

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

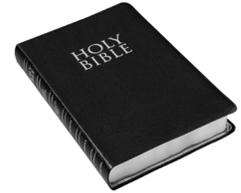
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**“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”**

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1104

## GENESIS 50—EXODUS 1-3

We discussed in our last issue that Jacob-Israel called all of his sons together and told them what would happen to their families in the “last days.” To some it was blessings, but to some the news wasn’t all that good. However, after completing this we’re told that Jacob commanded his sons, when he died, to take his body back to the land of Canaan and bury him in the cave of Machpelah where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah were all buried. Then Jacob lay back down in his bed and passed away.

(Read Genesis 50:1-14) This is the most elaborate funeral that we have recorded in Scripture. This chapter is the only time in Scripture that we find the word embalm, though in a sense, this is probably what the women were planning to do to Christ’s body (Luke 24:1) the day He was resurrected. The word “embalm” is from the Hebrew word *chanat* which Dr. Strong says is a primary root word meaning “to spice.” The word is used one other place in Song of Solomon 2:13 where it is translated “putteth forth” meaning here “to ripen:” **“The fig tree putteth forth her green figs...”**

Joseph, in carrying out the request of his father, had the Egyptian physicians embalm Jacob’s body. We are familiar with the fact that the Egyptians are known for embalming their Pharaohs. This process apparently took 40 days to complete. Once the embalming was done and a 70 day mourning period was completed, Joseph

requested permission from the Pharaoh to complete Jacob’s request to be buried in the cave of Machpelah.

Not only did Joseph, his brothers and all their families along with their herds make the journey, but all the servants of the Pharaoh, Egyptian elders and soldiers on horseback and in chariots, and many of the Egyptian people went with them so that there was a great company of people went to the burial. We’re told that once the burial was complete, Joseph and his brethren and all their families returned to the land of Egypt.

(Read Gen. 50:15-21) Once Jacob was gone, his brothers became very concerned as to what their fate might be at Joseph’s hand since they had treated him so badly and sold him into servitude. However, Joseph understood the sovereignty of God far better than most and acknowledged to them that though they had thought evil against him, God meant it for the good as was evidenced by the fact that Joseph had been there to save them and many more from starvation. So far as Joseph was concerned, he had forgiven them and he continued to treat them with kindness and comfort.

(Read Gen. 50:22-26) Joseph lived to the age of 110 and was able to see his great great grandchildren from Ephraim and great grandchildren from Manasseh.

Joseph understood that the day would come when the children of Israel would leave Egypt and return to the land of Canaan. He made the children of Israel swear to him that they would take his body with them when they went and bury him in the land of Canaan.

Joseph died and his body was also embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt to await the return of the Israelites to the land of Canaan.

I would like to extend our study on into the book of Exodus so that we can see the development of this people into the great nation as God promised to Abraham (Gen. 12:2). We need to understand the sovereignty of God as we see Him work His plan. As we have already seen in the brothers of Joseph selling him into slavery and it turning out to ultimately mean their salvation from starvation, we will see God work in mysterious ways to begin to bring about the fulfillment of the promises He made to Abraham.

(Read Ex. 1:1-14) To fully understand just how fruitful the children of Israel were, we need to look at some figures that will demonstrate this fact. In Genesis 15 God made the covenant or the promises He was making to Abram unconditional. In verse 13, He told Abram, **“And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their’s and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.”** However, when Israel left Egypt, Ex. 12:40 tells us, **“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.** There is no mistake here. We just need to understand what all happened. Paul, in Gal. 4:17 dates the four hundred thirty years from God’s covenant with Abram (Read Gen. 12:1-4) Some believe that the actual first call to Abram came when he was 70 years old while others believe it came when he actually left Haran when he was 75 years old.

The four hundred years actually started when Isaac was born. Though Ishmael was born 14 years before Isaac, he was not the seed of the promise, so we have to consider that it started with the birth of Isaac. Though Isaac lived in the land of Canaan 180 years, he never owned any of it, plus the land of Canaan was actually under the jurisdiction of Egypt at the time.

