel so as to not suffer the sudden and complete destruction that came upon those who did i.e., Gog and Magog. This is why God will force their attendance by causing drought in their lands if they will not attend the Feast of Tabernacles. A lot more information is given on this topic as you will see as you read through this study.

New Testament Israel is a spiritual nation made up of people from all

over the world who do not all live in the same geographical area nor is there any requirement for them to do so; what they have in common is not their nationality or a specific physical country or city but their shared knowledge and understanding of the truth revealed to them by God.

Though continuing to be flesh-and-blood individuals they are no longer citizens of the nations of this world but are citizens of a new country and city which will only exist when God creates the new heaven and the new earth.

> Heb 11:10 For he [Abraham and all true Christians] looked for a city which hath foundations, [the New Jerusalem] whose builder and maker is God.
>
> Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
>
> Heb 11:14 For they [Abraham and true Christians] that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.
>
> Heb 11:15 And truly, if they had been mindful [had cared for] of that country from whence they came out, [Christians have come out of this world which God here calls a country and have no desire to return into it] they might have had opportunity to have returned.
>
> Heb 11:16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. [the New Jerusalem]

About Our Cover …

Lasting economic prosperity for any people depends on the abundance of its agricultural harvests. Our cover shows how the earth, during the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ, will bring forth harvest wherever people learn to follow God's way of life.

But the harvest picture is dual. God used the final great autumn harvest in Palestine to illustrate the final great harvest of human beings in His master plan.

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Feast of Tabernacles — THE WORLD TOMORROW

Study Author Comment The expression "World Tomorrow" is not found anywhere in the Bible; the Church used it in reference to the Millennium.

IS GOD trying to save the whole world NOW? HAS God, for almost 6000 years, been competing with Satan? Has He been desperately trying to wrest the world from Satan's control?

This is the common teaching today. It makes Satan appear to be winning!

But what does the Bible say?

When God sets His hand to save the world HE WILL SAVE IT!

Study Author Comment God's plan of salvation has been in effect and working since the foundation of the world. He has been setting His hand to save the world since the foundation of His Spirit-begotten church on the day of Pentecost. There is no special time where different methods or means will be used by God to bring about the salvation of mankind. Salvation is an individual not a group process. God deals on a personal and individual basis with those whom He calls at a time He has chosen (John 6:44). Now is not the time when the world generally speaking is being called but conversions are ongoing and men are now being saved.

During the Millennium, God's plan of salvation will not suddenly change to make it easier for those born during the Millennium to be saved. True, Satan will be bound for a 1,000 years but the main source of sin in men is not Satan whose only power is to influence men not compel them. His power is to deceive mankind about the true difference between right and wrong which is defined by God's law. He has never had any power to force men to sin; his power is to influence not compel or force men to sin against their will. The main source of sin in men's lives is the lust of which all are capable because of the freewill and mind power God gave mankind (James 1: 13-15). See the following study for more information on this topic: Your Mind in God's Plan of Salvation for Mankind God does not change (Heb 13:8) and all will be submitted to the same conditions for salvation. God will not be partial in the administration of His master plan of salvation for mankind.

God's plan of salvation for mankind is an individual and personal one and nowhere but in the book of Revelation do we see a mass conversion occurring. Yes, the great multitude of Revelation is a massive conversion of individuals but prior to their conversion they had been individually and personally undergoing a process of learning God's truth through God opening their minds to understand the truth of the Bible sufficiently to be brought to the point where they have to make the decision to remain in the world or to follow their calling.

God had been working with them on an individual basis opening their minds to understand His spiritual truth. When the heavenly signs occur (6th seal of Revelation) they commit themselves not as a group but individually to obeying God and the number of those who do so constitute a great multitude. They were not converted through a group process; they came to conversion on an individual and personal basis. This is covered in detail in the following study: The Conversion of God's Laodicean Era Church

God has been saving the world since the foundation of God's New Testament Spirit-begotten Church on the day of Pentecost and He has been and will continue to do so one person at a time, on an individual and personal basis. All those called have to self-willingly and freely decide to submit to God's authority in their lives; God will not force any man to obey Him. (Rom8:14) The time of the Millennium and of the Last Great Day will be no different. The following study provides a great deal of detail on the conversion process during the Millennium: Mass Conversion of the Nations during the Millennium?

God is not competing with Satan! He is not trying to save the whole world Now! Long ago Jesus Christ foretold that His gospel message would be preached IN THIS AGE merely as a WITNESS to all nations — not to CONVERT them (Matt. 24:14).

Study Author Comment The Gospel will also be preached during the Millennium and the Last Great Day in God's Church; not to the world as the preaching of the Gospel is not for the purpose of converting men. Conversion is by the holy spirit God the Father working in the minds of those whom He calls AND who commit to obeying Him in all things; simply knowing the truth is not enough; committing to obeying God is required and this for life.

When Will the World Be Saved?

In preceding lessons of the Ambassador College Correspondence Course, you have learned what it means to be saved.

Salvation is a PROCESS of repentance, forsaking sin, receipt of the Holy Spirit and subsequent growth toward the spiritual "stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13)

At His return Jesus Christ will give you, if you have qualified, authority as a king, ruling with Him over the whole world.

Study Author Comment No, the reward of God's glorified saints is to rule over the universe (see Heb 2:6-8 quoted below), not the present one but the new heaven and the new earth that will be created after the 3rd resurrection when God makes all things new. God will only rule over those who self-willingly submit to Him after having been called; He will not rule by force over the nations to convert them; free moral agency given man (Deu 30:19) renders force useless as a tool for conversion and the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman only ever lead (Rom 8:14).

> Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?
>
> Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:
>
> Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

God, Christ in this instance, will rule over His holy nation and kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6) which will be God's Church during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. At the beginning of the Millennium, Christ at His Second Coming to Israel will make a New Covenant with them (Jer 31:31; Heb 8:8) and those who enter into the New Covenant will become part of God's Church.

God's First Century Church which existed as a physical organization

until it was scattered was the means through which God introduced new converts to the truth but the calling and understanding of God's spiritual truth was always by the holy spirits of the God family. Since the scattering of God's Church, it has ceased to exist as a physical organization which had the offices of responsibility stated in (Eph 4:11-12) For more detailed information on these topics, I refer you to the following studies available on this site: Administration of God's Plan of Salvation During the Millennium; God's Church after its Scattering.

God will not rule over the unconverted nations by force; God will only rule over those who after having been given the knowledge of the truth freely and voluntarily submit to Him; in other words, His Church.

God's resurrected saints, those called and converted from Adam and Eve to Christ's 2nd Coming will constitute the Bride of Christ and will be with Christ in heaven as will be Christ. Christ and His Bride will rule over God's nation or church in the same way He has always done, by working in the minds of the truly converted i.e., those who have freely and willingly accepted to submit themselves to His authority in all things in their lives; God will not force obedience to Him.

The Father and Christ are one and the Bride is one with the Father and Christ. Their individual roles do not change over time (Heb 13:8); God the Father is supreme in authority, Christ is second in authority and is spokesman to the God the Father's called and chosen ones. The Bride is 3rd in authority and is Christ's help meet. But neither Christ nor the Bride is a free agent able to do their own thing. Christ is in perfect submission to the Father as the Bride is in perfect submission to her husband, Christ. Christ is the logos, God's Spokesman and the means used by God the Father to work with His called and chosen ones (Heb 1:2).

The Bride is to be the "help meet" to Christ; the spokesman and teacher role belongs to Christ (John 14:17) who is the agent working in the minds of all truly converted and who teaches them all things (John 14:26). (What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version; Who or What is the Holy Spirit?)

Rulership over the universe is to occur after the creation of the new earth and of the new heaven. It is the reward of God's glorified saints who are no longer flesh-and-blood human beings but beings made of spirit and in whom dwells immortality. Their reward is not to rule over the unconvert-

ed nations of the world which is an impossibility given God will only rule over those who self-willingly submit to Him. God's glorified saints are to rule over the new heaven and the new earth not over the nations of this world during the Millennium.

Satan will be kicked out! [Rev. 20:1-3] Then there will follow ONE THOUSAND YEARS of peace and prosperity.

Study Author Comment No, at the beginning of the Millennium there will be the uprising of Gog and Magog against Israel returned to the Promised Land following their end-time captivity. They wage war against Israel whom they want to conquer and pillage. Also, the nations will not want to attend the Feast of Tabernacles and God will have to force them to attend the feast by having them experience drought (Zech 14: 17-19]. This goes to show that the nations are not all converted during the Millennium and forcing the nations to attend the Feast of Tabernacles is not the means used by God to bring men to conversion. It will be a reminder of the punishment that came upon Gog and Magog and a warning to them not to do the same thing or engage in war among themselves lest they be destroyed as they were. Conversion is by God working in the minds of those He calls out of the world. God will not force anyone to become converted.

We who are firstfruits of God's harvest

Study Author Comment NO, true Christians are to become firstfruits at Christ's 2nd Coming. Now, they are only a **type or kind** of firstfruits; see James 1:18 below. The first fruits of God's plan of salvation are those who will be in the first resurrection at Christ's Second Coming.

> Jas 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be **a kind of** firstfruits of his creatures.

— firstborn into God's family, co-heirs and brothers of Jesus Christ — will join Him in ruling this earth.

Study Author Comment No, they will rule over the universe; the new heaven and the new earth; not this current earth and not over the Gentile or unconverted nations of the world who are unteachable and cannot submit to God's law (Rom 8:7); all will be called but most will not convert (Matt 22:14) and of those who convert, most will not remain

converted (Mat 7: 13-14); the reward of God's glorified saints is to rule over the universe; the new one.

> Rom 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the **heir of the world**, [not this civilization created by the decisions of men following their lust which the Bible calls this present evil world; here the expression "the world" in this verse is referring to God's creation, the universe as made clear in Heb 2:7] *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.
>
> Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?
>
> Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: [God's creation; the universe]
>
> Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Study Author Comment Man is not yet given to rule over God's creation but he will be given to do so and it will not be this universe but the new heaven and the new earth that God will create after the 3rd resurrection. Man will be given rule over the universe as members of God's Kingdom. Men created to become God as God is God is for the purpose of ruling over God's creation NOT over unconverted men during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. God will only rule over those who willingly submit to His rule after having been called. All those dying in the faith are those over whom God will rule when His Kingdom is fully established.

We will be given the privilege of bringing saving knowledge to every human then alive. New generations will be born in the Millennium, and humans will soon again number BILLIONS!

Study Author Comment No, the primary and only actors in the salvation process are God the Father and Christ. They are the holy spirit beings who work in the minds of men while being called (God the Father) and when chosen (God the Word and Spokesman), not First Resurrection saints who have become the Bride of Christ. Conversion takes place

in the mind through the workings of the God the Father and God the Spokesman (the glorified Christ).]

These COULD BE called "second fruits." Each will live a life of overcoming as Christians today will have lived.

Pictured By the Holy Days

This happy **Millennium is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles** *— next in God's annual Holy Day cycle.*

Study Author Comment The Feast of Tabernacles was, and here I repeat myself, a reminder to ancient Israel of the severe punishment that came upon their forefathers when they refused to trust God to be able to bring them into the Promised Land. They wandered in the desert for 40 years until the generation of those who had refused to enter the Promised Land had died. The Feast of Tabernacles does not picture a happy time where people rejoiced and lived in comfort. They wandered aimlessly through a hot desert as nomads living in tents and eating manna never knowing how long they would stay in a given place, when they would be commanded to leave it, how long they would have to travel or what was their next destination.

During the Millennium there will be the uprising and destruction of Gog and Magog. Life as we know it today, including most of its shortcomings and misery, will continue; there will be no wholesale conversion of the nations (Matt 22:14). Mankind though all called, to a great extent, will remain unconverted and this world spiritually and morally speaking will remain to a large extent unchanged as unconverted men (the many (Matt 22:14) pursue their lusts.(James 1: 13-14)]

> 1Jn 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
>
> 1Jn 2:16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
>
> 1Jn 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his **own** lust, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Study Author Comment Let's continue reviewing this Bible lesson and see what Biblical proof is given that the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Millennium in NT times and that this is why NT Christians celebrate it.

The New Testament Church taught the meaning and observance of God's Holy Days far and wide. Even the early Catholic Church dared not dispense with the "doctrine" of the Millennium – the 1000-year rule of Christ (Rev. 20:1-5). The Catholic Church admitted the fact of the Millennium for HUNDREDS OF YEARS – long after the death of the Apostles.

Notice these surprising confessions from the writings of leading Catholic "church fathers."

Even Catholic Fathers Acknowledged the Millennium

In the second century, Papias of Hierapolis (in Asia Minor) said, "There will be a period of some thousand years after the first resurrection of the dead, and the Kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this very earth" (Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., Book 3, Chapter 39).

Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, France, wrote in the latter half of the second century: "For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded."

Then he continues: "These (rewards) are to take place in the times of the kingdom, that is, upon the seventh day …" – the Millennium ("Against Heresies", Book 5, Chapters 28, 33).

The early third century produced the same testimony. From Carthage, North Africa, Tertullian acknowledged the possibility of a promised Millennium upon the earth ("Against Marcion", Book 3, Chapter 25).

Why Truth Later Rejected!

In the fourth century the Book of Revelation was removed from the general reading list of Catholics. Why? Because it plainly stated the Millennium. "Thus the troublesome foundation on which **chiliasm** *(a Greek word for the doctrine of the Millennium) might have continued to build was got rid of" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, article "Millennium").*

After Constantine's time the Catholic Church began to look upon the Roman Empire as the Kingdom of God. They didn't want to hear of any Millennium of God's rule!

Present-day Catholic leaders even go so far as to claim that the doctrine of the 1000-year rule of Christ is not to be found in either the New Testament gospels or epistles or even in the traditions of the apostles ("The Question Box", by William N. Emch, p. 380).

But now turn to the Bible itself, THE SOURCE OF TRUTH, and see the truth for yourself.

World to Be Converted in the Millennium

Does the Bible really say there is only one "day of salvation"? Isa. 49:8.

COMMENT: Today is not the only day of salvation. Today is "a" day of salvation for those few who are being called to repentance now. The original Greek words in II Corinthians 6:2 should also be translated "a day of salvation," not "THE day of salvation." The original Hebrew is the same. Today is A day of salvation for the "firstfruits" [in OT times, it was a day of salvation for those who God was calling for a special purpose preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God (Web site author comment)]– the [relatively] few God is now calling to rule in the World Tomorrow! [God's saints glorified or not, will not rule over the unconverted either as individuals or as nations (Rom 8:7; Rom 8:14; Deut 30:19.) They will rule over the new heaven and the new earth. (Heb 2:6-8) (Web site author comment)]

Now consider the prophecies about fleshly Israel. Israel will return from her final captivity in a repentant attitude (Jer. 31:8, 9).

Jer 31:8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

Jer 31:9 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Does God PROMISE something when people repent? Acts 2:38.

Study Author Comment End-time Israel comes back from its captivity greatly chastened but what they have is not Godly repentance which will only occur when God will call them during the 3 ½ year period of confirmation of the covenant with them (Dan 9:27). Once taught the truth, which is what brings them to Godly repentance, (one has to know what to repent of and what new behavior is expected before being able to repent). NOT all of them will follow their calling (Mat 22:14) and not all who do will remain converted (Mat 7:13-14). See Mass Conversion of the Nations during the Millennium? for more information on this topic.

Doesn't this mean that the Millennium will ALSO be a day of salvation?

Doesn't Paul say that "ALL Israel shall be saved"? Rom. 11:26. When? At the Second Coming of Christ? Same verse.

Rom 11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until **the fulness of the Gentiles** *be come in.*

Study Author Comment Physical Israel's spiritual blindness is to remain until the time when all the Gentiles, (….the fulness of the Gentiles….) not just a few of them, are called. This occurs during the Millennium and the Last Great Day when all of Israel will be called. It is the time when its spiritual blindness will be removed along with that of all the Gentiles.

Those coming to conversion (Israelites and Gentiles) will constitute spiritual Israel which is only composed of converted individuals. Gentiles and physical Israelites in New Testament times can become spiritual Israelites as circumcision is of the heart and not in the flesh; converted Israelites and converted Gentiles will be God's Church. God's nation since Pentecost is a spiritual nation not a physical one whose members are from all the nations of the world.

Rom 11:26 And so all [those of them who convert will constitute

spiritual Israel. All those who don't convert even if born as flesh-and-blood Israelites, will not be part of God's new covenant nation of Israel which after Christ's 2nd Coming will become part of God's Church and spiritual nation composed only of converted individuals from Israel and of individuals from the nations of the Gentiles as they, (individuals from Israel and all nations, not nations as a whole) convert.] Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

Study Author Comment Christ will come back a 2nd time to teach Israel and make a New Covenant with it and those making it are turned away from ungodliness. Christ is coming back to Jacob or Israel as He did the first time; NOT to the world. (Zech 14:4; Jer 29:14; Ez 11:17; 20:34; 20:41; 36:24)

Rom 11:27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Study Author Comment His covenant with Israel is that the time will come when they will be offered salvation by Christ Himself coming to the end time physical remnant of the nation of Israel returned from captivity to confirm the Covenant with them for 3 1/2 years (Dan 9:27).

Rom 11:28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

Study Author Comment Judah rejected God's message sent to them through Paul and as a result, Paul turned to the Gentiles but as touching the election, [the few of the Jews that believed e.g., the Bereans] they are beloved.

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

Study Author Comment God will not fail to give the gifts He has promised to the fathers and He will not fail to call Israel to become part of His holy nation and kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6) which will also include all Gentile who become converted. Not all will convert as men are free to not follow their callings and many don't. The day is coming when ancient Israel will be called and this will be at Christ's 2nd Coming to Israel.

COMMENT: The word "all" should be translated idiomatically "as a whole" — meaning the vast majority.

Study Author Comment No, it will be only "all" of those making the new covenant and remaining faithful until the end of their live which Christ says will be the few (Matt 22:14). The process starts with the making of the New Covenant with the remnant of end-time Israel returned from its scattering among the nations and is then extended to the Gentiles but not all will convert; it will be the few.

Conversion of the Gentiles

Will the Gentiles, too, become converted? Isa. 2:3.

And many people [nations] shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Study Author Comment The mountain of the Lord and the house of God are not something physical or a brick and mortar building located in a specific geographical area of the world. (See Scriptures quoted below) The temple or house of God are the truly converted who are scattered all over the world. They are the mountain or nation of the Lord and they are His house. God does not dwell in houses made with hands (see the relevant verses below). God's house or mountain is not now in Jerusalem nor will it be during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. God's salvation process is not something physical that can be seen and His church is not located in specific country and city of the world.

God the Father will only be in the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven after the Lake of Fire when God makes all things new. The law will then go out from there as God who is the one and only lawgiver will dwell there.

> Act 7:48 Howbeit **the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands**; as saith the prophet,

> Act 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, **dwelleth not in temples made with hands;**

> 2Co 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an **house not made with hands**, eternal in the heavens.

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;

Heb 9:24 For Christ is **not** entered into the holy places **made with hands,** which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Study Author Comment Even if God's house were to be in Jerusalem which it isn't, it is a house and mountain that is spiritual i.e., that is not visible to human beings. It would be impossible for many people to say as flesh-and-blood human beings "….let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob….." because this house and mountain are invisible to flesh-and-blood human beings.

