

Dispensations of Gods' Spirit

***"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His"! (Romans 8:9)
Scripture reveals a most fascinating situation with regard to the Emerging
Availability of this Essential Element in the Salvation of Humanity.***

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The Feast of Pentecost, widely acknowledged as the founding date of the New Testament Church, on the fiftieth day after Christ's presentation as the True Wave Sheaf Offering, was marked by a most startling event. The visible outpouring of Gods' Holy Spirit, documented in Acts chapter 2, was the rarest of occasions, bringing to our attention that a notable milestone had been achieved in the spiritual inter-relationships between mankind and his Creator. At this precise moment in time, the situation changed in ways we have yet to fully fathom. A similar repetition, related in Acts chapters 10 (& 11), enhanced the milestone a step further, powerfully illustrating that this out-pouring had applicability among the Gentiles as well as upon Israel. In fact, these Gentiles would play a greater role than ethnic Israel might want.

As with the crucifixion and death of the Lord, our True Passover, His resurrection late in the third day thereafter,¹ and His presentation before the Father in Heaven mid morning of the next,² a whole new administrative paradigm came into effect, altering Gods' spiritual relationship with humanity from that time forward. With His ascension into Heaven to serve as our High Priest before the Throne of God,³ we are now capable of receiving and being empowered by Gods' Holy Spirit, imparting a

measure of His very Life into us,⁴ in ways never possible before Christ's ascension, except under the rarest situation.

Considering the seeming contradiction in the words of Jesus, found in John chapters 6 and then in 7, we are given further clue to an even greater dispensation of Gods' Spirit than is presently the case. In John 6:44 (and 39 & 65) He states emphatically, "*No man can come unto me except the Father...draw him:*" Yet a season later, we see Him uttering the proclamation that "*If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*", (John 7:37) what we regard as a wide open invitation to **any** who want to respond. A similar invitation as we read of in Revelation 22:17 which leaves open the opportunity for any individual to respond, saying, "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*" We recognize a '**whosoever will**' period of time, but most fail to realize that it's implemented after Christ returns, in what we know as the Millennial and post-Millennial age, not the present, limited "no man **can** come unless drawn of the Father" situation that exists today!

The temporal contexts of Jesus' two statements are a Holyday season apart. Both statements are true, but in their proper time settings. In this present dispensation, any who thirst (desire for the truth) are those who the Father has specifically drawn. It

¹ His death and burial taking place late on a Wednesday would put His resurrection (three days and three nights later) late on the weekly Sabbath: That same point in time when the Priests were cutting the Sheaf of first-ripe grain to wave up for acceptance the following morning. (Lev. 23:10-11)

² The very verses Jesus used to assure Himself of a timely death sentence (a composite of Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13) as quoted in Matthew 26:64, both refer to the Wave Sheaf Offering occasion. David relates what is said at this occasion and Daniel describes the scene of His official presentation and acceptance before *the Ancient of Days*.

³ Hebrews 3:1, 7:15 thru 8:2, (esp. v.25), & 12:24.

⁴ "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*" Romans 8:14-17

isn't natural to have such a desire. (Romans 8:7) Nor is it entirely of ourselves! "*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*" (Romans 2:4)

If we step back from the matter and consider it in a wider context, we can see that there have been and will yet be differing situations with regard to the availability of Gods' Holy Spirit throughout time. In fact, we can identify **four** distinct situations, distinct '**dispensations**', under which Gods' Spirit will be administered to humankind. We've already considered three. 1. That era before Christ's resurrection and acceptance to serve before the throne of the Universe on our behalf, 2. the present Christian era, and 3. the Millennial Age during which any who wish to may freely come! But if we consider a startling prophecy from Ezekiel 37, we see there is yet a *fourth* in which resurrected peoples are provided their first opportunity to receive Gods' Spirit also, compensating for the lack of opportunity in their previous life-situations. That period is alluded to in Revelation 20, referring to 'the rest of the dead', who don't live again until **after** the 1000 years are ended!

When we review each of these major segments of world history as it involves the availability of Gods' Spirit, we see differing *degrees* of availability. And, it's that ever-broadening availability that's the primary focus of this article. It's this administration that most emphatically illustrates the implementation of Gods' Master Plan. Only when we understand the application of Gods' Spirit to greater humanity can we fully understand how God will bring opportunity for all of His Created mortals to enter into His expanding Family of ever-living Beings.