Isaac was born when Abram was 100 years old and then Jacob was born when Isaac was 60 years old and Jacob went down to Egypt when he was 130. Depending on whether we

start counting when Abram was 70 or 75, Abram, Isaac and Jacob had already been in a land not their own for 215 or 220 years which only left 215 or 210 years of the original 430 years. The book of Jasher says that they were only in Egypt 210 years while Josephus says 215 years. Either way, the point is that they increased from 70 men to over 600,000 men (with women and children the number would probably have been over 3,000,000) in only a little over 200 years.

I think we can see then why the **“new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph”** was becoming alarmed. According to the book of Jasher, not only were the Egyptians afraid of the number of Israelites, but also their physical strength. The men of Israel appeared to be much stronger in battle than the men of Egypt. The solution was to place the Israelites into servitude and work them hard enough that would have neither the time nor desire to have children. The king soon found that this was not the solution for the harder they worked them, the more they produced. The Egyptians caused the Israelites to build some of Egypt’s treasure cities such as Pithom and Raamses. Like many things, when something doesn’t work, man’s solution is to do more of the same. This is what the Egyptians did with the Israelites, yet because God was behind this, the Israelites only continued to reproduce.

(Read Ex. 1:15-21) The king then tried a different tactic. He instructed the mid-wives to kill all of the male babies while letting the female babies live. The mid-wives feared God more than the king and refused to carry out the king’s order. When asked by the king why they had refused his order, their explanation was that the Hebrew women were not like the Egyptian women, but bore their children quickly and easily and had their babies before the mid-wives got to them. God blessed the households of these mid-wives because of what they had done in resisting the king.

(Read Ex. 1:22) So the king went directly to the people and ordered that every male baby was to be cast into the river. We’re talking about the Nile River as most all of the population of Egypt at that time was located on the Nile River.

(Read Ex. 2:1-4) First note that this man and woman were both of the family of Levi. As we go further in our study, we'll see that the Levites had a special job to do in Israel. They were to be the bureaucrats of that day, i.e. they served the rest of the people in the functions that we depend on government to do. This baby was to serve in the greatest of these positions.

Second, note that the mother, with the exception of waiting 3 months before doing so, did exactly as the king had ordered. Though certainly not as the king had intended, the mother put the baby in the river.

(Read Ex. 2:5-10) This is an excellent example of God's sovereignty at work. Pharaoh's daughter certainly thought that she was doing things by her own free will, just as we do in the things that we do. But in this case we can certainly see the hand of God in it. We need to learn that God's sovereignty doesn't just apply to certain people, but to all of us.

Instead of killing her baby boy, the boy's mother was being paid, by no less than the king's daughter, to nurse and raise this little boy. Eventually, as the child grew, the mother took the boy to the king's daughter for her to finish raising. The king's daughter, because she had "drawn the baby out of the river," named him Moses, which means "drawer out." She could not have known how really significant this name would turn out to be as Moses drew out the children of Israel from Egypt.

Moses was the youngest child of his family, having at least one older brother and older sister. The older brother was born before the king issued his order to throw the male babies into the river. We'll meet both this brother and sister a little later.

(Read Ex. 2:11-22) Moses' life was a series of three forty year experiences. His first forty years was spent being educated in the art and practice of being a king. His second forty years was being educated in the art of being a shepherd. The third forty years was spent exercising and putting into practice the knowledge he had gained in the previous 80 years.

The story of Moses killing the Egyptian

that was fighting with the Israelite man gives us some idea of Moses physical strength and ability. The fact that he was able to drive away the shepherds, single handed, that were preventing the daughters of the priest of Midian from watering their father's flocks adds confirmation as to his strength and physical ability.

There is sometimes confusion as just who this priest of Midian is. We find him usually being called "Jethro" which means "pre-eminence." He is also called Jether which means the same thing. Here he is called "Reuel" which means "friend with God." He apparently was a chieftan who also carried out priestly duties. "Midian" was a son of Abraham by his wife Keturah. Jethro was an ancestor of Midian. The land of Midian was east and south of the Jordan River in what we now know as Arabia. We're told in Gal. 4:25 that Mt. Sinai was in Arabia, not in the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula as is commonly taught today. Arabia was in what was called at that time as the land of Cush. Thus in Numbers 12:1, Moses' wife Zipporah is referred to as an Ethiopian woman. Ethiopia was another name for the land of Cush at that time. So Jethro was a descendant of Abraham through Abraham's wife Keturah and was obviously a Godly man. God caused Moses to go to the area of Mt. Sinai for his next 40 years of training taking care of Jethro's sheep. This accomplished two things for Moses. He had been served for his first 40 years, now he learned to serve. Secondly, he shepherded these sheep in the very area that he was to later lead the children of Israel.