Those who are called are in effect going to the mountain of the Lord, spiritually; they have been given to know some of the truth when first called and are eager to learn more of it. They are then going to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob spiritually. The mountain or House of the Lord is presently made up of God the Father and God the Word. At the completion of God's plan of salvation for mankind it will be made up of possibly millions of glorified spirit beings who are human beings who were called, chosen and faithful and inherited salvation.

Also, and this is very important to understand, God's Church i.e., flesh-and-blood true Christians do not live in a particular city, region or nation of the world nor are they required to do so upon conversion. There is no specific physical location on the earth that can be a central area from which God's law goes out to the unconverted nation or to which the unconverted nations can go to hear God's word. God's Church is a spiritual organism not a brick and mortar building which neither the converted nor the unconverted can see and, God's people is taught the law by the Comforter (John 14:17; 26) not by going to a physical place in a specific country, region or city.

Doesn't Luke 14:23 show that the time comes when every individual on earth is to be "called" by God? Note the word "compel."

Luke 14: 1 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

4 And they held their peace. [Didn't want to again be shown to not really understand the Scriptures of which they prided themselves as being the great teachers] And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

Study Author Comment Even though they didn't reply to Christ's question, Christ gave them an answer specifying what is the correct application of the Scriptures in this case by saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

Study Author Comment They knew He was right and that this was exactly what they did themselves. They didn't want to be seen as agreeing with Christ.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when He marked [noted, remarked] how they chose out the chief rooms; [the Pharisees and the Scribes chose for themselves the places reserved for the guests of honor which in this case would have been Christ] saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Study Author Comment If we elevate ourselves by, on our own assuming places of honors that are not ours for the taking, but are rather reserved for the man calling the wedding to allocate as he sees fit to those who are invited to the wedding; then the master of the wedding will remove you from your self-chosen place of honor and allocate you to a place of lower honor.

12 Then said he [Christ] also to him [the Chief Pharisee] that bade [invited] him, When thou [the chief priest that invited me] makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

Study Author Comment Don't invite your rich neighbors or friends, etc. in the hope they will invite your back; so that you will get something out of having invited them.

13 But when thou [the chief priest] makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. [Your reward for your well doing will be in the resurrection.]

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man [God] made a great supper, [the Lamb's wedding supper] and bade many:

17 And sent his servant [Christ] at supper time to say to them [Israel] that were bidden, [invited to the supper] Come; for all things are now ready. [Many called to go to the wedding supper but few choose to attend being too busy with other things they judged more important.]

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant [Christ] came, and shewed his lord [God the Father] these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. [Those who had not been called to attend the wedding.]

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and **compel them to come in***, that my house may be filled.*

Study Author Comment When we are called, God the Father draws us to Him like a giant magnet pulling in small pieces of metal; we are compelled when God calls us but we are not forced to follow our calling though we will not have the choice to ignore the truth God gives us. He will open our mind to enough of His truth for us to be forced to make a choice whether to commit ourselves to obeying Him or to go back into the world. This is how God compels those He calls. People are compelled to come in but will **not be forced against their will to do so** (free moral agency (Deu 30:19).

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Study Author Comment Who are the ones that were bidden to attend the Lamb's supper and were too busy to attend? When were they invited? Christ was then speaking to the Pharisees and the Jews generally which here represents the whole of ancient Israel. OT Israel was invited to the wedding supper but showed no interest as they were carnal minded. Christ is talking to Israel's spiritual leaders who seek the places of honor for themselves but none are bothering to go to the Lamb's wedding supper. They will not humble themselves by not seeking the places of honor on their own rather than having the host of the wedding, Christ bring them to places of honor at the appointed time. The religious elite of the time would not acknowledge their real status where God is first and is the one who allocates the places of honor which are

not theirs for the taking. They did not accept Christ, fought against Him to maintain their places of honor with the people and eventually put Him to death when they were not able to make Him look bad before the people. They took the place of Christ, the guest of honor of the wedding supper.

And, in fact, doesn't Joel 2:28 say that God's Spirit is to be given to "all" flesh — not meted out **sparingly,**

Study Author Comment More precisely it should say that the spirit will be "made available to all" not that it will be "given out to individuals in great abundance"; what will be given is the earnest of the spirit that all receive at the time of their calling which is all that is required to enable men's mind to understand God's spiritual truth. The responsibility is then on the called out ones to follow God's calling.

but "poured" out freely? [Being poured out freely means that all will be called; NOT that it will be given in great abundance to each individual.] Be sure to read this whole chapter, noticing especially Joel 2:12-13 and 22-27.

COMMENT: The rain spoken of in verse 23 is dual – a spiritual as well as a physical rain which produces great physical abundance. God is now giving the former rain of the Holy Spirit "moderately" — producing the small harvest of firstfruits. There is to be a correspondingly larger "latter rain" of the Spirit to produce the greater spiritual harvest of souls (lives) in the Millennium (Acts 2:16,17).

Study Author Comment The Millennium and the Last Great Day will not be a time where all but a few wicked individuals will become converted. All will be called but being called is not the same thing as becoming converted. Christ tells us that many are called but few are chosen; they refuse to follow their calling and remain in the world. Will we believe Christ or refuse to do so because we want things to be different from the way Christ says they are? How many have we known that were called and did not follow their calling? More than a few. Most of us also know people who became converted and then left the truth to go back into the world.

Act 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

Act 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will

pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Study Author Comment The sons and daughters that convert will do that; NOT ALL WILL CONVERT, THE "FEW" WILL CONVERT. (Matt 22:14). And here prophesying does not mean that people will start to make predictions about future events under inspiration of God. Prophesying here has the sense of speaking the truth of God to other converted individuals who are basically the only ones that can understand it and who will not be hostile to it. In other words, it is spiritual fellowshipping. The following study What is the Kingdom of God? available on this site provides detailed information on this topic under the sub-heading "What is a Prophet."

Isn't it clear from Isaiah 32:14, 15 that a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit — and hence, of salvation –

Study Author Comment [No, more **precisely**, it is not salvation but an **opportunity** for salvation that will be given to all in those days when God pours out of His Spirit upon all flesh; salvation's not a sure thing and Christ says it is the few that will be saved.]

is typified by and associated with increased rain on desert areas during the Millennium? Compare also Isaiah 44:3 and John 7:37-39.

Study Author Comment John 7: 37-39 is about the Last Great Day which is a separate feast from the feast of tabernacles (Lev 23:39). It will be a time when all those who were never called will be resurrected to flesh-and-blood existence and given their opportunity for salvation. This will happen at the beginning of the Last Great Day in the 2nd resurrection to flesh and blood existence of all those who were never called.

Joh 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

God's Harvest — the Feast of Ingathering

Study Author Comment Up to this point, in this lesson, the Feast of Tabernacles has been the topic but now without any explanation being given, the writer of this lesson starts to review the Feast of Ingathering.

True enough, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Ingathering are celebrated in the same time period but does that make the Feast of Tabernacles part of the Feast of Ingathering and vice versa?

The Feast of Tabernacles was instituted following ancient Israel's refusal to enter the Promised Land as a yearly reminder of the great punishment that then came upon it for having refused to enter into the Promised Land. Though these 2 feasts are celebrated during the same time period, the Feast of Ingathering was not celebrated until Israel entered the Promised Land and were no longer nomads wandering in a hot desert that could not sustain agriculture or livestock.

It is very important to take into account and realize the great differences between the time Israel wandered in the desert and the time it became settled in the Promised Land. And, it is also very important for us to realize that although Israel continued to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles once it occupied the Promised Land, it did so only in a symbolic fashion. They did not leave their cities, farms and houses to go live in the desert for 7 days in a hastily constructed temporary shelter with their wives and children; rather, they built makeshift booths on the rooftops of their houses and in their courts and spent some time in them every day; they did not live in them and they did not leave their houses and homes (Neh 8:16). More to come on this as we go continue reviewing this AC BCC lesson.

Neh 8:14 And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:

Neh 8:15 And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.

Neh 8:16 So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

Neh 8:17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the

days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

And why did God make them (ancient Israel) dwell in booths during the Feast of Tabernacles?

Lev23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born *shall dwell in booths:*

Lev23:43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, *when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.*

Who were the ones that were to dwell in booths? All those that are Israelites born. (Lev 23:42).

Study Author Comment Why? So that all their generations i.e., them and the physical descendants or generations of the children of ancient Israel may know that God made their forefathers dwell in booths when He brought them out of Egypt (Lev 23:43). Please note the author of the AC BCC quotes Neh 8:18 which proves that Israel returned from its Persian captivity did not leave their home to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (FoT). They did not go back into the desert to do so nor did they leave their houses to go dwell temporarily elsewhere during the feast. The WCG taught that if was necessary for Christians to dwell in temporary accommodations such as hotels and motels during the FoT.

God's nation since the day of Pentecost is a spiritual nation of Israel made up of men from all nations most of which are not the physical descendants of ancient Israel. Their forefathers never refused to enter the Promised Land and they were never made to dwell in booths because of their disobedience. The redemption of ancient Israel and it generations will be at the time of the making of the New Covenant and during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. Until that time, their spiritual blindness remains.

The Feast of Tabernacles applies to the ancient physical nation of Israel and their descendants and directly relates to major events in its history: Israel's deliverance from Egyptian slavery and the 40 years it spent dwelling in the desert. Gentile converts need no yearly reminders of the punishment from God on the carnal-minded, physical nation of ancient Israel to which they have never belonged and of which they are not the physical descendants.

See the following study for more detail: OT and NT Feast Celebration Differences]

Immediately after bringing His people out of Egypt, did God inaugurate a fall HARVEST festival? Ex. 23:16.

Exo 23:16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

Study Author Comment I have added in Lev 23:39 as that Scripture gives us additional, important information on this topic.

> Lev 23:39 **Also** in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, **when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land,** ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

The Feast of Ingathering began only once Israel came back from its captivity under the Egyptians and only after they had entered and settled the Promised Land. They then started to have crops to harvest. The Feast of Ingathering could not be celebrated while Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years as nomads living in booths with no possibility of having crops or herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

COMMENT: All seven of God's Holy Days picturing His plan were given to His congregation at the very time the congregation of Israel was first formed. [OT congregation of Israel was physical, carnal without God's Holy Spirit and unable to understand any of the spiritual truth pictured by God's Holy Days] The fall harvest festival was to be a time of great rejoicing and thankfulness for God's abundant blessings. It was to also picture the future gathering in of a great harvest of human beings into God's Kingdom a thousand years.

Study Author Comment A time is coming when all will be given the opportunity for salvation but it is the few of the many that will be saved (Matt 22:14; Mat 7:13). Also, there will not be this great harvest of souls as made clear by Christ Himself in Matt 22:14 and 7:13 if we will believe Him and not let our emotions and our preconceptions override what the Bible tells us about how things are going to be during the Millennium and the Last Great Day and nullify the plain and clear meaning of

those verses. God's great harvest of souls began with the day of Pentecost and will continue during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. The great harvest doesn't mean that all will be saved but rather that in time all of mankind will have been called and those who will have followed their calling and remained faithful will be harvested i.e., become part of God's Kingdom.

As previously stated, Israel did not always celebrate the Feast of Ingathering. While they wandered in the desert and had no crops to harvest they could not celebrate it. And in the same way, when God's nation became a spiritual nation composed of converts from the Gentile nations of the world, it was not necessary for them to keep a feast that was specifically commanded for the physical nation of Israel. God's physical and spiritual nations are 2 entirely different things. Though having the name "Israel" in common, they are not the same nor are they under the same Covenant. God's Church since the day Pentecost is under the New Covenant. See the following study for more details on this topic: God's Church a New Covenant Church?

Lastly, indeed more will be saved during the Millennium and the Last Great Day then now but taking into consideration the whole of humanity that will have existed since the days of Adam and Eve, comparatively, it will be the few as Christ tells us clearly if we will believe Him.

What other name does the Bible use for this feast? Deut. 16:13.

Study Author Comment The Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Ingathering though celebrated during the same time period are not interchangeable; they are two separate and distinct feasts with very different messages for 2 very different nations: one physical and the other spiritual.

The Feast of Tabernacles is for ancient Israel and their generations (those that are born from the physical descendants of ancient Israel) to know that God made them dwell in booths because of their refusal to enter into the Promised Land.

> Lev23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites **born** shall dwell in booths:
>
> Lev23:43 That your generations may know that I made the

> children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

The Feast of Tabernacles commemorates the severe punishment that came upon Israel because of their disobedience; it was not a time of great rejoicing and abundance wandering for 40 years in the hot desert, living in tents and eating manna.

But the Feast of Ingathering celebrates a time of great abundance of crops, herds and flocks which Israel enjoyed after entering and settling the Promised Land. It is great blessing from God as opposed to the period of great punishment endured by Israel in the desert. Ingathering and Tabernacles though celebrated at the same time are not the same feast, don't have the same meaning and are not directed to the same nation. As a carnal nation Israel celebrated together as commanded by God both the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Ingathering once they entered the Promised Land but when God's spiritual nation came into being on the Day of Pentecost, the Feast of Ingathering took on a spiritual dimension directly related to God's plan of salvation for mankind which physical Israel never knew or could know as this knowledge is spiritual truth inaccessible to the carnal mind.

The spiritual message of the Feast of Ingathering is that a time is coming when God will open up salvation to all of mankind by the holy spirit God the Father calling all men during the Millennium (Joel 2:28). It will be the time of God gathering in all those of mankind who can be saved because they will follow their calling, be chosen and remain faithful. The Feast of Ingathering and, the Last Great Day which will also be a time where salvation will be opened up to all those living in those days. It will be the time of God's great and final ingathering bringing His plan of salvation for mankind to an end. The Feast of Tabernacles is not a step in God's plan of salvation for mankind but merely a reminder to ancient Israel and their generations of God's punishment.

The Feast of Ingathering is the feast that pertains to **spiritual** Israel as it celebrates and looks forward to the final great ingathering during the Millennium of those who can be saved. Spiritual Israelites are not **physical** Israelites and are from all nations of the world; the Feast of Tabernacles does not pertain to them (spiritual Israel); their forefathers were never made to dwell in the desert for 40 years nor do they need a yearly

reminder of this event which never occurred in their past as they are not biological descendants of ancient Israel.

Is it a commanded assembly — whether one wishes to assemble or not? Verse 16. (Also Ex. 34:22-23 and 23:17.) Must it be held only at a certain God-appointed place? Same verse. Only God can choose this place or places (Ex. 20:24), and only God can change it to another place as circumstances warrant.

Study Author Comment I have quoted Ex 20:24 below to make it easier for the reader to follow along with what will be discussed. The AC BCC lesson only gives the reference.

> Exo 20:22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.
>
> Exo 20:23 Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.
>
> Exo 20:24 An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.

But, in New Testament times, God only speaks to His Church through Christ in writing i.e., the Holy Bible. There are no longer prophets who receive messages from God in visions.

> Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
>
> Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

In New Testament times, there is no earthly representative of God used by God to tell God's Church every year where it is to assemble to celebrate the Feast of Ingathering. Therefore, it is impossible for God's Church to know where it should assemble to celebrate it. And, as we have seen, even the Feast of Tabernacles does not require leaving our homes to celebrate it if indeed it was necessary

for God's New Testament spiritual nation to celebrate it (it doesn't). Practically speaking and from a Biblically-sound perspective, there is no way to know where God places His name for God's spiritual nation of Israel to celebrate God's 6th annual holy day.

The only conclusion that can be reached is that God's annual holy days are to be celebrated locally by God's truly converted who are scattered all over the nations of the world. God has not been appearing to anyone to be His prophet to communicate this information to His spiritual nation of Israel or Church. The Holy Bible is the means now used by God to speak to the truly converted; no prophets are to appear except the Two Witnesses.

What is the divinely set theme for this Feast of Tabernacles? Deut. 16:14 and 15. Notice the words "surely rejoice." Other translations render this "be altogether joyful."

Study Author Comment The author of this AC BCC Bible study now suddenly and inexplicably pivots to talking about the Feast of Tabernacles while up to this point the topic has been the Feast of Ingathering. It is clear that the author of this study considers one feast to simply be a variant of the other and that both can be talked about interchangeably. As we have just seen the two Feasts are different and addressed to different nations; the ancient physical nation of Israel and their physical descendants (Tabernacles) and the New Testament spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church (Ingathering).

Ancient Israel did not "surely rejoice" thinking about how their forefathers had wandered aimlessly in the desert for 40 years until the generation that had refused to enter into the Promised Land had died which is what is represented by the Feast of Tabernacles. They rejoiced in the abundance of the crops they had harvested which would ensure they did not starve until the next harvest which was then many months away. The ingathering of abundant crops is what they rejoiced over and which was represented by the Feast of Ingathering that was celebrated on the same dates.

COMMENT: This, too, is a command. For it pictures a phase of God's dealing with man when man will be **forced** *to be happy — practice the way of life that brings happiness — whether man wants to or not. Compulsory joy!*

Study Author Comment God will not force mankind to be saved against their will; God has given man absolute free moral agency; God commands men to choose and for it to be man's choice there can be no higher power able to force him to choose something against his will. Man must be free to choose God's way without being forced in any way to do so. (Deu 30:19).

Does this annual feast last more than one day? Verse 15.

Why?

COMMENT: To portray His plan, God took the material harvest seasons around Jerusalem as the picture of the spiritual harvest of souls. There are two annual harvests in Palestine.

The spring grain harvest which pictures the firstfruits is small compared to the great fall harvest.

Study Author Comment Comparatively speaking more will be saved during the Millennium and the Last Great Day than in the first 6,000 years of God's plan but it will not be the vast majority as thought by the writer of this AC BCC. Many called, few chosen and of the few chosen, few remain faithful (Matt 22:14; 7:13).

The firstfruits harvest is pictured by a single day, to be fulfilled like the Days of Trumpets and Atonement in a single event. But the Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering demands full seven days, denoting that God's great FALL harvest must be COMPLETED over a period of time rather than at one climactic moment. Seven is a number signifying completion.

People will be born again into the God family all during "the thousand years," upon completing their life's work.

Study Author Comment No, people who die in Christ during the Millennium and those who did not follow their calling or who turned away from their conversion will die and rise up in the 3rd resurrection. Please see the following studies for a full explanation of when God's Millennial saints will be resurrected along with a great deal of detailed information about what happens in the 3rd resurrection. It is a lot more than the simple resurrection of the wicked to be condemned to the Lake of Fire. When are God's Millennial Saints Resurrected and Will They Appear to the Unconverted? and What Happens During the Last Great Day?

Does this feast begin with a holy Sabbath High Day on which all ordinary work is forbidden? Lev. 23:35, 39. When does it come? Verse 34.

Is this annual Sabbath and its 7-day festival commanded to be observed FOREVER? Verse 41. [As long as human kind exists.]

Old Testament Israel Failed to Keep It

Where was the place that God originally set His name designating it as the place the Feast of Tabernacles was to be kept? Joshua 18:1. Were some of the children of Israel obedient at that time in keeping the Feast? Judges 21:19. And in rejoicing? Verse 21.

Were the parents of Samuel who became one of God's greatest prophets always obedient in keeping this Feast every year? I Sam. 1:3,21; 2:19.

Did God later change the location for the Feast of Tabernacles and in the early years of King Solomon have a temple built there? I Kings 8:1, 2. Did Solomon call the people early to the Feast to spend a week in dedicating the newly finished temple? Verse 65.

But had Israel ever COMPLETELY fulfilled God's instructions concerning the Feast of Tabernacles after the death of the one generation who personally witnessed God's miracles? Neh. 8:17.