Before Christ's Ascension

In what could be called the Pre-Christian Dispensation, Gods' Spirit was available only to an exceptional few. Those with whom God was specifically working to establish His model nation and to implement that structured form of worship, then necessary: a set of ceremonial performances (due to the absence of an acceptable Sacrifice for sin and the non-availability of the Spirit), which illustrated important spiritual truths relevant to His Redemptive Plan and the coming dispensation

when **the** Faith⁵ necessary for salvation would be possible, with the added component of Gods' Spirit. Very few had access to Gods' Spirit in that age.

We are also made aware that Israel as a nation was specifically blinded, lest they attain an adequate understanding and become converted. Old Testament prophecies⁶ indicated as much, and Jesus affirmed the same. The Apostle Paul re-affirmed that the condition remained in effect, not only in his day,⁷ but extending on thru that time-frame until the times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled!⁸

After the Feast of Pentecost

In the Christian Dispensation, when that Day had come to fulfillment, a number of select individuals had Gods' Spirit visibly poured-out upon them without their having asked for it! (They had only a little reason to suspect anything like this was to happen!) These, notice, were not observing the day with their Jewish counterparts at the Temple, but were observing a separate date at a separate location! (in a house) The Jews' observance was Sivan 6, a Friday that year, whereas the Disciples observed it on a Sunday, the 50th day from the correct Wave Sheaf Offering, also typically a Sunday, (the '*morrow after the* (weekly) *Sabbath*' that fell with-in the Days of Unleavened Bread.) Had any of these been keeping the more prevalent Jewish observance, which actually was different than what Leviticus 23 proscribed, they would have missed this out-pouring!

⁵ Romans 9:31 "*But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32: Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*"

⁶ "*But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they **believed not** on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, **He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.***" (John 12:37-40)

⁷ "*But **their minds were blinded**: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ*". (2nd Cor. 3:14) (also Romans 11:7)

⁸ "*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 fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*" (Romans 11:26)

But what was especially significant in this startling occasion was the realization that access to God's Spirit was **now available** in a way it never before was. A quantum leap had taken place thru the office of our High Priest, now interceding before the True Altar of which the one on Earth was only an inferior replica. *"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of **the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)**"* (John 7:38-39) There was a time when the Spirit wasn't yet available, then a time when it was!

Yet, the outpouring in this second dispensation was still thoughtfully and carefully meted out. God the Father makes determination of who's to be called in this age, and the rest are concluded in blindness. Even those who **we** would regard as 'prime candidates' for salvation are for the most part blinded, not yet called. *"No man can come unto me except the Father...draw him:"* is perhaps one of the most quickly minimized New Testament teachings of the present age, as there is little true understanding of the coming Millennial Age or what's beyond it.

After Christ's Return

In the Millennial Dispensation, when the Saints have been resurrected to Spirit-Life to live and reign with Christ in His Kingdom on Earth, the true and Everlasting Gospel will be announced to all then living by a powerful angel. *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to **every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,** Saying with a loud voice, **Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.**"* (Rev. 14:6-7) With the announcement of the demise of the Beast Power in the previous passage, all living will be directed to the worship of the true God, the one who Created! The One who at this point in time takes possession of His heritage and rules all nations: *"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and **he shall reign for ever and ever.**"* 16: *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before*

*God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17: Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because **thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.** 18: And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou should give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great;.. 19: And the **temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:...**"* (Rev. 11:15-19) Christ, reigning with His Bride, will then open the Temple (for business) providing opportunity for the receipt of His Spirit, and by it, salvation. He, His Bride and understanding witnesses will urge all living toward receiving it. *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**"* (Rev.22:17) This is the situation referred to by Jesus in John 7:37-38. It is to be the situation after His return, in the third dispensation!

Though the Spirit will then be freely available to any who truly desire to have it, (being willing to accept its life-changing effect) we see in the post-Millennial Age an even more remarkable event!

After the Second Resurrection

In the Post-Millennial Dispensation, the millions who lived and died without having been afforded opportunity will rise into their **first opportunity** for salvation. Those who died without having ever been evangelized, those who lived and died before the time of Christ, those who were kept blinded (even by God) during their lifetimes, those who didn't survive infancy, all will rise after the thousand years in what is known as 'the second resurrection'. That resurrection referred to in Revelation 20:5 & 12, when '*the books are opened*' to their understanding and 'the book of Life' is re-opened for additional names to be entered! There is no reason to believe that the 'whosoever will' condition will not continue on thru this era as well.

It's the prophecy in Ezekiel 37 that is most astounding. Many take this narrative to be *purely allegorical*, but with a proper understanding of the Doctrine of the Resurrections, seeing its reality, it becomes profoundly revealing. The last dozen

chapters of Ezekiel describe the co-ordinated physical and spiritual worship systems extant thru the Millennial Age, but chapter 37 offers a preview into the age just beyond it.