Jethro, or Reuel, gave one of his daughters, Zipporah, to Moses for his wife. Their first born son was Gershom, which means "sojourner or temporary, dweller," so named because Moses said he had been a stranger in the land.

(Read Ex. 2:23-25) What might later appear to be a possible mistake is that when Joseph brought his father and all his family to Egypt they were treated as a special class by Joseph and the Pharaoh. This caused resentment on the part of the Egyptians, so that after Joseph and the Pharaoh died, this resentment began to build and it turned the tables on the Israelites. Instead of be-

ing treated as a special class, they ended up in servitude to the Egyptians. As time went on, this servitude became more and more onerous. It eventually became bad enough that the Israelite people started crying out to God for deliverance. In verse 25 we're told **"and God had respect unto them,"** i.e. He heard their cry with the intent to do something about it.

(Read Ex. 3:1-6) According to my Bible dictionary, Horeb was a range of mountains of which Mt. Sinai is the most prominent. [*Side note: I recommend that if you would like to learn more about what I believe is the real Mt. Sinai, go to [www.baseinstitute.org](http://www.baseinstitute.org) on the web and order their DVD, "Search For Mt. Sinai—Mountain of Fire." It is \$15.00 plus postage. The gentlemen who made this DVD point out a number of things from Scripture that many of us, including me, read over without realizing the real significance, that will make the story of the Exodus much more meaningful to you. I believe you will find it very worthwhile.] It is here that Moses kept the flock of his father-in-law.*

We're told in verse 2 that an angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the flame, but in verse 6 Moses hid his face as he was afraid to look upon God. God says in Ex. 33:20, **"Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."** However, there are many manifestations of God that man has seen such as this burning bush that Moses is seeing. I am not an expert on electricity, but what little I know about static electricity leads me to believe that this was the phenomena that made the bush to appear to be burning, but not being burned, and why Moses had to remove his shoes to approach the bush so that he was well grounded. While I don't want to take away from any of the miracles of God, it appears to me that quite often God uses natural phenomena to effect His miracles. The miracle is often more a miracle of timing than of the event itself.

Notice that God introduces Himself to Moses as the God of Moses' father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. This fact will have significance a little later in our study.

(Read Ex. 3:7-10) The fact that God was

telling Moses that He was going to deliver the children of Israel from the oppression of the Egyptians was something that had been promised to Abraham, so it was expected, at least to some of the people. The problem in situations like this is, we as people usually fail to understand and thus believe the wonderful workings of God. We think the situation is impossible, even for God, all too often. The impact to Moses was in verse 10, God is telling Moses that he is the one by whom God is going to deliver the people out of Egypt. For a moment, put yourself in Moses' place and imagine what your thoughts might be if you were told such a thing.

(Read Ex. 3:11-15) Remember the Moses that killed the Egyptian who was smiting the Hebrew (Ex. 2:11). Smiting the Egyptian was Moses' idea of delivering the Israelites from the Egyptians, i.e. his thought of deliverance was that of doing so by force. So when God told Moses that He was sending him to the Pharaoh to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, suddenly, this put things under a different light. Immediately, Moses started thinking of reasons that he was not qualified for the job. He asks the question, **"Who am I?"** Obviously all of these reasons came to mind immediately that made Moses question why had God chosen him.

However, God reassured him that He would be with Moses and as a token or a pledge of this, God told Moses that when he brought the Israelites out of Egypt that they would serve God on this very mountain that Moses was on at that moment.

Moses then began to put forth his arguments as to why he could not do the job. He said that when he went to the children of Israel and told them the God of their fathers had sent him, they would immediately question Moses' authority by asking him what the name is of the God that sent him? Moses asks God, what shall I say?