What did wicked King Jeroboam do after his successful rebellion against Solomon's son? I Kings 12:32. Did he assume that where God's days were kept didn't really make any difference?

COMMENT: Jeroboam's action was normal for carnal-minded people everywhere. They don't know Who or what God really is.

Jeroboam's conception of how to worship the true God was merely his own man-devised idea (verse 33).

Be sure to read the whole passage from I Kings 12:26 to the end of the 13th chapter. The 13th chapter reveals how God mercifully gave Jeroboam further instruction — backed up by a series of miracles (verses 3, 4, 6) — and a further opportunity to repent (verse 6).

But Jeroboam did not repent of counterfeit religion (verse 33) and he suffered the penalty (verse 34)

Why did God finally cause Israel and Judah to be summarily deported to foreign lands? Ezek. 20:13, 16, 20, 21, 24, 34. Notice that "sabbaths" is plural, speaking of annual Sabbaths as well as the weekly Sabbath. The

Bible always speaks of the weekly Sabbath in the singular.

COMMENT: For long-continued disobedience — chiefly their utter disregard of God's weekly and annual Sabbaths — they were transported into slavery.

It is these days that point the way to salvation. Those who refuse to keep God's Holy Days soon forget the TRUE GOD!

Study Author Comment For ancient Israel, keeping the holy days was not as a means to salvation; the feasts did not in any way reveal to them who is the real God; they were blind to spiritual things. God was not trying to reveal Himself to them in a spiritual way; ancient Israel is God's proof that without God the Father and God the Word dwelling in a converted person's mind it is impossible to know the true God. And, this is especially important for us to realize, the physical and symbolic ceremonies and rituals commanded by God for ancient Israel did not give them God's righteousness. The purpose of the works of the law or of the physical ordinances was to give them the habit of obedience and had they perfectly obeyed God in doing these physical rituals, they still would not have had God's righteousness. No salvation was or can be possible by the performance of the physical rituals and ceremonies prescribed by God for ancient Israel nor by observing the physical rituals of organizations of men calling themselves "churches of God."

At length, God swore in His wrath, "With a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are SCATTERED … And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you again into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers" (Ezek. 20:33-34, 42).

Study Author Comment In the end time, after Christ's 2nd Coming, the nations constituting end-time Israel are to be returned to the Promised Land by God gathering them from the nations that had taken them captives. God will then offer to enter into a New Covenant with them which if followed will then give God's righteousness and salvation to those who will commit themselves to obey God to the best of their abilities.

Had the pitifully small remnant of Jews who returned from Babylon under Ezra and Nehemiah learned that He is the Lord? Neh. 8:1.

Study Author Comment Pitiful in a physical, material way, yes; spiritual-

ly, no; they were not converted and had never had the holy spirit beings called God and the Word dwelling in them which is the only way they, and any human being, could ever know God spiritually.

COMMENT: After 70 years of captivity, God had become real to these few Jews. [No, they never knew nor could know the real God] They now knew He was REALLY God who had promised happiness, abundance and continual rejoicing for obedience, and had vividly pictured for them in the same Book of the Law curses and wretchedness to follow disobedience (Deut. 28).

Study Author Comment All they understood is that they had better obey so as not to again go into captivity but it was on the physical level and not the spiritual level.

Did they immediately begin to keep God's Holy Days? Neh. 8: 2, 14, 18. And did they immediately set about learning the laws of God which, if kept, would bring about peace, happiness and prosperity? Neh. 8:18. Compare Deuteronomy 31:10, 11.

COMMENT: Because of personal experience, the Holy Days now held graphic meaning for the few thousand Jews who returned from captivity. Their eyes were open [on a physical level; they were carnal-minded and could not understand any of God's spiritual truth] — symbolic of the world's people after the Second Coming of Christ.

Study Author Comment There will be a spiritual eye opening that will occur during the Millennium but which does not necessarily lead to salvation, many called, few chosen, and of those chosen few stay on the strait and narrow way that leads to life; overall, though a larger number, considering the number of those saved during the first 6,000 years but overall, as compared to the total number of individuals who have existed throughout the 7,000 year time of man's existence, it will still be the few.

Jesus Kept the Feast

During Jesus Christ's life as a man, were some of the descendants of the returned Jews still faithfully keeping the Feast of Tabernacles? John 7:2.

COMMENT: John called it the "Jews" feast because he wrote mainly for the Gentile-born. Before conversion, the Gentiles saw the feasts

only as a part of the "different" religion of the Jews. Israel had lost God's Holy Days. Only Judah had preserved the Old Testament Scriptures.

Study Author Comment The feast days observed by the Jews were the very same Israel had observed. The Jews' festivals were for the OT, unconverted nation of Israel of which the Jews are a part. God's NT nation is no longer a physical nation into which one is born of the flesh but a spiritual one whose members are from the Gentile nations of the world. The physical rituals and symbolic ceremonies performed on the feast days by the Jews and the ancient nation of Israel are not applicable to NT Christians. Yes, there continues to be a need to observe God's annual holy days but not with the repetitive, laborious, physical and symbolic OT rituals.

On the day of Pentecost, Christ's disciples were not in the temple built by the Jews. They were on their own in a room when they were given access to the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman, the Comforter, the spirit of truth who would always be with them and all true Christians.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; [Christ was the Comforter who dwelt with the disciples.]

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye [the disciples] know him; for he [I, Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [After His resurrection and glorification, Christ is the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who with the holy spirit God the Father, would dwell in the disciples and all truly converted Christians.]

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

What unmistakable command did Jesus give his half-brothers? John 7:8.

Did Jesus, Himself, keep the Feast? Verse 10. Did everyone know that Jesus always kept all of God's Feasts and was CERTAIN to be there?

Verse 11.

COMMENT: Note that Jesus' purpose in going up to Jerusalem was not merely to preach and teach people.

Study Author Comment Jesus did not come to teach and preach to the people; He only came to train His disciples; He only spoke to the people in parables so they would not understand Him. Mat 13:10-11.

He had boundless opportunities to address the multitudes who followed Him continually. Rather, His problem was to find time alone! (Mark 1:35-38.)

Did Jesus have every reason in the world NOT to go up to Jerusalem? John 7:1, 10.

COMMENT: Jesus had been present at the feast from the first day although He did not stand up to teach until near the middle of the 7 days (verse 14). He had arrived secretly and remained out of the limelight because the established religious rulers were seeking — out of jealousy — to kill Him.

Was He merely following Old Testament practice or was He setting a New Testament example? Mat. 28:20; I Peter 2:21; I John 2:4-6.

Matth 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them [those individuals of the different nations who convert] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them [those who convert] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

1 Pet 2:18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: [to follow in His steps is to accept to suffer being abused by others when it is in keeping with following the truth that we have as we follow Christ's example as explained in the following verses.]

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

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1 John 2:3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

COMMENT: With such dangerous circumstances, if ever there is an excuse not to attend one of God's Feasts, surely this was one.

Study Author Comment Jesus attended the Jews Feast of Tabernacles according to John 7:2; 7:10.

> Joh 7:2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.
>
> Joh 7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

The author of this AC BCC study says in his "Comment" at the beginning of this present section with the title: *Jesus kept the feast,* that John called

the feast of tabernacles the Jews' feast because he was writing mostly for Gentiles. However, this is not accurate. The Feast of Tabernacles is indeed a Jewish feast. It is also a feast for physical Israel and their descendants as the Jews are also part of physical Israel. The Feast of Tabernacles was for them as is made clear by the following verses:

> Lev23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; **all that are Israelites born** shall dwell in booths:
>
> Lev23:43 That **your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths,** when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

You will recall that God's nation is no longer a physical nation in which one is born but a spiritual nation whose members are from all over the world. Ancient Israel and the Jews who are part of Israel are no longer God's nation since the day of Pentecost where one becomes a member of God's spiritual Israel by being called, chosen and faithful. Ancient Israel and the Jews and their physical descendants will have their opportunity at salvation during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

Jesus did not set for us the example of attending the Feast of Tabernacles which is for ancient physical Israel and their physical descendants (Lev 23: 42-43). God's spiritual nation of Israel celebrates the Feast of Ingathering which is a step in God's plan of salvation for the world while the Feast of Tabernacles is not. Its focus is ancient physical Israel and their physical descendants, not the nations of the world.

Also, the Feast of Tabernacles was observed locally as stated in Neh 8:13-17, the people did not leave their homes and farms to gather in another location to keep the feast.

But JESUS WAS THERE — boldly setting us an example that we should do likewise. He always condemned the "tradition of the elders" (Mat. 15:2, 3, 6, 9). He always made it plain and clear that God's laws were still binding and went on to MAGNIFY them. Compare Matthew 5:21, 22 — "You have heard … but I SAY …." NO EXAMPLE OF ANIMAL sacrifice was set for us, but He kept every one of God's Holy Days.

The Apostle Paul Kept the Feast

After Christ's death and resurrection, He personally taught the apostle

Paul in preparation for his ministry (Gal. 1:11-12, 15-18). Had Christ done away with His Father's feast days, He certainly would have revealed it to Paul personally. Notice Paul's example.

Did the apostle Paul follow Jesus' example long after everything that was "nailed to the CROSS" was nailed there? I Cor. 11:1.

Then did Paul keep the Feast of Tabernacles? Acts 18:21, and see Comment.

Study Author Comment Paul kept the feast but which one? The author of the AC BCC says it is the Feast of Tabernacles but Paul was a New Testament Christian personally instructed by Christ and a member of God's spiritual nation of Israel. He was no longer bound by the Jewish requirement (the remnant of ancient Israel dwelling in Jerusalem) to keep the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles which was a reminder of the time Israel spent 40 years in the desert as punishment from God. As a member of God's spiritual nation of Israel he would have been celebrating the Feast of Ingathering which points to the coming final ingathering of souls that will be the beginning of God bringing His plan of salvation to a close. The unconverted descendants of the physical nation of Israel in Paul's days would have been celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles but New Testament Christians would have been celebrating the Feast of Ingathering as they should today.

COMMENT: In 50 A.D. Paul crossed over from Asia into Europe and began to preach the gospel at Philippi "on the day of weeks"

— Pentecost — according to the inspired original Greek (Acts 16:13). Pentecost is also called the "feast of weeks" in the Old Testament (Deut. 16:10).

After a few weeks at Philippi, Thessalonica (Acts 17:1), Berea (verse 10) and at Athens (verse 16), Paul came to Corinth in the late summer of A.D. 50. After spending several Sabbaths teaching in the synagogue (Acts 18:4), he continued to hold meetings in the house of Justus (verse 7) for "a year and six months" (verse 11). This brings us to the spring of 52 A.D. After a riot stirred up against the apostle was quelled, Paul yet "tarried there a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren and sailed thence into Syria" (verse 18).

It was now well into the summer of A.D. 52 — the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost were past. Obviously it was nearly time for the Feast of Tabernacles. Here then was a major autumn festival

(verse 21) worth going all the way to the HEADQUARTERS FEAST at Jerusalem — the only logical reason for Paul's emphatic refusal to spend even a few days at Ephesus after long sojourns at lesser places (verse 20).

Some modern translations of the Bible omit Acts 18:21, as does the Catholic version. But 95% of all Greek manuscripts include it. The only manuscripts which leave it out are those 5% copied in Egypt and in Italy under the influence of Simon Magus' followers. They date from the days of the Emperor Constantine who forced his Sunday and Easter on the professing [not the true church] Christian church in place of God's Holy Days.

There would have been no reason to try to add this verse to the Bible. But there is every reason why men would like to tear it out of the inspired text!

The counterfeit church which developed within the bounds of the Roman Empire was never willing to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. It was a pagan church. But God's true people do keep it.

Still extant records from "Cox's Literature of the Sabbath Question" actually name names of individual Sabbath and Holy Day keepers who lived in England over 400 years ago. This is the Church which is really founded on the NEW Testament – on Christ's example, and on the teaching of Christ's apostle to the Gentiles!

Gentiles to Keep the Feast in the Millennium

In the Millennium, will Israelite tribes other than Judah keep the Feast? Hos. 12:8, 9.

Will all the Gentile nations join with Israel in keeping the Feast of Tabernacles? Zech. 14:16. Will Christ start immediately to reeducate the people of the world through His Holy Days to know He is the Lord, and that His Master Plan provides for all to be saved?

Study Author Comment I am quoting Zech 14:16 to which the author of this AC BCC only makes reference as well as Zech 14: 17-19 which provide useful additional information.

> Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem** shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Zec 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Study Author Comment If we read from Zech 14: 16-19 it becomes clear that what these verses are talking about is all those that are left of the nations that came up against Jerusalem to destroy it (Zech 14:16) will be made to go up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The following verses (Zech 14:17-19) make it evident that they are not doing so because they are converted but rather because God will force them to do so by causing their country to suffer drought if they refuse to attend the feast. God's spiritual nation keeps the Feast of Ingathering because they are converted and want to; God does not have to force them to celebrate it.

The unconverted nations of the world that rose up against Jerusalem are forced to attend for the Feast of Tabernacles to remind them of the punishment that came upon the nations of God and Magog that came up against Israel at the beginning of the Millennium. They will walk by the valley of Hamongog (Ez 39:11) every year and be reminded of the multitude that is buried there who came up against Israel. The purpose for their attending the Feast of Tabernacles will be the same as it was for ancient Israel, a yearly reminder of severe punishment coming from God which for nations existing during the Millennium will be because of their having sought to conquer and pillage Israel. Every year they will be reminded that Gog and Magog were suddenly and completely destroyed and so will they be if they engage in war against Israel or war against one another. That is why there will be peace during the Millennium; not because everyone except a few stubborn individuals will be converted.

The author of this AC BCC asks whether Christ will immediately begin to reeducate the people of the world through His holy days? The answer is that He will not. The unconverted cannot know the spiritual truth of God (Rom 8:7) unless God calls them. And, conversion is a personal and individual process; not a group process. The holy days have spiritual meaning for the converted only. Christ will not rule directly over the unconverted of the world to force them to come to conversion either as a group or individually.

Mankind has been given absolute free moral agency by God and He will not override it to teach them against their will. Salvation is an individual process and it is God working with each individual to bring them to repentance if they so choose it. Those that are to be part of God's Kingdom have to be individuals of character which require they be absolutely free to choose or refuse salvation when it is offered them. There will be no compulsory attendance to the Holy Days to reeducate the nations as a step in bringing the masses to conversion.

In Zec 14:9 we read that the LORD will be king all over the earth.

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Study Author Comment Indeed, Satan will no longer be sitting on the throne of the earth; Christ will have been inducted into office just before His 2nd Coming but that does not mean that He will rule by force over the remnants of the nations of the world after the great destruction of the Day of the Lord. Christ and the glorified saints will not become visible to the people, take over the governments of this world and impose God's law on everybody.

Satan now is the ruler of this world and His rule is invisible to men; so will Christ's rule be because it is spiritual, it occurs in the minds of converted men and not by a visible, physical presence or compulsory enforcement of God's spiritual law. God's administration of His plan of salvation for mankind will not change during the Millennium; men have to be free to choose and must live by faith (things not seen) and Christ is the Father's spokesman who works in the minds of the truly converted, NOT angels or born again men who have become glorified spirit beings and who constitute the Bride of Christ.

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon

south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

Study Author Comment The landscape of different parts of the earth will have been changed by the great physical catastrophes occurring during the Day of the Lord; one of which is an asteroid crashing into the sea and killing 1/3 of the sea animals (Rev 8:8).

Rev 8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Now going back to Zechariah.

Zec 14:11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Zec 14:12 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people [nations] that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

Study Author Comment This occurs to all the nations that came up against Jerusalem at the time of Christ's Second Coming to fight against what they considered to be an intruder from outer space; they will have seen Christ's 2nd Coming as a lightning flash across the sky and the faces of Christ and God the Father when the heavens are rolled back as a scroll but they will not have understood what was happening; only the converted will understand. The unconverted will want the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them. (Rev 6:16).

Zec 14:13 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

Study Author Comment They, the nations or people having come up against Jerusalem, will fight against each other in a great tumult and we can infer from this that they would kill each others with God causing them to fight each other as has occurred in past battles recorded in the Bible.

Zec 14:14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

Study Author Comment They will spoil the heathens around Israel and in this way accumulate a great deal of wealth for the new nation of Israel that is about to come into existence as the fighting comes to an end.

Zec 14:15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents,[the one of the nations that came up against Jerusalem] as this plague. [Zech 14:12 the plague is that they rot standing up.]

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that **every one that is left** *of all the nations which came against Jerusalem [there will have been great material destruction and death of human and animal life during the Day of the Lord; the nations that attacked Jerusalem will have been reduced to remnants of their former selves] shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

Study Author Comment These are not converted nations; they will come to keep the feast because of the drought God will send upon their nations if they do not attend the feast. They will not be converted nor will their attendance at the feast be for the purpose of effecting their conversion. One does not go to the feast to become converted; one goes to the feast because one is converted and what the truly converted celebrate in NT times is the Feast of Ingathering. In the case of these nations, it will be as a deterrent to their ever daring to again attack Israel or to engage in war among themselves and their worship of God will only be physical i.e., in their obedience to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. They are not converted and God is to be worshiped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); the unconverted nations forced to attend the feast have neither the truth of God nor the holy spirit of God the Word dwelling in them.

The Day of the Lord will result in great loss of life in the world and great material destruction.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. Zec 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague,

wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen [The Gentile nations that had come to attack Israel at the beginning of the Millennium] that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Study Author Comment The Feast of Tabernacles will be a reminder to them of the punishment that came upon Gog and Magog when it attacked Israel and that will come upon them if they ever attack Israel. For ancient Israel the feast was a reminder of the 40 years they wandered in the desert for having refused to enter into the Promised Land. For Old Testament Israel and for the nations of the world during the Millennium, the Feast of Tabernacles will continue to be a reminder of God's punishment for disobedience.

Zec 14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:20 In that day [when representatives of the nations are forced to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, in Israel] shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. [In that day, those of physical Israel who have become converted will constitute spiritual Israel. They will be a converted nation in which dwells no unconverted individual as if not converted, an individual cannot be part of spiritual Israel. There will be no Canaanite or heathen among them as one must be converted to be part of spiritual Israel. The only ones that are in the Lord's House are the truly converted i.e., spiritual Israel that will live among the unconverted nation of Israel and among the Gentile nations.]

Zec 14:21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

COMMENT: To receive salvation even the Gentiles will have to keep this festival. Of course — it is commanded **forever***! (Lev. 23:41.) [Two things here. Firstly, keeping the OT FoT will not be the means for Gentile to be saved. Being called and chosen by God the Father and remaining faithful is what will save them. And, God's truly converted Christians keep the Feast of Ingathering not the FoT. Secondly, the FoT was commanded forever which is as long as there will be human beings on the earth. The festivals are a means to an end; they are not an end unto themselves. Once the reason for which they were instituted*

by God has been achieved, they will no longer be necessary.]

Study Author Comment The reason the Gentiles will be made to keep the Feast of Tabernacles during the Millennium is to keep them in remembrance of the destruction of Gog and Magog which will serve as a warning to them not to war against Israel or among themselves lest they also be destroyed like Gog and Magog. This is why there will be peace during the Millennium not because everybody but a few rare exceptions become converted.

Also, as has been explained, God's spiritual nation keeps the Feast of Ingathering which describes a step in God's plan of salvation for mankind and not the Feast of Tabernacles which is not a step in God's plan of salvation. And, God will not have to threaten them with drought for them to keep it. They will do so because they want to obey God to the best of their abilities after having been called and chosen by God the Father.