Reviewing Ezekiel 37

*The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 2: And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. ... 10: So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11: Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the **whole house of Israel**: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12: Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will **open your graves**, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13: And **ye shall know** that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14: **And shall put my spirit in you**, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD. 15: The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 16: Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For **Judah**, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the **house of Israel** his companions: 17: And join them one to another into one stick; and **they shall become one** in thine hand. 19: ... Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and **the tribes of Israel** his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of **Judah**, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. 20: And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. 21: And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: 22: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king*

*to them all: and they shall be **no more two nations**, neither shall they be divided into **two kingdoms** any more at all: 23: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and **will cleanse them**: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. 24: And **David my servant shall be king over them**; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also **walk** in my judgments, and **observe** my statutes, and **do them**. 25: And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. 26: Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be **an everlasting covenant** with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. 27: My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, **I will be their God**, and they shall be my people. 28: And **the heathen shall know** that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.*

We can glean a number of important facts from this insightful narrative.

1. First, that they will all be resurrected together,
2. The state of their existence will be physical,
3. That they will be reunified as a single nation, (something not seen since shortly after the end of the reign of King Solomon),
4. They will again be restored to the true worship of their **true** God, and will have time to live according to biblical instructions,
5. That their prevalent religious practices have been utterly detestable,
6. **God will unilaterally place His Spirit within them**, a condition not remotely seen at **any** time prior!
7. They will be **sanctified nationally**, fulfilling their intended destiny: as examples to other nations,
8. God's sanctuary will then be **among** them, (This has to be **after** Christ returns to Earth),
9. Resurrected King David will be their national leader, (he having been ruling under Jesus, over the resurrected Apostles, over the physically-surviving

twelve tribes during the Millennium. (Luke 22:30)),
10. Non-Israelites will be living among them and will bear witness of all of this!

11. To these we could add that they all will become acutely aware of their **ethnic identities**, as descendants of the tribes of Israel, a teaching specifically *shunned* in most Christian denominations, who for the most part limit it to the Jews as being who they say is meant where-ever they see the term: 'Israel'. (Their problem with the identities of the so called 'lost tribes of Israel' has in part to do with the applicability of Gods' Law, an issue they'd prefer be left aside!).

That's way too much specific detail for it to be only an allegory! Those who understand the Millennial Age and the Last Great Day judgment period illustrated in Biblical Holydays realize this is not at all allegorical!

Not Sentencing Just Yet!

Here we see a resurrection involving specifically **all** the peoples of Israel. (Both Jewish and non-Jewish Israel) This judgment is **not** a 'sentencing event', as we see them being resurrected and restored to their former lands, reunified into a single nation again, with their King David set-up as king over them! And then, given a period of time to live out their intended destiny in the sight of surrounding nations! What would be the point of all of that IF this 'judgment' were just their sentencing event?

Typical modern religion obviously has a problem in that they are woefully ignorant of this final age, even if they are among those few that acknowledge the Millennium!

The Greatest Outpouring

But what is most revealing about this event is the Spirit of God being placed within them. Obviously then, these didn't have it before. They're **all** given it together, without their having asked for it, not unlike the unsuspecting recipients on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and again later in Acts 10 & 11.

Though those other nations, also resurrected, living in this same physical re-generation,⁹ have Gods' Spirit available to them upon request (continuing the 'whosoever will' invitation), Israel, on the other

hand, will have it **placed within them outright!** This 'second resurrection' period represents the last opportunity for salvation, and is appropriate to this resurrected generation **only**. It will be Israel's challenge to 'sink or swim' spiritually! They were by-and-large kept blinded during their first lifetimes, and this provides them the opportunity their life-situation denied them previously. Israel's people here will either follow through to full conversion, or they will fail to do so, and not have their names added into the Book of Life that we see referenced again at the **final sentencing event** of the 'Great White Throne' (Rev. 20:13-15, John 5:29) where all who have ever lived, who weren't in the first resurrection, are re-raised together, segregated and sentenced to either Life or eternal death! (Mat. 25:31-46) (Rev. 20:15)

God's reason for keeping Israel spiritually blinded is to afford the majority their opportunity period during the best of ages, the post-Millennial age, when Satan is completely absent from society and when their likelihood of success will be greatest. This in keeping with the explanation given in Romans 11:25-26. "*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 fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*"

So, in these four dispensations, we see Gods' Spirit in ever-increasing availability. "*God is not willing that any should perish*", (2nd Peter 3:9) and He has revealed to us His Plan by which the greatest number can avoid suffering such a fate. **Ω**

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⁹ Luke 11:31-32