The translators of the King James and several other versions have capitalized the beginning of God's answer to Moses' question as if that were God's name. The phrase **"I am that I am"** is not the name, but literally means "I will be what I will be (or become)." God then tells Mo-

ses to say to the children of Israel, **“I am (I will be) hath sent me unto you.”** This is like saying “I will be \_\_\_\_\_ hath sent me unto you. The blank would be filled in “according to the needs of those with whom He is in covenant. He who becometh Saviour, Redeemer, Deliverer, Strengthened, Comforter, etc.” (note in Companion Bible)

The actual name that God instructed Moses to give to the people is in verse 15, **“The LORD God of your fathers....”** “LORD” is from the Hebrew *Yehweh* with “Jehovah” being the English translation. The name “God” is from the Hebrew *Elohim*. Dr. Bullinger Appendix 4 of the Companion Bible says, “While Elohim is God as the Creator of all things, Jehovah is the same God in covenant relation to those whom He has created. Jehovah means the Eternal, the Immutable One, He Who WAS, and IS, and IS to COME.” So while God first told Moses that He was the God (or Elohim) of Moses’ fathers, He now adds “LORD” (or Jehovah) to the name. This gives us a more complete understanding of the promise that God made to Abraham in Gen. 17:8, **“I will be their God.”**

God then adds, **“This is my name for ever (for the ages), and this is my memorial unto all generations.”**

(Read Ex. 3:16-22) God then tells Moses to gather the elders of Israel and tell them what He has told Moses and He says that the elders will believe him and go with him to the Pharaoh. He is to then tell the Pharaoh that the LORD God has met with them and then ask that the Pharaoh let them go three days into the wilderness that they may sacrifice to Him there. However, He tells Moses that the Pharaoh will not let them go. God then says that He will smite the Egyptians with all His wonders that He is going to do and when He is done, the Pharaoh will let them go.

When they go, God tells them not to go empty handed, but they are to borrow of their Egyptian neighbors jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment which they are to put on their sons and daughters by which they are to spoil the Egyptians. JRL

## PAUL’S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Romans 13 is a very controversial chapter in many quarters and probably one of the least understood. (Read Romans 13:1-2) I have known some, very good men with good intentions, just almost want to tear this page out of the Bible because they can’t agree with what is written here by Paul. Part of our problem is that we hold Romans 13 out separate from all else that is written in the book of Romans and try to deal with it by itself. Yet we have seen in our study so far that there has been a flow of thought throughout the book moving from one subject to another rather smoothly as Paul introduces new thought and information. Romans 13 is no different. If we look back at chapter 12, verses 18 and 21, we’re told **“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”** And **“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”** Romans 13 now discusses how we do this and why.

Let’s again first look at who Paul was writing to as we discussed when we began our study of the book of Romans. From the list of names that Paul gives us in the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter, we determined that basically there were two groups of people represented in the congregation, one group were Jews. A good part of the reason that the Jews rejected Christ, was that it had been engrained in them that the Romans were the enemy and thus God wanted them to destroy the Romans. They expected the Messiah to be a military commander who would somehow lead them to victory over the Romans. Even Paul had been raised with this thought constantly in his mind. If God wanted Israel, or Judah, to rule the world, the first thing they had to do was to get rid of the Romans. Christ did not fit the bill of an outstanding military commander, so He could not be the Messiah. This was not the current thinking of the Jews that were part of this congregation, but it certainly had been. I would imagine that many of them were still confused because this had been so much a part of their lives.

The other main group were Britons who were basically war captives. In verse 7 of chapter 16 we are introduced to Andronicus and Junia. When we looked at the meaning of those names, we determined that these were probably Roman names for a man named Caradoc and his wife. He had been the commander of the British forces in Britian who were fighting against the Romans, had been betrayed and captured as a result, and he and his family had been brought to Rome for trial. At his trial, to the surprise of everyone, the Roman senate, because of their great admiration for his military genius, let him live, but made him stay in Rome for seven years and promise to never take up arms against Rome again. It was near the end of this seven year period that Paul is writing this epistle. Caradoc and his wife left Rome when the seven year period was up, as did some of his children, but others remained in Rome. Claudia, whose real name was Gladys, had been so taken by Claudius, the Emperor at the time of their capture, that he renamed her after himself, remained and married Rufus Pudens, who may have been a half brother to Paul, and was probably the Roman military officer that had brought the family to Rome following their capture. Linus, her brother, stayed and became the bishop of Rome. At any rate, they were there as war captives. At least part of their family had been converted to Christianity by Joseph of Arimathea, who had gone to Britian very shortly after the resurrection of Christ, and ultimately the rest followed. They would have had reason to be antagonistic toward the Romans, as did the Jews, but when we can look back on all that happened as a result of their presence in Rome, we have to appreciate the sovereignty of God, since their family had much to do with the spread of the gospel over the world.