What will happen if they refuse to be reeducated, in their ignorance refusing salvation? Zech. 14:17. Will He have to rule at first with "a rod of iron" (Rev. 12:5) until they are convinced that their fathers' ways — their "oldtime religions" — are not "good enough" for them?

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Study Author Comment This verse read in isolation of the rest of the Bible could lead one to believe that Christ will rule over the unconverted nations of the world and that He will do so forcefully if He has to. This is the "rod of iron" according to this lesson that Christ will use until the unconverted nations are convinced that they have to be reeducated to receive salvation and that He will keep on using until they agree to be reeducated. But God will force no one to obey Him. Those over which He rules with a rod of iron i.e., which is symbolic of an unchangeable law always in force and equally applied to all, are those of His Church who during the Millennium will be those of end-time Israel returned from captivity and who enter into the New Covenant as well as those of the Gentile nations who will convert during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. God will not rule by force over physical Israel or the Gentiles to force them to convert. (Rom 8:14)

And if the nations still won't obey? Zech. 14:18-19.

COMMENT: Many in Egypt will be sure to say, "We don't care whether it rains or not! We have the Nile! We've never had rain anyway before this recent revolution in the weather!" Egypt has always been a river-made oasis in the midst of centuries-old deserts. Those that stubbornly refuse to obey will suffer from the plague until they submit.

Study Author Comment Again, let it be said, God will **NOT** force men to be converted or to remain converted by inflicting gradually more intense levels of physical and/or mental pain and suffering on anyone. (Rom 8:14; Deu 30:19; Heb 6:4-6)

And there will be other rebel nations, but "there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen (Hebrew:"nations") that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

(Zech. 14:18.) After one or two years of this, all will be keeping the Feast.

Zec 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Zec 14:5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

Zec 14:6 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

Zec 14:7 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

Zec 14:8 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. [God will begin healing the earth.]

Zec 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Study Author Comment Christ will have removed Satan from the throne of the earth and He will then be king all over the world but it does not necessarily follow as many have supposed that this means that the unconverted will recognize Christ as their King or even know that Christ has returned to this earth. His 2nd coming will only be understood by the converted and Christ will only rule over the converted; God will not rule by force over the unconverted. God now rules in His Church but none see any physical manifestation of God; Satan rules over this word but we don't see any physical manifestations of Satan and nor does the world know of the existence of either of them. God's rule occurs in the minds of the converted who freely and willingly follow the lead of the holy spirits of the God family dwelling in them.

Zec 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

Zec 14:11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Zec 14:12 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. [Supernatural destruction of Gog and Magog at the beginning of the Millennium.]

Zec 14:13 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

Zec 14:14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

Zec 14:15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year

to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Study Author Comment Representatives of the nations will be forced to attend the Feast of Tabernacles as a yearly reminder of the destruction of Gog and Magog which will serve as a continuing warning to them to not war against Jerusalem or between themselves. The nations will fear being destroyed as Gog and Magog were and will keep the peace throughout the Millennium. They will not be peaceful because they are all converted.

Zec 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Zec 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zec 14:20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Zec 14:21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

Study Author Comment All those in the house of the Lord will only be those who are converted; they will be God's holy nation and kingdom of priests in embryo; they will be the House of the Lord or God's temple; God's Church on the earth; the Canaanites spoken of here are spiritual Canaanites i.e., those who are unconverted. Only those of the captives of end-time Israel making the New Covenant at the end of Christ's 3 ½ year ministry will be part of spiritual Israel. The unconverted of end-time Israel will be living in the Promised Land and be physical Israel. Spiritual Israel will be among them like in the days when the Aaronic priesthood lived in the midst of the 12 tribes. But this will not be the totality of spiritual Israel which will come to include the converted from all nations living all over the world.

There are those who think God doesn't mean THEY should keep His feasts today. They say: "Well, I'll keep the days God made holy when I have TO, BUT I WON'T KEEP THEM NOW." But God shows that only those who obey Him now will be protected through the time of trouble just ahead.

Where will the people of this area go to keep the festival? Will Christ make it conveniently close to home for them all, so being a Christian will not be too difficult? Zech. 14:16-17.

Study Author Comment The FoT to be kept in Jerusalem by "….. every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem…." (Zech 14:16) but not the whole population of these unconverted nations can physically attend; millions of people can't be force fitted in such a relatively small space let alone all the accommodations and services needed to sustain such a large gathering while attending the feast in Jerusalem. Again, it should be noted that the Gentiles, the unconverted nations that came up against Jerusalem, are the ones that will be forced to attend the Feast of Tabernacles which will then serve the same purpose for these unconverted nations as it did for ancient Israel i.e., be a reminder of God's punishment for disobedience; the converted will freely and willingly celebrate God's Feast of Ingathering and there is no need for them to travel anywhere to do so. God is to be worshiped in spirit and in truth NOT in a specific geographical location in the world (John 4:23-24).

Zec 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Study Author Comment Those being forced to keep the Feast of Tabernacles are the unconverted nations that came up against Jerusalem. The worship of which they are capable is purely at the physical level as they have no knowledge of God's spiritual truth. They are attending because they are forced to do so and their manner of worship is limited to their obedience to God's command to attend the Feast of Tabernacles; they cannot obey Him or worship Him in any other way. And, their obeying God's command to attend the Feast of Tabernacles does not give them the righteousness of God anymore than it did to Ancient Israel. God is a spirit being and is to worshiped in spirit and in truth (John 4: 23-24) which requires that a person first be converted in order to be able to do so.

OT Israel was an unconverted nation who was commanded by God to attend the Feast of Tabernacles (FoT); NT Israel is a spiritual nation and it celebrates the Feast of Ingathering (See OT and NT Feast Celebration Differences). The message of the FoT is a reminder of God's punishment on Israel for its disobedience; the message of the Feast of Ingathering is God opening up conversion to all of mankind prior to the coming of the Great White Throne judgment and the end of His plan of salvation for mankind. Tabernacles and Ingathering are not the same feast, are not interchangeable, are not addressed to the same group of people (one unconverted, physical Israel and the other converted, spiritual Israel) and does not convey the same message.

Time of Great Physical and Spiritual Rejoicing

Now perceiving its meaning, did Nehemiah's company find this Feast of Tabernacles a time of "very great" gladness? Neh. 8:17.

Does God intend for everyone regardless of age, social strata or economic level — to rejoice in the Feast of Tabernacles? Deut. 16:14.

Does this verse also show that God intends for a man to take his wife and children to rejoice with him at the Feast of Tabernacles? Same verse, and Deut. 12:5, 7, 12. Haven't we already seen that attendance of all grown males is absolutely mandatory? Deut. 16:16.

Does God say that good food such as sizzling steaks and expensive delicacies should be bought and eaten to multiply our joy and happiness during this feast? Deut. 14:26. Does this show what wonderful abundance there will be in the Millennium of the wonderful world tomorrow?

Study Author Comment In order to correctly understand what Deu 14: 26 is talking about we need to know what is the context. When Israel entered the Promised Land they were to destroy all the places where the nations that were in the land served their gods. Then God would tell them where He would place His name **in the place out of all their tribes** (not in any of the other nations of the world as is done today) and there they were to go (Deu 12:5) and bring their tithes, freewill offering, etc. (Deu 12:6) and eat before the Lord and rejoice (Deu 12:7; also see Deu 12:1-14 quoted below).

> Deu 12:1 These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy

fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.

Deu 12:2 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:

Deu 12:3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.

Deu 12:4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

Deu 12:5 But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose **out of all your tribes** to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

Deu 12:6 And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks:

Deu 12:7 And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Deu 12:12 And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

Deu 12:13 Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest:

Deu 12:14 But in the place which the LORD shall choose **in one of thy tribes,** there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

Study Author Comment The place where ancient Israel was to serve

God was a specific place chosen out of their tribes (see Deu 12:14 above) where God would place His name and there they were to eat their tithes, burnt offerings, heave offerings, etc. It was located within the nation of Israel in one of their tribes as chosen by God.

> Deu 16:13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:
>
> Deu 16:14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.
>
> Deu 16:15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

Study Author Comment In Deu 16:15 we read that Israel was to keep the feast of tabernacles in the place which the LORD shall choose. This was spoken to Israel before they entered the Promised Land (see Deu 12: 10 below) and God had not then yet specified where would be located the place that He was to choose for them to bring their tithes, offerings, etc. The place that God would choose would be in Israel, it would not be in any of the other nations that then existed; it would be within Israel. It is clear that God was not saying that every year there would be different places that He would choose among the tribes of Israel or in one of the unconverted nations for Israel to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. It was to be celebrated at the same place every year in a place chosen by God in one of the tribes of Israel. (See Deu 12:11 below)

> Deu 12:10 But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;
>
> Deu 12:11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:

Israel entered the Promised Land and became a large and wealthy nation and the tribes were given different parts of the Promised Land by lot for their use upon entering the Promised Land. For more than a few, the place where God chose to place His name was too far for them to bring their tithes, offerings, etc. God then allowed them to turn their tithes, offerings, etc. into money (see Deu 14: 25 below) and use it to buy wine, strong drink, oxen, sheep, etc. for themselves and for offerings to God.

> Deu 14:22 Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.
>
> Deu 14:23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.
>
> Deu 14:24 And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:
>
> Deu 14:25 Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:
>
> Deu 14:26 And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,

Study Author Comment The Feast of Tabernacles was for Israel and was celebrated in Israel, not in some location in another country. It was celebrated at the place in one of the tribes of Israel where God chose to place His name (see Deu 12:11 above) when they entered into the Promised Land. It was not at a different place every year nor was it left up to men to choose what is the place where God had placed His name.

Israel was also to celebrate the Feast of Ingathering.

Exo 23:16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

Exo 34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.

Study Author Comment The Feast of Ingathering was celebrated at the same time as the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles.

Lev 23:33 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Lev 23:34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.

Lev 23:39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

Lev 23:40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

Lev 23:41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

Lev 23:42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; **all that are Israelites born** shall dwell in booths:

Lev 23:43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Study Author Comment The Feast of Booths or Tabernacles was specifically for all that are Israelite born, for them and their generations, so that they may know that God made Israel to dwell in booths because

they refused to enter into the Promised Land after God had brought them out of the land of Egypt. No such statement is made about the Feast of Ingathering.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a somber reminder of the severe punishment that came upon Israel for refusing to enter the Promised Land. They were made to wander aimlessly for 40 years in the hot desert as nomads never knowing where they were going or how long they would remain at the same place when they stopped traveling. They wandered until the generation that had refused to enter the Promised Land had died. It was not a happy situation which would cause one to want to sing and dance for joy upon remembering it.

The Feast of Ingathering was a time of physical rejoicing in food and drink for ancient Israel at that time of year when they had completed harvesting their fields. They rejoiced before God that He had given them abundant crops, flocks and herds that year. They would have enough food until the next harvest season and would not have to worry about the possibility of starving during the winter months. The Feast of Ingathering is the reason why people rejoiced.

For Israel who was and remains an unconverted nation, the annual feast day had no spiritual meaning and the Feast of Tabernacles was specifically for flesh-born Israelites and their descendants as a reminder to ancient Israel and their physical descendants of having had been made to dwell in booths by God.

But, the Feast of Ingathering is not specific to the ancient physical and unconverted nation of Israel and it has spiritual meaning for God's spiritual nation of Israel which is made up of truly converted Christians from the nations of the world. It prefigures and anticipates the time when God will open up salvation to all of mankind as He proceeds to taking the final steps that will bring to a close His master plan of salvation for mankind during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. The Feast of Ingathering applies to the time of the Millennium and of the Last Great Day when all of mankind will be called. The last step occurs during the Last Great Day when all who were never called are resurrected and given their first chance for salvation.

COMMENT: Over and over God tells us that the Feast of Tabernacles is a time of exceedingly great rejoicing!

To fleshly Israel, the Feast of Tabernacles should have been the most joyous of all God's Feasts because it was celebrated just at the season when the winter's store was in. [This is represented by the Feast of Ingathering not the Feast of Tabernacles.] If Israel had followed God's ways, her blessings in material things always would have been greater than other nations. She would have had abundant reason to rejoice at this season.

But the happiness and joy and prosperity pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles WILL come about universally under the righteous and enlightened rule of Jesus Christ.

Study Author Comment Neither Christ nor His Bride (First Resurrection saints) nor His holy nation of kings and priests in embryo (those of Israel returned from end-time captivity that enter into the New Covenant) will rule over the unconverted nations of the world.

Obedience to the spiritual principles of God's laws and God's revealed way of life will make the World Tomorrow a deliriously, gloriously happy place!

Study Author Comment God will only rule over the converted and it is the few that will be converted as per Jesus-Christ Himself; Christ will not rule over the world by force. The bulk of the individuals in the nations of the world will not become converted. The world to a large extent will be as it is today. All will be called but being called is not the same thing as being chosen; one must be called and chosen to become converted.

Those striving to grow to spiritual perfection, fit to be Spirit Beings in the Millennium, can learn how to use freely, yet safely and efficiently, ALL the material blessings given them.

Study Author Comment All those dying in Christ during the Millennium will rise up in the 3rd Resurrection and be the sheep along with those of the Last Great Day that remained faithful that will be separated from the goats i.e., all those who did not follow their calling or who did not remain faithful. They will not become spirit beings during the Millennium following their physical death. There are only 3 times when there are general resurrections in the Bible: Christ's 2nd Coming, the Last Great day and the Great White Throne Judgment. When are God's Millennial Saints Resurrected and Will They Appear to the Unconverted?]

The Feast of Tabernacles gives the opportunity to live abundantly for one week. [The Feast of Ingathering does this NOT the Feast of Tabernacles] God has COMMANDED YOU to live above what you would be normally be able to afford even to splurge, that you may learn by experience while properly picturing the wealth the whole world will enjoy.

If you are accounted worthy to be in the first resurrection, you will have all the powers and possessions of God — the whole created universe — to use fully [but under the direction of God the father; we will not be free to do just anything we want to do; we will be under God's government and the universe over which the kingdom of God will rule is the new heaven and the new earth; not the existing one.]

When the Holy Spirit is being poured out freely, what will happen to the natures of men and animals? Isa. 11:6-9. Will God even change the digestive systems of carnivorous animals so they will be able to receive their nourishment from vegetation? Verse 7 and Isa. 65:25.

COMMENT: This coming Millennial change in the very natures of humans and animals — no more to harm or destroy — is CHIEF reason why the Feast of Tabernacles previews this time with such great rejoicing! [No it doesn't, FOT was a reminder of the great punishment that came upon Israel for their not wanting to trust God to be able to bring them into the Promised Land.]

Study Author Comment Human nature will not be changed; men will retain the absolute freedom to choose given them by God (Deu 30:19); freewill is required to build character and for individuation; God is not looking to reproduce Himself through beings who cannot think for and by themselves. He made man in his image (character, mind power and free moral agency) and according to His likeness (physical appearance): God has hair, eyes, fingers, feet, etc. God wants beings in the resurrection that are going to be like Him i.e., that have the ability to freely originate their own thoughts, to be individuals with freewill and mind power whose ability to think and acquire knowledge are not constrained nor directly controlled by Him.

God and the Word have their own minds and are separate and distinct beings who can have their own thoughts, desires, emotions, likes and dislikes. How can we know this for sure? We only have to look at men created in their image and according to their likeness. Men's manner of existence is a direct reflection of God and the Word's way of existing or being without of course being composed of spirit, being eternal and having the same

degree of mind ability. As sons of God, in the resurrection men will continue to have those same characteristics of being individuals with their own minds and freedom to think while being in perfect submission to God. God's kingdom cannot be made up of beings whose minds are fully controlled by God, who cannot generate their own thoughts, have their own emotions, likes, dislikes, etc. because that would essentially make them like robots and computers whose behavior and outputs cannot be any different than what has been programmed in them by their builder. God would still be all alone in the universe but for the Word.

More simply put, God can no more reproduce Himself through mind-controlled human beings than He can through the vast variety of animals He created who do not have mind power, the freedom to think, etc. who are controlled by instinct which is a number of set responses to different stimuli put in them by God and which we call instinct. A human being on a desert island with friendly animals is still alone. Human level interactions cannot occur with an animal.

What Will Christ's Government Be Like?

God's Government is not a democracy. Christ will RULE SUPREME. Power shall "be given" to His saints. See Dan. 7:14, 27.

Dan 7:18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

Dan 7:22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

Dan 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Study Author Comment God's saints are converted flesh-and-blood human beings who will become glorified spirit beings at Christ's Second Coming and the Bride of Christ. The saints are physical human beings, they are not spirit beings as can be seen from Dan 7:25.

Dan 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most

> High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

If they were spirit beings they could not be worn out or given into the hand of an aggressor. The kingdom of the most high which is an everlasting kingdom is to be given to the people of the saints of the most high. They are to receive it but not in this life.

> Dan 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

They will receive it when God creates the new heaven and the new earth after the coming of the Lake of Fire. It is the world to come spoken of in Heb 2:5 and it is the time when God will set men who have become glorified spirit beings, over the works of His hands (Heb 2:7), the new heaven and the new earth.

> Heb 2:5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.
>
> Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?
>
> Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:
>
> Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Christ He is in the position of the Husband. The saints — born again, now immortal Sons of God — together constitute the bride of Christ. They are in the position of a wife, subject to her Husband — Christ.

In the Millennium, how will Christ's supreme government be adminis-

tered in all parts of the earth? Luke 19:17, 19. Here are local administrative districts — some larger, some smaller!

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and **because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear**.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, [the authority to rule] and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. [Do the business till I come back; keep on doing what I have taught you to do while I am away.]

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. [earned 10 pounds with the one pound he had been given.]

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

Study Author Comment To be given to have rulership over 10 cities is a figurative way of saying that our reward in God's Kingdom will be in accordance the growth we have had in knowledge and understanding and in obeying God in all things while human beings; it is a parable, where the true meaning is hidden from those hearing it by using symbols (Matt 13:10-11). The Bride will **not directly** rule over human cities; the meaning is that the saved will be rewarded according to their works or efforts in obeying God and this reward will be to be given different levels of authority in God's Kingdom not over the nations of the world. God's kingdom has many offices or levels of authority as stated by Christ to His disciples in John 14:2. These offices are in God's Kingdom, they are not positions of authority over the unconverted nations of the world who cannot be subject to God's law (Rom 8:7)

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

Study Author Comment God expects and requires growth in knowledge and understanding; those that have no growth lose the knowledge that they had. Those that are studying and have growth will have more growth as they keep on studying and those who are not studying will lose the original truth they had received. The holy spirits of the God family will leave them.

I have personal knowledge of such individuals who never progressed past the basics and who have forgotten the knowledge they had received at the time of their calling. When you try to explain something to them you always have to re-explain some aspect of the basic truths they had received as they have forgotten it. Should they be able to sit long enough to listen to what you are saying, they will just as quickly forget what you were trying to explain to them and the basics you just gave them again. They are not hungering and thirsting for the truth. They, like the individual in the parable, had knowledge but did not study to increase it so as time goes by, they lose it and their salvation.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. [This occurs in the 3rd

resurrection where those who were given to know the truth and turned away from it are judged.]

So the kingdom of God was not to soon appear in their days, some would be given knowledge and understanding and while Christ is in heaven receiving authority to rule just before the blowing of the 7th trumpet of Revelation which is yet in our future some 2,000 years after Christ's First Coming.