Keep these facts in mind, and let's turn to the law in Leviticus 26. (Read Lev. 26:3-13) By law, God says that if they obeyed His commandments and statutes, they would prosper in their land and would be protected from their enemies. (Read Lev. 26:14-39) Again, by law, if they disobeyed God, He has told them He would bring all kinds of curses upon them and their enemies

would come in and take over their land and they would be removed into their enemy's land. (Read Lev. 26:40-46) If, after they were taken captive by their enemies, they repented, then by law, God would rescue them. Deuteronomy 28 pretty much repeats this law, but adds in verse 48 (Read) that their enemies would put an iron yoke on their neck. Remember Deuteronomy means the second law. But especially keep in mind that the means of escape from such captivity was to genuinely repent. In the book of Judges, we see this whole process take place six times, but still the people failed to abide by God's law. In the book of Jeremiah, we see this played out in the Babylonian captivity of Judah in a way that we might understand it better.

(Read Jeremiah 27:1-17) (The name Jehoiakim in verse one should be Zedekiah.) Keep God's sovereignty in mind. He can do whatever He pleases, and we're told here that He is warning these nations, including Judah, that He is going to bring Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, upon these nations. If they will submit to Nebuchadnezzar, they will be allowed to remain in their land, but if not, they will be removed from their land. God is bringing judgment upon these nations for their sins against Him, but He is giving them a choice of being able to stay in their land or be removed from it. Nebuchadnezzar, at this point was far from a nice man, he was a tyrant, so I think we can see how difficult the decision was for these various kings, including King Zedekiah.

In chapter 28, another prophet, Hananiah, basically called Jeremiah a liar in front of the priests and all the people in the temple. He said that God had told him that within two years He would break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar and would return the vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple along with Jeconiah, who would have been the king. Jeremiah told him he hoped he was right, but he would only believe him when this came to pass. Hananiah then took the yoke that God had instructed Jeremiah to make and put on his own neck and broke it and said that God would do the same to the king of Babylon. (Read Jeremiah 28:12-14) The wooden yoke meant that they would be in subjection to

Nebuchadnezzar in their own land, the iron yoke meant they would be in subjection to Nebuchadnezzar in the land of Babylon.

If you recall, the captivity and transport of the children of Judah took place in at least three efforts. By the time the above took place there were already children of Judah in the land of Babylon. Jeremiah wrote them a letter telling them what they needed to do while in captivity. He says they were to build houses, plant gardens, take wives and beget children, because he tells them in verse 10 of chapter 29 that they were going to be there 70 years. (Read Jeremiah 29:7) This sounds very much like what Paul is telling us in Romans 13. They were there 70 years before they were able to return to their own land. It wasn't until Babylon fell to the Medo-Persians that this happened. Daniel was a young boy when he was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, but as he grew up and matured, he took the advice that Jeremiah gave the Judahites and ultimately became one of the most trusted of all of the subjects of the king of Babylon. When the Medes and Persians took the city of Babylon, he became the most trusted man in the Persian administration. (Read Daniel 6:1-3) The other princes and presidents became very jealous of Daniel and tricked King Darius into signing a decree that they thought would get rid of Daniel. (Read Dan. 6:5-9) We all know what happened next in that Daniel refused to obey the decree and prayed to God as was his custom and ended up in the lion's den, much to the dismay of King Darius. Daniel, of course was saved from the lions, but the next morning those who had accused him didn't fare as well. The result was that the king signed another decree. (Read Daniel 6:25-28) Remember verse 8. Technically Persia, or Iran today, is still under this decree since it cannot be altered, therefore, their background is Christian. Someday, I believe we will see them come back to this decree.