Does Luke 13:28 indicate who will have high positions under Christ in the Kingdom of God?

Study Author Comment They will have high level positions "in" God's Kingdom where for men to be part of it must first be resurrected from the dead to glorified spirit life which is a level of existence which is unknowable by those who are still flesh-and-blood mortal human beings. Spirit beings and the Kingdom of God are invisible to men and spirit beings will not rule visibly over unconverted mankind either during the Millennium or the Last Great Day any more that God and the Word now rule visibly over the converted. God's rulership over men is exercised through the leadership of His law that is written in the hearts of the truly converted and that they have chosen to obey to the best of their abilities.

Will Christ have certain other chief assistants, each over a major nation? Luke 22:30; Psa. 122:5; Isa. 32:1.

Luke 22: 29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [in the resurrection, in God's Kingdom NOT over the nations in this present, evil world.]

Isa 32: 1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

Revelation 20:4, 6 shows the time!

Rev. 20: 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark

upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Study Author Comment This is the first resurrection and those that are part of it are to reign with Christ as His Bride for a thousand years over those that convert during the Millennium NOT in a visible manner over the unconverted nations of the world. God's rule is only possible over those who choose and accept to be ruled by God i.e., those called and chosen; His Church. God's rule in His Church is not now visible to the converted or the unconverted and it will not be visible during the Millennium. It is something that occurs in the mind.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again [will be in the 2nd resurrection of the Last Great Day if never called and in the 3rd resurrection at the end of the Last great Day if called and didn't follow their calling] until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. [They shall reign over God's Holy nation of kings and priests which is God's New Testament Church. God who is a spirit being only rules over the converted. His rule is only over those called and chosen who freely and self-willingly committing themselves to conducting their lives to the best of their abilities according to God's spiritual law. God does not rule over the unconverted by force (Rom 8:14); He can force them at times to do certain things as may be required for the prophecies to be accomplished as written but not to convert them.]

PHOTO CAPTION: In the World Tomorrow petty campaigning for public office will not only be unnecessary — it will not be allowed!

Christ Himself will appoint those qualified to govern.
COMMENT: This is government from the top down — OF the people and FOR the people but NOT by the people.

How much power will each subordinate ruler exercise in his own area? Rev. 2:27.

COMMENT: In one sense this government will be decentralized because there will be absolute and definite authority on the spot in all parts of the world. Yet in another sense it will be extremely centralized, having all its policies based on the over-all pattern laid down from

world headquarters by Christ Himself, responsive and responsible to Him.

It will be perfectly organized, devoid of useless "red tape," bumbling, stumbling excess-baggage bureaucracies.

Study Author Comment Resurrected saints who have become the Bride of Christ nor God's holy nation of kings and priests will take over the civil administrations of this world. God's government or rulership can only be exercised over men who willingly and freely submit to God when called. God will not rule by force over the unconverted during the Millennium any more than He does so now. Men have to be beings of character to be saved; obeying God must be their own freely taken decision. God the Father calls and those who follow their calling are taught by the Word. Conversion is a personal and individual process not a group process and even less a national process. This is a basic and fundamental principle of conversion applicable to men of all times; not only before the Millennium.

This divine government will be permanent (Dan. 7:14, 18). It will not need to cater to special organized groups or classes to get votes. No elections, no campaigning, no politicians squandering money, wasting months of their tenure seeking re-election!

Dan 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man [Christ] came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days,[a different God personage, God the Father] and they brought him [Christ] near before him. [God the Father]

Dan 7:14 And there was given him [Christ] dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him [those from among them that convert; God will not rule by force over the unconverted nor force them to convert]: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, [an eternal kingdom which will bear rule over beings which are also eternal; not the physical nations of this world] and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. [Not a physical, material kingdom made up of flesh–and-blood human beings which can be destroyed but an eternal one made up of beings that are also eternal and cannot be destroyed.]

Daniel's Vision Interpreted

Dan 7:15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

Dan 7:16 I came near unto **one of them** *that stood by, [around or near God's throne] and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.*

Dan 7:17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, [kingdoms] which shall arise out of the earth. [Earthly, temporary, physical, material kingdoms; kingdoms of flesh-and-blood men that will end]

Dan 7:18 But [as for]the saints of the most High [they]shall **take** *[***Hebrew word is "receive"***] the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.*

Study Author Comment God's saints in the resurrection will become part of, inherit, receive an eternal kingdom not a temporary, physical, material kingdom that will end as is the case for the four kingdoms that arise out of the earth; theirs will be eternal and last forever and ever, God's kingdom. This verse is NOT saying that the saints of the most high will rule over the kingdoms of men which are temporary.

Dan 7:19 Then I would know [after having been given that information Daniel wanted to know] the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

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

Dan 7:21 I beheld, and the same horn [Roman Catholic Church] made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

*Dan 7:22 Until the Ancient of days came [God the Father], and judgment was given to the saints of the most High [***over the sinning angels; Paul says that the saints in the resurrection are to judge angels (see 1 Corn's 6:3 below)***]; and the time came [***in the 1st and 3rd resurrections***] that the saints possessed [***became part of***] the kingdom. [***God's kingdom; see Dan 7:18***] [***After the sentencing of the sinning angels and of the wicked, the time of God's Kingdom is fully come.***]*

Study Author Comment The 3rd Resurrection is not only of those who are damned but also of those who are saved during the Millennium and

who died at the end of their natural life span. There are only 3 times in the Bible where people are resurrected. The First Resurrection that occurs at Christ's 2nd Coming, the Second Resurrection to flesh-and-blood of the Last Great Day and the 3rd Resurrection of the Great White Throne Judgment that occurs at the end of the Last Great Day. In this last resurrection we have all those since the days of Adam and Eve to that time who refused their calling or abandoned it; their resurrection is to flesh-and-blood life. At the same time we also have the resurrection of all those who during the Millennium were called, chosen and faithful (men will die during the Millennium as has been the case since Adam and Eve). Their resurrection will be to flesh-and-blood existence. The Great White Throne Judgment occurs and Christ separates the goats from the sheep. The sheep are transformed into glorified spirit beings and the goats die in the Lake of Fire which is the second death from which there is no resurrection possible; it is eternal death.

1Co 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

Dan 7:23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

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

Dan 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

*Dan 7:26 But the judgment shall sit, [***this great false religious leader and his kingdom will be judged by God and destroyed; see Rev 19:20 below***] and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. [In the Lake of Fire which is the second death from which no resurrection is possible. This occurs at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day.]*

Rev 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Dan 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven , shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, [This is the time of the establishment of God's Kingdom after the Great White Throne Judgment. Flesh-and-blood mankind has ceased to exist and God's saints who have become glorified spirit beings are given **rulership over the universe; the new heaven and the new earth,** *] whose kingdom [***the kingdom of the most High***] is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions [all those given to rule; to have dominion, will be those who will be rulers in His Kingdom NOT over the rulers of the nations of the world; men's kingdoms are not everlasting;] shall serve and obey him. [The most High.]*

Dan 7:28 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Study Author Comment Hebrews 2: 6-8 and Ps 8:4-6 clearly show that God's glorified saints are to rule over the new heaven and the new earth (the universe); not over the Gentile or unconverted nations of this present evil world nor over the current universe that will be replaced by the new heaven and the new earth.

No demented, fanatical, vicious assassin can then kill a ruler. They will be immortal, not subject to death. There will be no insurrections, no rebellions — God can't be overthrown. Satan proved that! Nor will any member of the God Family ever turn into another Adversary. Every member will have been proved in advance. Each will SERVE — in genuine love and concern for his subjects, never acting selfishly (Mat. 20:26).

Are you preparing to exercise that kind of rulership?

Study Author Comment OT and NT Christians up to the time of Christ's Second Coming will constitute the Bride of Christ and will be in heaven as Christ's Bride; glorified spirit beings will not become visible and rule over flesh-and-blood human beings and the nations of the world who to a great extent though having been called will remain unconverted. God has not been ruling by force over mankind; is not doing so now, nor will He do so in the future. God's saints during the Millennium will be God's church; initially, it will be Israel returned from its end-time captivity following its conversion (not all will convert) and it will also include those individuals from the nations that convert

during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. God's Church does not now rule over the unconverted nor will it do so during the Millennium.]

How will these immortal spirit rulers serve the people? [Immortal spirit rulers will not ever rule directly over humans; spirit beings are invisible and their existence unknowable to human beings; this was the case in the past, it is now and will be so in the future.]

Rev. 1:6; 5:10; I Cor. 6:2.

COMMENT: To curb tyranny, rulership exercised by mortal men is necessarily divided up into separate functions. America has today separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. In addition, the teaching field is completely apart from government in "democratic" countries. These are all respectively the functions of "kings and priests."

The four functions will be UNITED in God's Kingdom.

Government will be in the hands of a "Spirit race." From the God [the Father] Family originate the laws — the legislative function. The God Family will enforce the laws — the executive function. It will also interpret them and adjudge guilt — the judicial function.

The Father is, and always will be, chief King and LAWMAKER! He has laid down, eons ago, the basic principles that will continue to govern the universe. We, as members of His family, will teach and judge. [Law to be taught to those called and chosen by the holy spirit being called the Spokesman. God's Holy nation of kings and priests which will be made up of those of end time Israel who enter into the New Covenant following their return from captivity will have the responsibility of teaching the foundational truth of God's Church to newcomers to the faith with the holy spirit being called the Spokesman giving them spiritual understanding of these truths.] This was the pattern established in ancient Israel.

*The Eternal was King (I Sam. 8:7), but the human rulers under Him were "judges" and "priests." [***Precisely****, they were not God beings or glorified spirit beings; they were human beings.]*

How successful will the priest-teachers be? Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34. Will even the blind and the deaf [spiritually speaking not physical blindness or deafness] be able to know the Bible? Isa. 29:18. What does this kind of education bring? Verse 19, also Prov. 29:2.

Will God do more than merely make knowledge available?

Isa. 25:6, 7 compared with Isa. 29:10-12 and Rom. 11:7, 8. Note the words "spread over ALL NATIONS."

Is. 25: 6 And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain [His mountain is His nation made up of all those who after having been called self-willingly and freely have chosen to obey God to the best of their abilities in all things] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. [The world is blind to God's spiritual truth; occurred when **mankind was cut off from God** *after Adam's sin. For those called and chosen, His Church, the vail is removed and they begin to understand God's spiritual truth.]*

Study Author Comment A time is coming, when mankind's spiritual blindness will be removed but following a time sequence and plan; not all at once; conversion requires teachability and the acquisition of some knowledge of the truth. The world will be given access to God's spiritual truth during Millennium but each person has to make the choice to follow or not God's spiritual truth. God will destroy the vail, the covering that prevents people from seeing God's truth but each person then has to choose to learn God's truth; many will not because they would have to change their lives in ways that are unacceptable to them.

Is 29:10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I a m not learned.

Study Author Comment The Bible to the world has been a sealed book and will continue to be closed until Christ's 2nd Coming and the beginning of the world's conversion which perforce will be a gradual process. One must first learn what one needs to repent of. They will all be given

enough of God's truth to know they must change their lives; most will not want to.

Rom 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [those who had been predestinated to be called from the foundation of the world and who followed their calling] hath obtained it, and the rest [the world that would not be called until the Millennium and the Last Great Day] were blinded

8 (According as it is written, **God** *hath given them [the world] the spirit of slumber [cut off from God], eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.*

COMMENT: "And in this mountain" — the government of God — He will make the Millennium one great feast of rejoicing – the Feast of Tabernacles in antitype!

He will destroy the covering of spiritual blindness [mankind cut off from God since Adam and Eve; God will during the Millennium and the Last Great Day make contact with all of mankind. that has hidden the truth from all nations. Every mind will be opened; will begin to understand (Isa. 32:3, 4; 26:9, last part).

Study Author Comment Even the **dense and self-deceived?** All of mankind is deceived by Satan the devil and cut off from God by God Himself; being dense and self-deceived is an inaccurate description of the state of those who today are genuinely deceived; they are not self-deceived nor are they dense; they are deceived by Satan as allowed by God and they are not dense i.e., stupid or unintelligent for not knowing or following the truth of God which they **cannot know**.]

No one then will "kid himself" he is righteous. None will vainly assume he is a spiritual giant when the Spirit of God has never yet come inside him to change his human nature. [God will not change man's human nature; He will allow men to know sufficiently of His truth for them to make the decision to obey Him or not; but man will continue to have absolute free moral agency.

Study Author Comment What is human nature? Why it is nothing more or less than the manner in which God created man i.e., in His image and according to His likeness. Man was created according to the God kind i.e., with the same kind of mind power and ability to think and independently originate thoughts; to acquire great amounts of knowl-

edge and to freely make decisions. Man whenever faced with a given situation is completely free to decide what he will do. He is not forced to choose to do good or evil. History shows that man more often than not makes decisions that are not good and this is because man does not know the correct difference between good and evil and, his mind power and freedom of thought makes it possible for man to lust. Before being called, men have no real reason to personally restrain themselves. Human nature is not inherently bad or good. God did not create a being for the purpose of reproducing himself which from birth is hostile to Him and cannot be subject to His law. It would have been folly for Him to do so. Everything God creates is good and man was created by God. The great risk taken by God was to create a being with mind power and freedom to choose and hope that he would use for good his ability to think and his freedom to make decisions. Man's behavior in the first approximate 1,000 years of God's plan of salvation took God by surprise; their thoughts were evil continually and God destroyed the whole of humanity in a great flood except Noah and his family. In the days of Jeremiah, God gives us what He thinks of mankind having seen what it has been doing since the time of the Great Flood and it is that:

> Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The human mind (the heart) above all things behaves in ways that are dishonest to make others believe something that is not true and it is desperately wicked i.e., extremely wicked. God's conclusion is "…who can know it…" God says even He can't understand men's minds who constantly lie in an attempt to make others believe that the wickedness they do is in fact not wickedness but something good.

Man was created with mind power and the absolute freedom to choose (also called free moral agency) for it to be possible for God to hold man responsible for the decisions he makes and for man to be a being of character i.e., someone whose behavior is not controlled by instinct but who can exercise control over himself if he wants to.

In Romans 1, God gives us a listing of some of the things that unconverted men do as well as those who were once converted and return into the world.

> Rom 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, [they were once converted; only the converted can know God] they glo-

rified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. [They lost the truth that they had because they substituted their own understanding of right and wrong to that of God; they went back to deciding right and wrong for themselves.]

Rom 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, [thinking they know right and wrong better than God] they became fools, [by refusing God's wisdom and substituting their own instead, they do what is described in the following verses. These are also the kind of things that men will do before becoming converted and which they will have to resist once converted.]

Rom 1:23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. [They made idols for themselves]

Rom 1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: [They engaged in all kinds of sexual perversions.]

Rom 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

Rom 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: [Lesbianism]

Rom 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; [Homosexuality] men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Rom 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Rom 1:29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication,

wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

Rom 1:30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Rom 1:31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, [Those that are converted and not restraining themselves and which Paul here was correcting.] that they which commit such things are worthy of death, [the second death as these are converted people who are not following their conversion] not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. [They socialize with and agree with those in the world that are doing those forbidden things which they know to be sin which themselves also do.]

*Will re-born Spirit Teachers take an active down-to-earth part in bringing about complete comprehension [**No**, the Bride is made up of OT and NT saints up to the point of the 2nd Coming; Christ is the Logos and the Spokesman and He is the one who will teach end-time Israel returned from captivity] and* **causing** *[helping, guiding, leading* **NOT** *causing; man has free will and MUST freely chose to obey God] people to take right action? Isa. 30:20, 21. [Will act in the mind of the person; not physically appear to them or make audible sounds, etc.]*

*COMMENT: Sudden materialization as if from nowhere, [**NO**, this is not how God ruled over OT Israel; nor is it how He rules over His current Spirit-begotten nation, the Church which is to be Christ's Bride at Christ's 2nd Coming and it will not be how He will rule over those converted during the Millennium and during the Last Great Day who then become part of God's Church.] a spoken word — potential lawbreakers will freeze in the act. Sinful acts will be prevented before they occur. [No, mankind must remain free to obey or, not obey God after their conversion so as to be beings of character. The voice in their head will be God's law.] Human minds will be shown their real motivation.*

John 21 shows how a resurrected Spirit can live the part of a human being and serve those still mortal.

Study Author Comment Christ appeared to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead but it was not to institute the practice of glorified spirit beings becoming visible to human beings and teaching them. Quite the opposite is occurring, Christ is commissioning His disciples to do the work for which He had trained them before His ascension through the heavens to His Father. He now sits on the right-hand side of His father and will not come back to Israel until the time of His Second Coming.

The principal means through which those coming to conversion will be taught the truths of God's Church is through the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman teaching them all things as they study God's holy Bible. The understanding of God's truth is not the doing of men; not even the apostles. Paul in talking to the Corinthians tells them the following:

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

Men acting as minister including Paul who was an apostle are not able to give men understanding. They can only transmit knowledge; understanding which is different from knowledge is only from and by God. The whole unconverted world can have knowledge but no understanding of the Bible. This is why simply reading the Bible and being able to memorize and recite verses does not result in understanding.

Knowing what the parts are is knowledge; being able to use them by correctly putting them together is understanding. One can have knowledge of the consonants and vowels of the English language but being able to make words and sentences with them is understanding of how consonants and vowels can be combined to make words and then how words can be used to make sentences.

Will this present evil world's wrong sense of values be turned right side up? Isa. 32:1, 5, 6. Notice how verse 6 exposes human nature. THIS world believes "the inherent good in human beings will ultimately bring worldwide peace and happiness"! What nonsense!

Is. 32:1 Behold, a king [Christ] shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. [Over those that convert during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. God's rulership is over those called and chosen

freely choosing to submit to Him by following God's spiritual law which is upon conversion is written in their hearts or minds. Christ does not rule directly over men by force; it is by their willing and unforced agreement to follow His law. God's rule is now found in His Church and it will be in His eternal kingdom over His glorified saints but it will not ever be over the unconverted of the world.]

2 And a man [not a human being; Christ is the king that shall reign in righteousness; this is speaking spiritually] shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. [No human being can be as a rock so great that it casts a shadow so big that it covers a land.]

3 And [when this man, Christ begins to act during the Millennium] the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. [When the holy spirit God the Father calls all men and the holy spirit God the Word teaches them all thing, they will be given to understand some of God's spiritual truth.]

4 The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. [As they come to know some of God's spiritual truth when mankind is called during the Millennium.]

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl [a deceiver] said to be bountiful. [Evil shall no longer be called good by those who know the truth; not all will convert.]

6 For the vile person [many will be called, few will be chosen and those that are not chosen are the vile persons this verse is speaking about] will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

7 The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. [This is spiritually speaking. The deceivers or false teachers will work at destroying with their lies the poor in spirit i.e., those that are obeying God. They will try to draw then away from God and have the poor in spirit follow them.]

8 But the liberal [Noble, generous] deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.

A World Free From Fear!

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures an auspicious time when people will not have the influences of Satan's demons and the false glitter of "this present evil world" to distract them from overcoming their human nature.

Study Author Comment That is not the problem; the problem is not having the in-dwelling presence of the holy spirit being called the Spokesman (John 14:17; 14: 26, opening their minds to understand God's spiritual truth which cannot be known or understood any other way. And, human nature cannot be changed nor does it need to be changed as it is not basically evil. What is needed is for men to be given knowledge of God's truth and the opportunity to exercise their freedom of choice to choose to follow God's truth. Upon becoming converted men will still have the very same lusts of the eyes, of the flesh and of the mind but this time he will know that he has to exercise self-restraint so as not to be lustful in what he does and as a result, have his sins forgiven because of his abiding attitude to obey God. God does not impute sin to those who commit to obey Him in all things to the best of their abilities. Only mankind has the ability to lust as only it has been given mind power and free will as opposed to being governed by instinct like all the other animals created by God. Animals cannot lust. Man had to be free to choose to have individuality and personality to be a being through which God could reproduce Himself. This is why man was created after the God kind; not after any of the other animals created by God.

God's way will become the popular and broad way. It will be the way society in general will be going. [NO, Christ says that it is the many among those that come to conversion that will choose the broad way that leads to perdition (Matt 7:13); the unconverted of the world, who will be the many, are blind and cannot choose to obey or not God. God's way will NOT become the popular and broad way during the Millennium; it is the few who will remain faithful.]

Pressures that now urge toward conformity to this present evil world will then be working toward conformity with God's standard, toward overcoming the self and building true spiritual character. [NO, by and large the world will remain unconverted after having been called for many are called, few are chosen. (Matt 22:14) and of those who convert few remain converted (Matt 7:13).]

When Christ has forcibly put down those who fill the earth with vio-

lence, will He abolish for all time fear of war? [End-time catastrophes that come upon the world during the Day of the Lord will be God's wrath **not** *His efforts to* **forcibly** *put them down, convert them or change their human nature. There will be a very great uprising against Israel at the beginning (physical Gog and Magog) and at the end of the Millennium (spiritual Gog and Magog) (Rev 20: 7-9).]*

Isa. 2:4. How? — by exercising tremendous authority to "rebuke" many? Same verse.

Isa. 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Study Author Comment God is working out His master plan of salvation for mankind by His ability to influence the minds of men as needed for the fulfillment of His plan of salvation. God does not and will not force men to obey Him (Rom 8:14). The nations will be rebuked not because they have a knowledge of God which they never had before. They will be rebuked by the fear of being suddenly and totally destroyed by Israel who has no visible weapons of war and no armies but whom the nations think annihilated the hordes of Gog and Magog. The nations of the world will not know or understand that this was God's doing; they will think that it is as a result of some secret weapon of mass destruction that Israel has and can use against any threatening nations. They will fear to engage in war among themselves and against Israel fearing sudden destruction.

Israel will be the world's superpower greatly feared and respected by all nations and this will ensure peace around the world as the United States has ensured peace around the world since the ending of the last World War. The beast armies coming against Jerusalem at Christ's 2nd Coming were miraculously destroyed and the world will think that this has been done by Israel and then later on, the armies of Gog and Magog were miraculously destroyed. The world will take notice and will cease to make war fearing being also destroyed by what they think is a super-weapon controlled by Israel. Every year, representatives of the nations will have to go to Jerusalem and walk past the valley of Hinom were are buried the bones of Gog and Magog and it will be as a reminder to them of the fate of nations daring to come against Israel or who seek to engage in war. The knowledge of who and what is God is spiritual knowledge; Christ on His Second Coming is not coming to the world but to Israel;

the world will not know Him except those who become converted upon being called by the holy spirit God the Father. All will be called during the Millennium and the Last Great Day but few will follow their calling and few of those following their calling will remain converted; so says your Bible if you will believe it.]

COMMENT: Imagine! Never again any destruction of the fruit of years of labor! No more waste of human life! No young men drafted from their homes, their lives upset, to have their minds warped with hate!

Will there be any reason to fear that Christ will be a tyrannical ruler? [God will not rule forcefully over the nations of this world nor take over their civil governments.] Psa. 72:1-4,8, 12-14; Isa. 11:5. Will His decisions be unerring? Verses 2-3. Will the poor receive righteous judgment at His hands? Verse 4. Is this why by contrast Paul wrote disparagingly of the judgment of "man's day"? I Cor. 4:3 (see margin).

Will there be any fear of wild animals? Hos. 2:18 and Isa. 11:6-9. What about wars will the weapons of war be abolished from the earth? Hosea 2:18.

Hos 2:18 And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely.

Will unarmed men, women, or children be afraid to be out on the streets even at night? Isa. 32:2.

COMMENT: A strange man in a lonely place at night will be a source of help, not someone to fear! Under the right system of government and education, human beings will become worth something.

In the secure, rejuvenated World Tomorrow, will it be said to them: "Be strong, fear not … God will save you"? Isa.35:4.

And will miracles of healing be performed on those who are deformed? Isa. 35:5, 6; 33:24.

Is 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. [Spiritually speaking]

6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: [NT end-time Israel returning from captivity]

10 And the **ransomed of the LORD shall return**, *[***NT end-time Israel returning from its end-time captivity***] and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. [***End-time Israel on its return to its Promised Land***.]*

COMMENT: Physical deformity is simply the penalty of physical sin. Years of wrong eating, drug taking, general dissipation, parenthood before complete physical maturity, radiation — causing genetic damage to reproductive germ cells — mean deformity for future generations.

Now just ahead, in cataclysmic, age-ending, searing hydrogen war, are the most massive doses of radiation of all time.

Scientists believe radiation to be the most damaging of all to reproductive cells.

What about fear of accidents? See COMMENT.

COMMENT: When the Law goes forth from Zion (Isa. 2:3) [Will not occur until the coming of the new Jerusalem after God creates a new heaven and a new earth.] the principle of personal responsibility will be taught worldwide (Ex. 21:29, 33-34, 22:6). Yes, we ARE "our brother's keeper"! [God nor His resurrected saints will forcibly teach the nations of the world.]

There will be few accidents. But if someone should occasionally be careless and God allows [Men will continue to have free moral agency and will continue to be subject to times and circumstances; the world will go on as it always has in the very same way it goes on for those who today are converted. The Millennium and the Last Great Day is not a time where God will change the administration of His Plan of salvation for mankind. All will be subject to the same conditions for salva-

tion. Satan's power is to deceive the world about the correct difference between right and wrong but he has no power to force men to sin. For a full explanation see the following study: Your Mind in God's Plan of Salvation for Mankind *] an accident to teach a lesson, the miraculous healing power of Christ will be ever available.*

Will the fear of food shortage spectre that continually haunts most of the world — be gone? Isa. 30:23, 24. Will even the steep and rough places produce food abundantly? Amos 9:13.

What about that nameless fear, timidity — lack of confidence that plagues so many? Will those who REALLY "know the Lord" dwell with confidence? Ezek. 28:26. Re-education will take care of that. They won't be taught self-confidence, but confidence in Christ dwelling within them.

What kind of fear will remain? Isa. 59:19; Jer. 32:39, 40

Is 59:16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

18 According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and **unto them that turn from transgression** *in Jacob, saith the LORD. [God is active and will be active only in the lives of those who become and remain converted. During the Millennium it will be the few that follow their calling and remain converted (Matt 22:14; Matt 7:13)]*

21 As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

Jer. 32:39 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:

40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

An ever lasting covenant God will make with end time Israel returned from captivity; He will not turn away from them to do them good. "But" here is used in the sense of "And." And the sentence would then read: An everlasting covenant will I make with them and I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me.

Study Author Comment God will write His law in their hearts (minds); it will become a part of them upon their conversion but not all will convert or remain converted. You should by now know the applicable Scriptures proving this.

COMMENT: This fear is not terror and misery, but mature, sound-minded realization that disobeying laws God has set for our good leads to nothing but wretchedness, filth, and deprivation.

The Feast of Tabernacles was given that we might "learn to fear God always" (Deut. 14:23). [Not in NT times; HWA used to ask every year at the FoT "Why are you here?" Because called out and want to be there; not to learn the habit of obedience as was the case for OT Israel who was a carnal-minded nation which never could come to conversion as they were never had the holy spirit being called the Spokesman working in their minds to reveal to them the spiritual truth of God.] We SHOULD fear to disobey. [Our attitude should be to want to obey God to the best of our abilities in all things.] Most people have NEVER HAD a right kind of fear. [Also never had God's presence in their minds and could not have a fear to disobey a God which they can't know exist and a law to which it is impossible for them to submit to (Rom8:7).]

Israel to Be Chief of Nations

Will the remnant of Israel alive [returned from its end-time captivity] at Christ's coming be eager to enter into the New Covenant with Him? Jer. 50:4, 5.

Jer. 50:4 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.

Study Author Comment End-time Israel returning from captivity say they want to go back to God and obey Him and Christ will spend 3 1/2 years confirming the covenant with them (Dan 9:27) but when the time comes for them to enter into the New Covenant many will not. Why? They will all have been called but Christ tells us clearly that many are called but few are chosen if we will believe Him. They will have to count the cost as we have had to and for the many, the cost will be too high. The pleasures of this world which are to be had immediately, for them, will outweigh the pleasures of God's Kingdom which are far off into the future and are not be had in this life.

Will Christ's blood cleanse all Israel so that in serving and living for others — a converted, truly Christian life this nation shall reach the very apex of joy and gladness and material prosperity? Jer. 33:7-9.

Jer. 33:7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

Study Author Comment Israel and Judah will come back from captivity and again become united in the one nation Israel at a time shortly following Christ's Second Coming. God will prosper them in physical and material wealth as He had at the first when they entered the Promised Land. But He will do so not because Israel is a fully converted nations eager to obey Him in all things. He does it for His holy name's sake i.e., to ensure the fulfillment of the prophecies made about Israel.

Eze 36:21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

Eze 36:22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes,** *O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.*

Eze 36:23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Jer 37: 8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

Study Author Comment Israel returned from captivity will go through a conversion process (the confirmation of the Covenant (Daniel 9:27) where their sins will be forgiven by applying Christ's sacrifice to them but only after their re-education and only with those making the commitment to obey God; not all of them will. In other words; all of **Israel will be called upon its return from captivity** but only those that choose to submit themselves to God will become part of God's church and be part of God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

Jer 37:9 And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

Study Author Comment End-time Israel returned from captivity will be greatly blessed by God in a material way; those individuals of Israel and of the Gentile nations that convert will become part of **spiritual** Israel or God's Church during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. And, all those of Israel that return from captivity that do not enter into the New covenant will be **physical** Israel.

Both will exist at the same time but they will not be the same thing.

Spiritual Israel will begin with those of physical Israel that enter into the New Covenant but it will then grow to include those from other nations that come to conversion. But, God's spiritual nation of Israel will not be a nation living in a specific geographical location of the world; rather its members will be in all those countries of the world where they have been called and chosen; they will not leave their countries to go to a specific location where all truly converted members of God's Church are to live. There will be no central Church either located at Jerusalem or anywhere else where all are to gather as they come to conversion but there will exist a physical and unconverted nation of Israel in the original Promised Land.

As for physical Israel which will be made up of all those of Israel that do not enter into the New Covenant. They will be greatly blessed by God and become very wealthy but as God says, He is doing this to keep the prophecies made about Israel not because physical Israel is a converted nation (Ez 36:22). The same thing occurred with prophetic Israel i.e., the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh who are the modern-day nations of Great Britain and the United States of America. They received the blessings though not being obedient to God.

> Eze 36:22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel,** but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.
>
> Eze 36:23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.
>
> Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.
>
> Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.
>
> Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.
>
> Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.
>
> Eze 36:28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.]

COMMENT: Return from captivity of a very few [in OT times] — nearly all from Judah, only one tribe — could not fulfill this prophecy.

They never attained great prosperity. Nor did they even approach

the degree of wealth Israel had possessed under David and Solomon. When THIS IS fulfilled, "ALL [all those who choose to submit themselves to God will be saved if they remain faithful; God will not force anyone to be saved and there will be many that won't be saved; there is a 3rd resurrection for a reason; all those that are saved become Israel which is a spiritual nation; so in that sense all of Israel will be saved] Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26)! What a WONDERFUL time that will be!

Study Author Comment I have to stop here and spend some time explaining that after Christ's 2nd Coming there will be a part of Israel returned from captivity that will become converted and become part of spiritual Israel or God's Church and there will be a larger part of Israel returned from captivity which will remain unconverted and constitute physical Israel. This physical Israel God will greatly prosper in fulfillment of prophecies made that Israel would be restored to its former physical and material glory as in the days of Solomon NOT because Israel has become a fully converted nation except for a few resistant individuals.

Physical Israel will be a visible nation residing in the originally Promised Land and it will greatly prosper. But, spiritual Israel though starting in Jerusalem will not remain a people bound to a specific geographical location as those of the nations that will convert will not join them physically by moving to Israel and becoming a physical nation visible to the world. New converts from all over the world will remain where they have been converted and continue their lives. They will not travel to Israel to become part of the physical nation of Israel. From the day of Pentecost, Christians have not become a nation visible to the world by all converts from all over the world moving to Jerusalem.]

At that time, will Israel be God's delight, married to Him? Isa. 62:4, 5. "Beulah" means "married." [Those of end-time Israel who convert become spiritual Israel and then become a delight to God. First Resurrection saints are the Bride of Christ not those of the Millennium or of the Last Great Day. End-time converted Israel made up of people from all nations will be like a wife to God as like a wife who obeys her husband they will obey Him. (Eph 5: 22-24]

Is 62:1 For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. [This can only occur when the new Jerusalem comes down from heaven after God makes all things new. God's Church is not a large building or a city on

a hill that all can see like a beacon for ships out at sea. The Church is all those from all nations that have been called, chosen and faithful and they remain scattered all over the world and invisible to the world. They do not come together to form a community, people or nation that the world can see nor do they exist as a visible organization preaching to the world trying to make converts.]

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. [Converted Gentiles and Kings will see Zion and Jerusalem's righteousness which is spiritual; it is not something that can be seen by the unconverted or the converted in this present world.]

3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. [End-time Israel returned from captivity after its conversion will be God's holy nation of kings and priests in embryo which here God calls a crown of glory and a royal diadem in the hand of thy (theirs, Israel's) God.]

4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. [God will be highly pleased with Israel as His holy nation of kings and priests in embryo and those of the Gentile nations that will become part of spiritual Israel as they come to conversion during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.]

6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

7 And give him [ye that make mention of the Lord] no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. [That will be the time of the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven after God's makes a new heaven and a new earth. God's glorified saints will reign on and from the new earth over the new universe God will create at the end of His plan of salvation for mankind (Rev 5:10; 21:1).]

8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine

enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: [Here God is talking about the physical nation of Israel that will exist during the Millennium and which He will protect.]

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.[Physical end-time Israel.]

10 Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, [NT end-time Israel.] Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

12 And they shall call them, The holy people, [Those of end-time Israel that convert become God's holy people.] The redeemed of the LORD: [From their end-time captivity] and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken. [By God; His holy nation of kings and priests or His Church and physical Israel.]

COMMENT: Verse 5 is mistranslated in the King James or Authorized Version. Here is how the Smith-Goodspeed translation renders it: "As a young man marries a maiden, so shall your Builder marry you: And as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." [The Bride are church era saints; not those converted during the Millennium or the Last Great Day **OR end-time Israel returned from captivity after its conversion***.]*

Was Israel to set an example of obedience to God's statutes and laws so all nations might see the wisdom of living the way that produces success? Deut. 4:5, 6. When God's ways are fully practiced will people have to admit they are the right ways to live? Verse 6. [This was true for ancient Israel but God's nation in the end-time is a spiritual nation existing in individuals living all over the world and is thus, invisible to the world.]

COMMENT: They will be coming to Israel saying, "You are an amazing nation! How do you do it!" or "These laws are astounding!

[This is talking about ancient Israel whom God would prosper and which would attract the attention of the Gentile nations of their days. They wanted to know why they were so wealthy and their answer to them

was because of the law, judgments and statutes given them by God.]

De 4:1 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

3 Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you.

4 But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6 Keep therefore and do them; **for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations***, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.*

7 For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

8 And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

What makes them work?" "Teach us your ways and your laws" (Isa. 2:3; Micah 4:2). [This is talking about physical Israel restored to Promised Land in the end-time after Christ's 2nd Coming.]

Micah 4:1 But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. [The mountain of the house of the Lord i.e., God's nation with God at

its head, is the spiritual organism that is God's Church which is invisible to the world.]

2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. [The nations will all be called during the Millennium and the individuals within those nations following their calling will be going to the mountain of the Lord, not physically but spiritually. Like all those first called they will have great enthusiasm to learn more of God's truth and like those first coming to the knowledge of the truth, they are eager to obey God. The law will go forth out of Zion and Jerusalem, spiritually speaking; God's Kingdom is Zion and it is the Zion and the New Jerusalem which will come down from heavens at the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind. God will not make Himself visible so men can see Him and assemble before Him; God's church is not a physical thing that men can see and flow toward; it is a spiritual thing or entity which is invisible to the world; it is not a physical nation living in a specific region of the world. The physical Zion and Jerusalem are not where God lives or can be found or from which God is visible to mankind or can become visible to mankind.]

3 And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. [Those individuals from among the nations that follow their calling and become converted will do this.]

4 But they shall sit every man [every one of those that become converted] under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.

5 For all [unconverted] people will walk every one in the name of **his** *god, and we [the converted] will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. [This verse shows that there will be no mass conversion of the nations; the converted will walk in the name of the Lord and the unconverted in the name of* **his** *god which is not the true God.]*

6 In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; [This is the gathering of Israel from all nations where God had scattered them.]

7 And I will make her that halted a remnant, [God said He would not make a full end of Israel and that a remnant would be kept (Isa 6:13)] and her that was cast far off [end-time Israel] a strong nation: [NT physical Israel after its return from captivity (Jer 33:7; 33: 11] and the LORD shall reign over them [NT Spiritual Israel i.e., over those that become converted and remain faithful] in mount Zion from hence-forth, even for ever. [Israel will then be a Spirit-begotten nation and only those that remain Spirit-begotten will God rule over and in this way God will rule over them forever and ever as human beings and as glorified spirit beings upon their resurrection as glorified spirit beings in His Kingdom.]

8 And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion [end time physical Israel returned from captivity], unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daugh-ter of Jerusalem. [End-time Israel will be restored; the 10 tribes will be reunited with the 3 tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah. The original kingdom of Israel will be restored.]

9 Now why dost thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counsellor perished? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.

10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, [NT end-time Israel before their captivity] like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon; [will go into captivity a 2nd time in the end time.] there shalt thou be delivered; there the LORD shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

11 Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. [Gog and Magog at the beginning of the Millennium and spiritual Gog and Magog after the Millennium who are from the four corners of the world are destroyed by God when they come up against Israel.]

12 But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor.

*13 Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion:[end-time Israel] for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt [**through me as your protector**] beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.*

4. Will Israel then fill the world with "fruit"? Isa. 27:6.

This indicates not only vast worldwide population but spiritual fruit — righteous spiritual character produced from all nations by the example of Israel's obedience. [No; this can only be done through God's working in the minds of converted individuals; righteous spiritual character can only come from God.]

Is. 27:6 In the future Jacob shall take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

5. Were Abraham's offspring to become extremely numerous? Gen. 13:16. Will Israel's population reach its highest point in the Millennium? Ezek. 36:10-11; Isa. 60:22.

Eze 36:8 But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.

Eze 36:9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown:

Eze 36:10 And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded:

Eze 36:11 And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. [Physical Israel will be even wealthier than in the days of Solomon.]

Eze 36:12 Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men.