In Daniel 9, we're told that Daniel understood, apparently from Jeremiah's writings, that the length of time that Judah was to be in the Babylonian captivity was 70 years and those 70 years had now gone by. Daniel then prayed a prayer of repentance for Judah. (Read Dan. 9:3-15) Daniel

could pray for repentance for the nation since he was in a major leadership position even though that position was in the Persian government. Once this was accomplished, Cyrus released all of the Judahites who wished to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple. This is an example of how the law worked—corruption-judgment-repentance-freedom. With this in mind, let's go back to Romans 13.

As we discussed at the beginning, there had been no repentance on the part of the Jews, so God had put them under the control of the Roman government. For them to try to defeat the Romans was actually an act of contempt of court, the judgment of which was the death penalty. We see this carried out on the nation in 70 A.D. But Paul is telling this congregation at Rome to subject themselves to the Romans because they were in their position because God had put them there because of the sins of the Jewish nation. Though the Britons were never totally defeated by the Romans, certainly God had caused these Britons who were in Rome to be there for His purpose. As we have mentioned before, this family played a major role in the spread of Christianity, even though most of the family died as martyrs.

(Read Romans 13:1-5) Paul is writing this primarily to this congregation at Rome because of the circumstances that existed at that time. Actually Rome had a pretty reasonable judicial process, so that if a man didn't antagonize the government, the government pretty much let the person alone. It wasn't until later that Christians were persecuted, but this was because they started to openly reject the authority of the Emperor and things only got worse from there. Paul is telling them here that God has given the Emperor authority here and that they should obey the Roman laws, not only from fear of the wrath of the Emperor if they disobeyed, but for their own conscience sake.

(Read Romans 13:6-10) Some of the people that object to what this chapter says do so because of these verses. They don't want them applied to themselves in this day and time. (Read Matt. 22:15-22) If we can understand the sovereignty of God and that He actually causes nations

to attack and destroy other nations or put them in captivity as part of His overall plan and purpose, and that at this time in history, He had put Judah into subjection to Rome for that purpose, I think we can then understand why Christ answered these Pharisees and Herodians the way He did. Paul is telling this congregation at Rome the same thing. If we look at our current day situation, we need to understand that God has put us, the U.S., in captivity to the Babylonian system. This occurred in 1913-14 when the Federal Reserve Act was passed. We, as a nation, need to understand that the way we get out of this captivity is not by resisting the paying of taxes, but rather to repent both as individuals and as a nation. This is God's law. Repentance will happen, but I don't know what will have to happen to bring it about.

The answer, Paul says, is to love one another. He then lists the last 5 of the Ten Commandments that have to do with how we deal with each other and tells us that all of these commandments are covered in the commandment, "**Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.**" If we could learn to love each other as we should, there really would be no need of these five commandments. Remember that the word love is from the Greek, *agapae*, which we have previously defined as head love, as opposed to heart love. It is love that takes a conscious effort to do.

Remember what we read last lesson in Matt. 5:43, "**Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.**" This was what was being taught in that day by the Jewish priests. But, though the first phrase is part of God's law as we just discussed, the second is man's law. Christ continued in verse 44, "**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the**

**children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**" I.e., God has given us an example of love in that He takes care of His enemies just as He takes care of those who love Him. We need to follow His example.

(Read Romans 13:11-14) I believe that Paul thought it entirely possible that Christ would return in his day, though he did not dwell on it. He just said it was high time that they started acting like Christ's return could happen at any time. He wasn't accusing those in the Roman congregation of anything different than he felt of himself. He includes himself in his admonition.

This chapter remained a mystery to me for several years as I watched men, who I now realize didn't understand the situation either, try to justify their defiance to the tax laws and the many onerous regulations that we have to deal with. It wasn't until I realized that the release from this injustice was through repentance, not through rebellion, that I understood this chapter. As part of their defense by those who wished to rebel, they used the example of how our nation was founded by the rebelling of our nation's forefathers against King George of England. This, at the time, presented me with a dilemma as I couldn't answer them. We have to understand who God is judging and why, and understand God's sovereignty to understand this. If we can comprehend all of this, then I think we can understand that until God removes these higher powers, we are to obey them, but we are to also understand that repentance is our release and though it has to be on a national scale, it begins with each of us as individuals. Again, as I have said before, we need to learn to look at the big picture, God's overall plan and purpose for mankind. JRL

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