The Fall and Restoration of NT End-Time Israel

Ez 36:1 Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains [this is spoken to the end-time nations constituting Israel] of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD: [ancient Israel had gone into captivity and ceased to be a separate and distinct nation when this was spoken by God through Ezekiel who was among the captives by the river Chebar.]

2 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession:

3 Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto **the residue of the heathen***, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people: [the heathen nations that had taken them captive after the events of the Day of the Lord will only be a remnant or residue of their former selves; much destruction and death will have reduced them to a residue.]*

4 Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to **the residue of the heathen** *that are round about;*

Study Author Comment "Residue of the heathen" is an expression used throughout this chapter. Verse 36 hereunder says: "Then the heathen that are left round about you…. " The residue of the heathen is therefore talking about the Gentile nations that will be left (after the massive and widespread destruction that occurred during the Day of the Lord) after Christ's 2nd Coming when Christ will bring the end-time nations constituting Israel back from its captivity among the Gentile nations.

5 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against **the residue of the heathen***, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey.*

*6 Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken [punished you] in my jealousy [***I did not want you to be committing adultery with the heathen***]and in my fury, [in my* **great anger for your adultery***] because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: [***Had adopted their ways and were living like them***.]*

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. [They will be punished for their doings i.e., haven taken end-time Israel captive and made its cities desolate; laying them waste.]

*8 But ye, O mountains [***talking about the land itself not its people***]*

of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. [The land of Palestine to become fertile and filled with edible fruits and grains before the arrival of Israel returning from its end-time captivity.]

9 For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye [the land, the fields] shall be tilled and sown:

10 And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: [after having been destroyed by the heathen armies or Gentile nations; this is talking about the Promised Land in Palestine that is to be rebuilt after the destruction that came upon it during the events of the Day of the Lord; it is not talking about the land occupied by Ephraim and Manasseh in modern times.]

11 And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and **will do better unto you than at your beginnings:** *[physical Israel will be more wealthy than in the days of Solomon] and ye shall know that I am the LORD. [Israel returned from its end-time captivity will be more prosperous than ancient Israel which in the days of Solomon was a very rich nation if not the richest that had ever existed to that time.]*

*12 Yea, I will cause [***God will do it***] men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, [***the land of Israel will be theirs and no other nations will have it***] and thou shalt [the mountains or lands of Israel] be their inheritance, and thou [Gentile nations that came up against Israel] shalt no more henceforth bereave them [the mountains or land of Israel] of men.*

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they [the Gentiles who had taken them captive] say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved [to deprive ruthlessly or by force (usually followed by of)] thy nations;

14 Therefore thou [the land of Israel] shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD. [Israel will be protected by God and not again suffer to be invaded.]

15 Neither will I cause men to **hear in thee** *the shame of the heathen any more, [will no longer have anyone involved in heathen practices in Israel] neither shalt thou [Israel] bear the reproach [punishment] of the people any more, neither shalt thou [Israel] use thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord GOD.*

16 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the **uncleanness of a removed woman**. *[a divorced women could not attend the religious ceremonies of ancient Israel; she was said to be "unclean" i.e., not of the purity required for attendance to worship ceremonies; it was a lack of "ceremonial" purity; not an actual physical lack of purity.]*

18 Wherefore I poured **my fury upon them** *[ancient Israel] for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:*

*19 And I scattered them among the heathen, [***occurred anciently and will also occur in the end time***] and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. [punished them]*

20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. [They kept on with their pagan practices while calling themselves God's people; that is how they profaned God's holy name.]

21 But I had pity [I did not go on punishing them for their having adopted the ways of the heathen.] for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake,** *which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.*

Study Author Comment Here is a very great truth which we need to really understand as it is of the greatest importance in having the correct understanding of the status of physical Israel returned from its end-time captivity (see also Ez 36:32 below). God here is saying that the reason why He will have pity on Israel in captivity and restore it to even greater prosperity than in the days of Solomon is because of His Holy name. God through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prophesied that Israel would become a great nation. Despite their idol worshiping and Sabbath breaking, He fulfilled the promises made to the fathers of the nation of Israel. However, God says they would not go unpunished for their disobedience.

And, the point of greatest importance to understand is that Israel returned from its end-time captivity is not blessed by God because they are all converted and eager to obey Him except for a few stubborn individuals. Ephraim (Great Britain) and Manasseh (the United States of America) also received the blessings without being converted nations that obey God.

Jer 30:11 For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

Jer 46:28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.

Jer 49:12 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it.

Study Author Comment After having punished them, He would restore them as at the first i.e., they would be as when they entered the Promised Land and under Solomon became the richest nation in the world of that time. And according to Ez 36:11 quoted above, Israel returned from its end-time captivity will be even wealthier and prosperous than in the days of Solomon.

23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when **I shall be sanctified in you [by the prophecies in the Bible concerning Israel being realized] before their eyes.**

24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. [End-time Israel to be brought back from captivity and go through a conversion process (Dan 9:27); NOT all will convert (Matt 22: 14; 7:13).]

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: [in those that follow their calling at the time of the confirmation of the New Covenant] and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my spirit within you, and **cause** [to make apt, meet, fit to do something; enable someone to do something NOT force them to do something] *you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. [all those that choose to obey God become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel which is not the same as the physical nation of Israel that will exist at the same time.]

29 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. [I will not punish you with famine because of your former uncleanness when you profaned my name among the Gentiles in the days of your dispersal among the nations]

30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

31 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves [be disgusted with yourselves] in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.

32 **Not for your sakes do I this***, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed [for your past uncleannesses] and* **confounded** *[at seeing my not acting to punish you as you should be punished but rather in blessing you] [***to confound is to** *cause surprise or confusion in (someone), especially by acting against their expectations:"the inflation figure confounded economic analysts" synonyms:* amaze · astonish · dumbfound · stagger · surprise *] for your own ways, O house of Israel.*

*33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day [at the time when I cleanse you; not a 24 hour time period here; will be a 3 ½ year process (Dan 9:27)] that I shall have cleansed you [***a conversion process to occur but not all will convert***] from all your iniquities I will also cause you[-converted and unconverted members of Israel] to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. [Those of Israel who enter into the*

New Covenant will be the beginning of God's Church which during the Millennium God will use to teach those individuals of the nations that convert; NOT all individuals in every nation will convert.]

Study Author Comment Israel will be back in the Promised Land; the cities and the wastes that will be rebuilt are those of the Promised Land; war also affects Jerusalem where half of the city is taken and there is much destruction according to Zechariah 14. The wastes that are to be rebuilt will not be the US, Canada, etc. the lands occupied by Ephraim and Manasseh's descendants. The Promised Land and Jerusalem will suffer some destruction and desolation and it is that destruction and desolation that will be restored. Of course, other nations will also begin rebuilding after the events of the Day of the Lord.

34 And the desolate land shall be tilled,[by men] whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is **become like the garden of Eden***; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. [A new Israel comes into being which this time is both a physical and a spiritual nation. A physical nation made up of the physical descendants of Israel and a spiritual nation whose members (those of Israel returned from captivity that become converted after Christ's 3 1/2 year ministry and those individuals from the nations who become converted) will be all over the world.]*

36 Then **the heathen that are left round about you** *[the residue of the heathen] shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.*

37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

38 As the **holy flock***, [or God's Holy nation as those of Israel who enter into the New Covenant was to become] as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD. [Those end time Israelites returned from captivity who will have become converted following Christ's 3 ½ year ministry to them will know the Lord; the unconverted can't.]*

Study Author Comment The unconverted nations each year will have to come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles and their represen-

tatives will walk by the valley of Hammongog where the bones of Gog which attacked Israel are buried.

Zec 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Study Author Comment **Here is the reason why God will force attendance to the feast of tabernacles**; it will not be to convert anyone but it will rather be as a reminder to the unconverted nations of the world of what will happen to them should they come up against Israel. Conversion is by God's presence in ones mind; not by force; people go to the Feast because they are converted; not to become converted and the feast celebrated by spiritual Israel, God's Church is the Feast of Ingathering. The unconverted nations of the world like the unconverted nation of Israel observe the Feast of Tabernacles.

6. Did God set the bounds of all nations with Israel in mind? Deut. 32:8.

Deu 32:8 When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people **according to the number of the children of Israel**.

COMMENT: God knew from the beginning the number of Israelites that would ultimately spring from the seed of Abraham. He reserved the mineral and agricultural wealth He meant for them to have. After setting aside the areas they were to occupy, giving them the largest portion of any race, He divided up the remainder among all the rest. [But end time Israel will be in Palestine; not the US or Canada which had the resources to make these nations the richest in the world; during the Millennium the deserts will be made to bloom and the dry places will become irrigated and fruitful plains, etc. etc. The land in Palestine will not remain in the state that we know it to be in today.]

Gentiles who first occupied land reserved for Israel were permitted to dominate it only until Israel had multiplied sufficiently to fill it.

6. Were the descendants of Jacob to be a blessing to all nations? Gen. 28:14.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and **in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed**.

The descendants of Jacob or Israel were to spread abroad. [Would be dispersed among the nations in their first captivity.]

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and **will bring thee again into this land**; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

God clearly says here that Israel would not remain in the promised land ["....I will bring thee again in this land...."]

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.

COMMENT: Just as blowing dust where it comes to rest, fertilizes the soil, so the racial descendants of Israel were to bless all lands where they would settle. God designed to bring through them superior prosperity, technical know-how and inventiveness to all continents.

The richest fulfillment of this prophecy is yet future reserved for the Millennium.

8. How does God describe this future explosive spread of Israelites into every part of the globe? As a "breaking forth"? Isa. 54:2, 3. The United States' population explosion is only a type of the population boom to occur in Israel during the prosperous Millennium. What inheritance is promised Israel? The whole world? Same verse.

Is 54: 1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and **thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles***, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.*

4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, [ancient Israel] and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. [Ancient Israel became widowed when Christ died on the stake.]

5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.?

7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath **I hid my face from thee for a moment;** *but with* **everlasting** *kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.*

9 For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; **so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.**

10 For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

11 O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

12 And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

13 And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

15 Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

9. Will all nations either serve Israel or perish? Isa. 60:12. Who will possess the wealth of the world? verses 5, 11, 16-17.

Isa 60:1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the

name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.

10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.

12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

13 The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy

mourning shall be ended.

21 Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

22 A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

Comment In verses 5 and 11, the word should not be "forces" but "wealth" — as is shown in the margin of most King James Bibles. Israel will inherit the world's wealth. Obedience to God's laws will cause it to multiply again and again. [Israel returned from its end-time captivity is to become both a physical and a spiritual nation at the making of the New Covenant. Those that enter into the New Covenant become spiritual Israel (not all of them will) and those that do not (many will not) will be physical Israel. Physical Israel will be blessed not because it is obeying God but because God is fulfilling the prophecies made about them. Below are the relevant Scriptures and you should read from Ez 36:22 onward to get the full understanding of what God is saying.

Eze 36:22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.

Eze 36:32 Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.

The whole world will become an Israelitish colonial system. Israel, under the guidance of her Spirit Rulers, will rule the world.

Study Author Comment Israel will not be ruled by spirit beings. The physical Israel that will exist during the Millennium will be an unconverted nation. Those of Israel who converted on their return from captivity will be **spiritual Israel** as well as others from all over the world that will later on become converted through accepting their calling when God opens up salvation to all of mankind (Joel 2:28). They, the converted Israelites, will live on the same territory as the unconverted Israelites in the same way God's Church has always lived among the unconverted. Physical Israel will be blessed and be the wealthiest nation in the world (Jer 33:7) not because of their obedience (Ez 36:32) but because of God keeping His promises. It will not be because Israel or the world is being

governed by spirit beings which is an impossibility (John 3). God will only rule over those who voluntarily submit to His authority in their lives (Rom 8:14). God's government is by men freely and self-willingly submitting to God's law when it is revealed to them. Christ tells us plainly and clearly that it is the few who follow their calling and of those who do, it is the few who remain converted. And the knowledge of God's law comes from the presence of God in men's mind revealing it to them not through spirit teachers taking on non-scary human forms, taking over the governments of the world and teaching the nations.

The British Empire, on which the sun never set, only weakly foreshadowed the destined world power of Millennial Israel under the Kingdom of God.

If you have not already read it, be sure to write immediately for Mr. Armstrong's free 240-page book, "The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy."

It will not be an exploiting colonialism, but rather a cooperative association of all races. Each people will do that for which it is best suited.

Will the Gentiles do her physical work while Israel devotes her main effort to teaching? Isa. 61:5, 6. Compare also Isaiah 49:22, 23. Combine the best abilities of all races and you will finally have a civilization worthwhile!

Study Author Comment Physical Israel will be made to prosper by God on its return from its end-time captivity but it does not follow and, the Scriptures do not in any way support the notion, that Israel will devote herself to teaching the unconverted nations of the world as an intermediary step to bringing them to conversion. Physical Israel's prosperity is not because of it being a fully converted nation that eagerly obeys God and for which God in return blesses with material riches. God clearly says that Israel is blessed in fulfillment of the prophecies in the Bible about Israel; the promises made by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is for His name's sake that He does it (Ez 36: 32) because He is the one who promised it; His ability to keep His word regarding prophecies made thousands of years before proves that He is God.

Physical Israel that will greatly prosper during the Millennium will be an unconverted nation. They will reap the benefits of the promises

made to their forefathers in the same way a disobedient Ephraim (Great Britain) and Manasseh (the United States of America) reaped them.

Those of Israel that return from their end time captivity and who enter into the New Covenant become spiritual Israel and God's Church. God's Church will begin in Israel and gradually there will be converts from all over the world through God calling all of mankind not through spirit beings teaching them. It is God that opens men's minds to understand spiritual truth. The saints resurrected at Christ's Second Coming will be in the third heaven as the Bride of Christ. The Spokesman role belongs to the Word who became Christ. New converts among the nations will remain where their conversion occurred and live out their lives there as has been the case since the day of Pentecost; they will not all move to Israel nor is there any requirement for them to do so. God's people is a spiritual nation dispersed all over the nations of the world. They are to remain in the world without being a part of it.

> 1Co 5:9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: [the ones that come to be known as such in God's Church
>
> 1Co 5:10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. [Christians however cannot avoid the fornicators, covetous, extortioners, idolaters that are in the world as they would then have to go out of the world but Christians are to remain in the world without being a part of it. (See John 17:15-16 below)]
>
> Joh 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.
>
> Joh 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.
>
> Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

There is no Biblical requirement for true Christians to form a community apart from the world by upon their conversion leaving their homes and traveling to a specific geographical location where they will form a new community and nation separate from the world. Quite the opposite is true, they are to remain in the world.

The Marriage of the Lamb

We can draw some interesting parallels between the Feast of Tabernacles and the coming marriage of Jesus Christ to His Spirit-born Church. Let's notice.

When will the marriage of the Lamb take place? Will it follow Jesus Christ's return? Rev. 19:6-7. Will it be an occasion of great rejoicing? Same verses.

COMMENT: Notice how Christ's marriage, like the Feast of Tabernacles, is a time for great rejoicing after the war, darkness and trouble pictured by Christ's return — the Day of Trumpets!

In biblical pattern, how long does a marriage feast last? Judges 14:2, 10, 12. Does the Feast of Tabernacles span the same length of time? Lev. 23:34.

COMMENT: These are the days God set aside to be kept perpetually as a TYPE of the marriage state of Christ and His Bride — the Church.

Is a wife bound to obey her husband as long as he lives? Will the Bride of Christ obey Him forever? I Cor. 7:39 and Eph. 5:22-27, 32. Did Nehemiah read the Law to the people every day of the Feast of Tabernacles? Neh. 8:18. Compare Deuteronomy 31:10,

1. **Those who then will compose the Bride must learn the law in this life — and learn it well — to teach it then. [No; God's first resurrection glorified saints will not teach the nations; Christ is the Spokesman not the Bride.]**

Does Christ emphasize in the New Testament the necessity of an inner change brought about by the Holy Spirit to enable one to take part in the Marriage of the Lamb? Matt. 25:6-10.

Did Israel in the beginning have the heart to fear and obey Him? Deut. 5:29; 29:4. But once added, will the Holy Spirit enable them to obey? Isa. 59:21; Jer. 32:39, 40.

COMMENT: The Old Covenant was a marriage contract. When Israel broke the terms of the contract – [the Bride was to obey the Husband] committed spiritual adultery [broke the letter of the law; not the spirit; never had God in their minds revealing spiritual truth to them. Israel committed the same sin as Eve did; she failed to submit to her husband's, Adams's authority granted over her by God Himself]– her sins

*divorced her [***NO; it is Christ's death on the stake that ended OT Israel's marriage; no divorce possible; separation from a wife is through death of the husband; a better and more precise word would be "alienated" or "separated" but not ended, God separated Himself from Israel but did not divorce Israel.** *(See Jer 3:14 below)] from the Person who became Jesus Christ (Jer. 3:8, 14; 31:32; Isa. 59:2).*

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

7 And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. [A bill of divorce; God separated Himself from ancient Israel but was still married to her until as a man He died on the stake.]

9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

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

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

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.

13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

14 **Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD***;* **for I am married unto you***: [***though Israel sinned; God says, she is still married to Him***.]and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: [the original Promised Land of their forefathers; not the eternal Zion. After its end-time captivity, the remnant of Israel will be resettled in the Promised Land and it is there that God will provide them with Pastors*

teaching the truth. Only a few will return from captivity; it will be "….one of a city and two of a family…..".]

15 And I will give you [end-time Israel returned from its end-time captivity] pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. [These pastors will be the holy spirits of the God family. God the Father will call them and God the Word will teach them.]

*16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, [after end time Israel's return from captivity] saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. [***All these thing were for OT Israel who did not have God dwelling in them; in NT converted Israel these physical symbols will not be needed***.]*

17 At that time [when Israel returns from captivity] they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. [This will be true for those of Israel who become converted and for those among the nations who become converted during the Millennium.]

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. [Restoration of the end-time nations constituting physical Israel as they come out of captivity and God brings them back to the Promised Land.]

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me. **[Talking about those of Israel that become converted after the 3 ½ year confirmation of the covenant***.]*

*20 Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.[***But the Logos who became Christ remained ancient Israel's husband until His death on the stake***.]*

21 A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they

have forgotten the LORD their God.

22 Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God. [God calls them to repentance, some of them repent and submit to God; many do not.]

Unfaithful Israel committed adultery (Jer. 3:8), but the great false church, the Gentile whore of Revelation 17 and 18, commits FORNICATION. That one was never married to Christ and was NEVER God's Church.

God's true Church is not a Gentile church. It is an Israelitish church. A Gentile-born person enters into it only by becoming a spiritual Israelite (Eph. 2:11, 12; Rom. 9:4, 5; John 4:22).

Christ will not marry another. He will remarry Israel. Note that the Bride [NT spiritual Israel] is already — before the marriage — His "wife" (Rev. 19:7).

But the Lamb is Spirit. His wife must also become spirit, if it is to be a lasting congenial marriage. A man could not marry an animal or anything less than human. Neither can Christ's wife be less than fully God.

She must be a REBORN Israel (II Cor. 11:2), who has "made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

Spiritual Israel [flesh-and-blood human beings who have become converted] will constitute the ruling echelon of the fleshly nation Israel. Israelites of the flesh who become qualified, as well as Gentiles, will be added to God's ruling family all through the Millennium as they are born again. [Those coming to conversion during the Millennium and dying in the faith will not be born again until the time of the 3rd resurrection which occurs at the end of the Last Great Day. See the following study for more information on this topic: When are God's Millennial Saints Resurrected and Will They Appear to the Unconverted? *]*

The whole 54th chapter of Isaiah is devoted to describing spiritual Israel now remarried to Christ, in contrast with the physical nation Israel during the preceding 3000 years. Notice especially the first 6 verses. The church has been desolate — the truly converted few — until the making of the New Covenant — a marriage covenant. But Israel of the flesh never multiplied as fast as the church of converted Israel will multiply at Christ's return and during the Millennium.

Study Author Comment The whole of Israel returned from its end-time captivity will not become a converted nation. WHY? Because Christ says if we will believe Him that many are called and few are chosen and of those who are chosen few remain converted. Physical, unconverted Israel will prosper and grow in population as a result of the fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers and not because the whole nation has become converted in the same way that Ephraim and Manasseh in the end-time inherited the promises made to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) while being carnal nations not obeying God.

NOTE: All of Isa 54 is talking about how God will prosper and protect those who are His servants and whose righteousness is of Him (Isa 54:17).

The God Family is getting set for the greater things still future. The Millennium is yet only the beginning of eternity — of happiness and accomplishment.

The Meaning of Booths

Did God decree that all Israelites live in booths – that is, temporary dwellings, during the Feast of Tabernacles? Lev. 23:42. What is a booth? Verse 40.

COMMENT: A booth (or tabernacle) is a temporary shelter. Its essential characteristic is its temporary nature. A tent or a one-room house of leafy boughs would not be suitable for continual habitation.

God directed the use of trees in ancient Israel because these were then the most plentiful and convenient material. But a temporarily occupied dwelling, such as a tent or camper, made of any material would qualify as a "booth."

Was this manner of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles to be a continual reminder of Israel's 40-year sojourn in the wilderness and deserts south of Palestine? Lev. 23:42, 43. Why?

Lev 23: 42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:

43 That **your generations [of OT Israel who was a carnal-minded nation and who to this day remains a carnal-minded nation] may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt***: I am the LORD your God.*

Study Author Comment NT Spirit-begotten Israel doesn't celebrate the feast of tabernacles which God clearly says is for the physical generations of ancient Israel, that their physical descendants may know that He made the children of unconverted ancient Israel dwell in booths. NT Christians' forefathers were never made to dwell in the desert for 40 years; they are Gentiles who have no common history with physical Israel. NT Christians are from all nations of the world; they are not flesh born Israelites; they observe the Feast of Ingathering.

Because Israel lived in temporary dwellings during that time? Verse 43.

Let us understand why God wants those 40 nomadic years remembered.

What is the real significance of dwelling in booths? IChron. 29:15; Heb. 11:9, 13.

Heb 11: 9 By faith he [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 **For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.**

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, **the holy Jerusalem***, descending out of heaven from God,*

11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had **twelve gates***, and at the* **gates twelve angels***, and names written thereon, which are the names of*

the **twelve tribes** *of the children of Israel:*

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had **twelve foundations***, and in them the names of the* **twelve apostles** *of the Lamb.*

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with th reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the **twelve gates were twelve pearls***; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but **they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

COMMENT: The dictionary defines "sojourn" as "a temporary stay." Abraham was a stranger or alien in the Promised Land, living in a temporary fashion all his days. God had not yet given him any inheritance there. Canaanites occupied the land.

Dwelling in booths pictured that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were only heirs — not yet inheritors — to eternal life and eternal possession of the land.

Study Author Comment God just plainly told us in Lev 23:43 who were to keep the feast of tabernacles and why. It was to be as a reminder to ancient, physical, unconverted Israel and their **fleshly** descendants of the punishment that came upon Israel for its disobedience. Nowhere does God say that Israel's 40 year in the desert was a way for NT Christian to know and understand that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth and that like Abraham are looking "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb 11:10)

Was Israel's 40 years of wandering meant from the beginning to be only a temporary state of affairs? Deut. 8:2.

Just until all that rebellious generation were dead? Num. 14:29,33, 34.

COMMENT: The rebellious generation in the wilderness is a type of all carnal rebellious people as long as there are MORTAL beings left on earth. And as long as men are still mortal beings, human life and society will still be only temporary. This will be the case all through the Millennium. [As we have just seen that was not why ancient Israel was made to dwell in booths or the reason why their physical descendants are also to dwell in booths.]

This then is the lesson [Again, as we have just seen that was not why ancient Israel was made to dwell in booths and that their physical descendants are also to dwell in booths.] that God wanted ancient Israel — and us today — to learn when He ordained living in booths or temporary dwellings during the Feast of Tabernacles. [New Testament Christians are not descendants of the ancient, unconverted nation of Israel and there is no requirement for them to dwell in booths.] With all

this in mind, we now can draw further analogies, comparing Israel's 40 years of wandering with the coming Millennium.

Just as ancient Israel, on escaping from Pharaoh — a type of Satan — was given in the wilderness a temporary period of comparative isolation from Satan's influence, [Satan's influence is in men's mind and is spiritual; being in the desert did not isolate Israel from Satan's influence in their minds.] so will the whole world enter 1000 years of rest from Satan's rule.[Satan is not ruling over mankind; mankind given absolute free moral agency i.e., there is no power in heaven or on earth that can force him to believe something he has not chosen to believe. Satan was given rule over the physical earth. At the time when Lucifer and his angels were placed on the earth human beings were yet to be created and Lucifer was cast back down to earth after his failed coup attempt at a time when human beings had not yet been created.] During that 40 years Israel was welded into a nation completely organized under God's government. [The whole book of Judges is a refutation of that statement.] During the Millennium the whole world is to be similarly organized under God's government. [True Christians who are God's Church are not of the world though they are to remain in the world. They are not to participate in this world's government or in the administration of its laws which are not God's law but men's laws.

Joh 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.
Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Study Author Comment The writer of this AC BCC study is gratuitously assuming that the world will convert en mass during the Millennium even though Christ tells us plainly it is the few that are called that follow their calling and of those who do, it is the few that remain converted. He is also assuming that spirit beings will take over the governments of the nations of this world though flesh-and-blood cannot see spirit. (John 3).

Forty is the number of trial and test. Israel in the wilderness was a type of all people who will go through trials and tests in overcoming their human nature during the Millennium.

Study Author Comment Mankind is not capable of changing their human nature which is not evil. Man was created by God in their image and according to their likeness; man was created according to the God kind not according to any of the animal kinds created by God and all that God creates is good. Man has no power to change his nature. Man

given mind power, the ability to make decisions and free moral agency i.e., there is no power in heaven or earth that can force him to believe something against his will. This absolute freedom to choose is the source of sin in men as choices can be made that are good or evil. Satan can only influence men's minds; he cannot force men to do anything. Men are capable of lust because of their freedom to choose otherwise they would be like animals whose existence is almost exclusively determined by instinct. Animals cannot sin because they have no mind power. Human nature as created by God is not evil but it allows for men, independently from God, to make decisions that are sin. Once converted and having come to the correct knowledge of the difference between right and wrong, men can then try to the best of their abilities to avoid sin. If this attitude is maintained though they remain unable not to sin, any sin that they do is covered by the grace that resulted from Christ's death as God's perfect sacrifice for sin.

How will God draw the 1,000-year period of testing to a close? Rev. 20:3, 7-9.

Study Author Comment The Millennium will be a period of testing of mankind in the same way that the current times in which we live is a period of testing for all those called and chosen. God's master plan of salvation as carried out from the beginning will remain the same during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. Men will be called on an individual basis and sufficient spiritual truth will be revealed to them for them to be able to make the decision to submit to God or not. Men are not brought to repentance and belief by trials, physical or mental; repentance is from God (Rom 2:4). Now continuing with Revelation 20.

Rev 20: 7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Is a condition of permanency finally reached in the plan revealed in God's Holy Days of this seventh month? I Kings 8:2.

"Ethanim" means " (the month of) PERMANENT things."

COMMENT: Next month's lesson will show how and when God's plan leads to permanency — eternal inheritance instead of "sojourning."

Is there to be any end to the increase of God's kingdom? Isa. 9:7.

COMMENT: It begins like the proverbial grain of mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, but when grown becomes the greatest of all things and fills the whole earth (Mat. 13:31, 32). Throughout the Millennium, population will increase rapidly.

Study Author Comment God's Kingdom is invisible to flesh-and-blood human and cannot be seen by men unless they are born again (John 3). God dwelling in the minds of the converted only leads; it does not force obedience (Rom 8:14) nor will it force those converted to remain converted. God's Kingdom is entirely and only composed of spirit beings who as part of their unchanging spirit character have an attitude of perfect obedience to God in all things.

God's Kingdom cannot exist on the earth over unconverted flesh-and-blood human beings who are not subject to God's law nor indeed can be (Rom 8:7). It cannot exist even over the truly converted who despite their intense desire to obey God are still unable to do so. Paul makes it clear in Romans 7:14-24 that no matter how very much he wanted to obey God he often did the evil he wanted to avoid instead of the good he wanted to do.

> Rom 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.
>
> Rom 7:15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.
>
> Rom 7:16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.
>
> Rom 7:17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Rom 7:19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Rom 7:20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Rom 7:21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Rom 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Rom 7:24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

God cannot dwell with sin and those that will be in His Kingdom when it is fully established cannot be flesh-and-blood human beings, even truly converted ones, who are unable to perfectly follow God's law. His Kingdom will and can only be composed of individuals who can no longer sin and this will be the truly converted when they are resurrected as glorified spirit being and who will be God as God is God who cannot sin (1 John 5:18). God's Kingdom will fill the new heaven and the new earth which is created after the complete end of mankind. God's new creation will be infinite and His government that will be in it will also be infinite being made up of glorified spirit beings that are immortal. [The Millennium God's Kingdom on Earth?]

Millions will be converted and born into the Family of God.

By the end of the thousand years, the Family will be ready for the final step in the Holy Day Plan. Until that step, too, has been made, only a foundation has been prepared for the great things yet in store. Even greater joy and accomplishments lie ahead after the Millennium!

The universe will no longer be subject to destruction, sin or death.

Revelation 21 gives us just a hint of this new universe. A new heaven and a new earth inhabited solely by Spirit Beings! "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (verse 4).

HOW the Converted Will Keep the Feast Now

Is Jerusalem again to BE CHOSEN as the center of worship?

Study Author Comment Jerusalem was never a center of worship but for the unconverted nation of ancient Israel. God's spiritual nation exists in called and chosen individuals who are from all the nations of the world. There is no requirement for them to go to Jerusalem or any other places on earth to worship God. God is to be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

> Joh 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. [Jerusalem, the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven after the creation of the new heaven and of the new earth will be the center of worship for God will be there as plainly stated in the following verses.]
>
> Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
>
> Rev 21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he [God] will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

God will dwell and can only dwell with men who were called, chosen and faithful and who have become glorified spirit beings who cannot sin. God cannot dwell with sin. The tabernacle of God will not be on the earth in Jerusalem until the completion of God's plan of salvation for mankind when there will no longer be any flesh-and-blood human beings left alive on the earth following the coming of the Lake of Fire that consumes the wicked and the current heaven and earth. Jerusalem will not be the world's center of worship during the Millennium.

Zech. 2:12. Then Jerusalem is not now the place for all people to go to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, is it? John 4:21.

Study Author Comment God's spiritual nation who are not fleshly descendants of ancient Israel who refused to enter into the Promised Land observe the Feast of Ingathering not the Feast of Tabernacles. The unconverted nations of the world will be forced to attend the Feast of Tabernacles as a reminder of the destruction that came upon Gog and Magog when they rose up against Israel to destroy it. It will be God's warning to them that they too will be destroyed if they ever were to try to destroy Israel. God's Church is a spiritual organism invisible to the world and there has never existed a central headquarters church in Jerusalem even in the days of the apostles. The people did not come to them, they went to the people. Jerusalem will not be this world's center of true religion to which the nations will eagerly go to seek God's truth.

COMMENT: Jerusalem was rejected in 69 A.D. and turned over to the Romans and destruction after exactly two 19-year cycles allotted to the headquarters New Testament Church. God withdrew His name He had placed there. But Jerusalem will again in the Millennium be the place God's people will keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Does God STRONGLY intend His people be free from this world's system? Ex. 10:7 and Ex. 15:1, last part. Was the drowning of Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea a type of the future destruction of the chief instruments of Satan the Devil? Rev. 19:20.

COMMENT: God wants you that free NOW! Free to meditate on His purpose and on how to fulfill it! The Feast of Tabernacles is intended to separate and free us from the world.

Dwelling in booths — temporary habitations — away from our everyday surroundings, away from our jobs, our customary thoughts, influences and personal contacts, we picture by our thoughts and actions the freedom and peace of the Millennium.

We get away from the world at this season to typify that we don't belong in this world's society any more.

We MUST keep the Feast of Tabernacles now to become really separate — free from the flesh and its nature then.

Do you want with every fiber of your being to do something about this rotten world? To help set it right? To rule with a rod of iron? Your salvation depends on you! Do you sigh and cry for the abominations this world has to suffer?

God's people keep the Feast of Tabernacles with a purpose.

They are preparing now for the job they will have to do during the Millennium. *[No, first resurrection Christians (those currently called and chosen) will be the Bride of Christ and be in the third heaven with Christ. The teachers of God's saints are God the Father while being called and God the Word once chosen.]*

Being physical, we learn by that which is physical. Just as God — His character, His power — is made evident to us through the created material universe (Rom. 1:19, 20), so we must learn to be ruling Gods by learning to rightly use the physical things God gives us.

Rom 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 For the invisible things [spiritual] of him from the creation of the world" are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [the Spirit-begotten members of His Church who are God's spiritual creation; they are made by God] even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they [the Spirit-begotten members of God's church] are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, [Only Spirit-begotten people can know God] they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. [Turned away from the truth they were given and lost their understanding of all things spiritual.]

Study Author Comment These verses of Roman are not talking about God's physical creation but rather about God's spiritual creation, the Spirit-begotten members of His NT Church and in this case certain members of the Roman churches to which Paul was addressing his letter or epistle. The spiritual truth of God cannot be known by marveling at God's magnificent creation. Here Paul was talking about those that hold the truth in unrighteousness i.e., those who have been called, have been given to know the truth and are going back to sinful lives (See Rom. 2:18 hereunder). This topic is covered in detail in the following study: Men Who Hold the Truth in Unrighteousness

Rom 2:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all

ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Study Author Comment The only ones that can know God's truth are those who had God dwelling in them; otherwise; it is IMPOSSIBLE for them to know it; mankind cut off from God since Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden of Eden. Men who are being unrighteous and who hold, possess or have the truth can only be members of God's church and in this case, those to whom Paul was sending this epistles, the Roman churches of his days.

By practicing God's laws and experiencing the result — peace, harmony and joy — of group living at the Feast of Tabernacles, we learn the value of obeying. The Feast of Tabernacles as carried out TODAY is actually a tiny but happy foretaste of the happy World Tomorrow when the Spirit of God will lead EVERY human. We show now by the way we live together IN HARMONY what this whole sin-sick, unhappy world COULD and WILL be.

Study Author Comment Yes, God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh but then as today and in the past, not everyone will follow God's calling. According to Christ Himself if we will believe Him, of the many called it is the few that follow their calling (Matt 22:14) and of those that follow their calling and are chosen, it is the few that remain converted (Matt 7:13).

Even those, who, because of distance or finances, cannot attend a local meeting of the Worldwide Church of God every week, CAN KEEP THE ANNUAL CONVOCATIONS with the rest of God's people.

God has made a way because He knows it is absolutely necessary.

Write and ask about it.

There are lessons to be learned by LIVING and WORSHIPPING with others of God's people that simply would not be learned any other way. There are days of concentrated teaching by God's ministers — days of continuous genuine Christian fellowship. And for some, individual counsel and PERSONAL instruction from God's true ministers, is available ONLY at these Festivals.

No CONVERTED person should remain home from the Feast of Tabernacles except on the advice of a true minister of God. No child of God

has authority to except himself from God's blanket command: "Attend!"

Final Thoughts and Comments from the Author of this Web site Study

Since the death of Mr. Armstrong (HWA) who restored many truths to God's called, chosen and faithful, more that 40 years have gone by at the time of the writing of this study.

After the destruction of the organization of men called the Worldwide Church of God, it became evident just how many did not understand their Bible but had been simply following the man Mr. Armstrong. They are unable to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15) or in modern language, they are unable to read the Bible on their own to prove the teachings they have received and most of them are unconcerned about their inability to do so.

People started looking for another man heading up a religious organization which they thought most closely approximated the church in the days of HWA. Many false churches of God rose up after the death of HWA and it is the many who are now attending their services.

Did HWA restore all things? Was it all possible truth contained in the Bible and consequently, there are no other truth to be found in the Bible by the truly converted. All they have to do is simply study the literature authored by Mr. Armstrong and listen to the recordings of his sermons and Bible studies. HWA was just a man and Christians are to always be proving all things with their Bible before accepting them as true.

Have Mr. Armstrong's writings become the criterion of truth instead of the Bible? And is it that if HWA did not say or write it then it cannot possibly be true?

If all possible Bible truth have been restored to God's Church why does God command Christians to study so as to have growth in knowledge and understanding or lose their salvation? (Matt 25:25-30). Is mastering and repeatedly reviewing HWA's literature and sound recordings until our death, growth?

HWA, differently from what was widely believed is not the end-time Elijah whom God promised to send to end-time Israel returned from its captivity among the Gentiles? This is fully explained in the following study which you can access by clicking on the following hyperlink: The Second Elijah and the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord

Christ said that Elijah was to come to Israel before the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

> Mat 17:10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

The context here is Christ and the disciples who are living in Israel. The scribes were saying that Elijah must first come. He must first come before what event can happen in Israel? Israel was under Roman domination and they saw themselves as being God's chosen people and therefore as God's nation and kingdom. The disciples were asking Jesus when would be the time Elijah would come to Israel as it would be the time that Israel would again become an independent sovereign nation as it was before. Elijah was to restore all things to Israel which to them included its independence.

> Mat 17:11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

> Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

The book of Malachi is addressed to Israel not to God's Church which at that time did not exist. In the book of Malachi God reprimands Israel for its failure to obey Him and at the end of the book, He gives them hope by telling them He will send them Elijah to help them to go back to obeying Him. He would not always be angry with them.

The disciples thought the establishment of God's Kingdom would be the restoration of independence to the nation of Israel. Just before Christ ascended to His Father, they asked him the following question:

> Act 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

The disciples knew that God's kingdom or nation was the physical nation of Israel but they did not then understand that in the future it would be a spiritual nation of men from the nations of the world called and chosen by God the Father and who would become immortal, glorified spirit beings by a resurrection from the dead and that this was the way they would become part of God's Kingdom. This is the kingdom Christ spoke about but they didn't understand it.

Not all truth that can be know in the Bible will be restored by any man;

otherwise God would not have made spiritual growth as one of the condition for salvation (Matt 25:25-30).

God will not force you to make time in your life to engage in quality Bible study resulting in growth in knowledge and understanding of the spiritual truths of the Bible. The decision is entirely up to you and your decision will decide your ultimate fate. God is no respecter of persons and all will be rewarded according to their works i.e., according to what they did with the knowledge given them at the time of their conversion. Those not having had any growth will lose even the knowledge which they had and their salvation.

Your salvation hangs in the balance and what you choose to do will determine your fate. God is a God of justice and all will be judged according to their works.

What will you do?