

KINGDOM SPIRIT

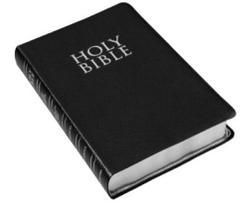
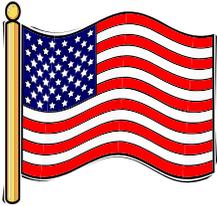
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“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1402

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

We started studying Revelation 13 in our last issue. Continuing with chapt. 13 we note, It has been the desire of man at least as far back as Nimrod, the builder of Babel, to rule the world. What might surprise us is that, in effect, man has wanted to rule in the place of God, to be God. We might take a minute to look at what Christ was like after His resurrection, as what He was, is what man has sought to know and be through the ages. If you watch science fiction movies or read science fiction books, the hero is always trying to figure out how to do the things that Christ did after His resurrection. Time and space were no longer boundaries to Him. He could be here one minute and somewhere else the next. He did not have to have a door to enter or leave a room. He could change His appearance to match the necessity of the moment. He had the freedom of a spirit, but ate solid food with His friends and could be touched as if in the flesh. These have been characteristics that man has desired from Nimrod's time at least. The building of the tower of Babel was not to try to build it high enough to reach heaven physically, but rather to try to discover these secrets, the mysteries of the religions of the various kingdoms since all profess to be searching for the answers to these same secrets. Often, through the ages, men have professed to have discovered some of these secrets which then attracted more men to these various religions and orders. But note that it has always been secrets and mysteries. No one has actually found out these se-

crets, yet, even today we have men still striving to unlock these secrets apart from God. They believe that they just have to gain sufficient knowledge to be able to unlock these secrets. Today we call this "Gnosticism," gnosis meaning knowledge. There were people in Scripture who thought this knowledge could be obtained without going through Jesus Christ. Acts 8 relates the story of a man named Simon who had been a sorcerer and had established quite a reputation for his greatness. Simon, after listening to Philip preach became converted and was baptized. When he saw Peter and John lay their hands on others that had been baptized and they received the Holy Spirit, he offered them money that whosoever he laid hands on might also receive the Holy Spirit. Of course, he was quickly told that this power was not something to be bought or sold. He is given the distinction of being one of the founders of Gnosticism.

Getting back to Rev. 13, the Roman Catholic Church is not just the ecclesiastical authority but was the civil authority as well. In verse 4, while the dragon, i.e. the Roman Empire, was worshipped, we're told that it was this dragon that gave power to the beast. Because of the power of the dragon, the question was, who was able to make war with the beast? Obviously, very few, as the military power of this beast was not seriously challenged for several centuries

(Read Rev. 13:5-10) In addition to being powerful militarily, we're told that **“there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.”** We have discussed briefly in the past the attitude that developed among many of the Popes. Perhaps a statement made by Pope Boniface VIII in his Un-

um Sanctum in 1302 will exemplify this attitude. Note that he uses examples of what Popes before him have done to justify what he is doing.

“Wherefore, no marvel if it be in my power to change times and times, to alter and abrogate laws, to dispense with all things, yea, with the precepts of Christ; for where Christ biddeth Peter put up his sword, and admonishes His disciples not to use any outward force in revenging themselves, do not I, Pope Nicolas, writing to the bishops of France, exhort them to draw out their material swords? And whereas Christ was present Himself at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, do not I, Pope Martin, in my distinction, inhibit the spiritual clergy to be present at marriage feasts, and also to marry? Moreover, where Christ biddeth us lend without hope of gain, do not I, Pope Martin, give dispensation to do the same? What should I speak of murder, making it to be no murder or homicide to slay them that be excommunicated?”

“Likewise against the law of nature, item against the apostles, also against the canons of the apostles, I can and do dispense...”

I think we can see that Pope Boniface VIII made it quite clear that he and other Popes before him had the absolute right to alter or abrogate the law of Christ and the apostles. The problem comes when men claim to be vicars (in the place) of Christ, but then think that God has empowered them to overstep their bounds. To claim the right to overrule Christ is the way of a rebel leader, not a mere vicar. The Pope thus staged a revolt against Jesus Christ. This was what John meant when he said that this beast (or the little horn of Daniel 7) had a mouth speaking arrogant blasphemies.

I might note that the Pope that immediately preceded Boniface VIII was an elderly man who was a true spiritual leader and loved by the people. However, before being named Pope, he was known as Peter the Hermit and lived in a cave on a mountain top. He was probably as surprised as anyone at being named Pope and was probably the most miserable Pope in history. He hated the luxury of the Vatican. As Pope he was known as Celestine V. He only lasted as Pope for 107 days

before he resigned, much to the dismay of the people. Ten days later the conclave of Cardinals met and within 24 hours had elected Benedict Gaetani as Pope who then took on the name of Boniface VIII. The new Pope soon realized that he could never be as popular with the people as their beloved Peter the Hermit. Considering Peter as a potential threat to his pontificate, he gave orders that the old man be arrested and brought back to Rome, by force if necessary. However, Peter got word of this and started moving through the mountains and the soldiers could not find him. Knowing that he had to leave Italy to avoid capture, he boarded a ship headed for Greece, but the ship was blown back by a storm and wrecked on the Italian shore. Peter survived the shipwreck, but his enthusiastic admirers recognized him and soon proclaimed him to be the true Pope. The troops found him and arrested him. He was sent to a prison in the isolated fortress of Fumone. He rejoiced when he saw the tiny cell prepared for him as it resembled his cave on the mountain. However, he died some ten months later to the expected rumors of murder, most of which implicated Boniface.

People today who are looking for a future Anti-Christ are neither reading the Scriptures correctly, or remembering or learning their history. There have already been many who have been as wicked as any that are being dreamed up by the futurists that are saying that everything in Revelation is yet to happen.

The power to speak these blasphemies and great things was to last 42 months, or 1260 days or years. There are several 1260 day, or year, time frames discussed, so it is difficult sometimes to determine just what time period we are talking about. In this case, the beginning of the Papal rise to power started with Emperor Justinian and his rewriting of the Roman law. As we have mentioned before, he rewrote the law in 529 and revised and published it as the Corpus Juris Civilis in 534 A.D. 1260 years from these dates takes us to 1789 to 1794, the dates of the French Revolution. We'll discuss this more in a little bit.

Rev. 13:7, 8 tells us, **“And it was given unto him (the beast) to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in**

the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” In Daniel 7:21-22, Daniel, speaking of the “little horn,” said, **“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 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.”** So the time given to this beast, or the “little horn,” is a rather long time, until Christ returns and sets up His kingdom on the earth, i.e. until the first resurrection. I believe that we are very near that time now.

I have spent a good part of this last week studying the influence that the Roman Catholic Church has had in our past wars. I can assure you that it has been substantial and it would probably come as quite a surprise to many of us as to whose side they were on, or at least started out on. From our Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI and II down to our present day conflicts, the Vatican is involved in virtually every war in a fairly major way, usually to gain power, dominion, and/or wealth for the Church.

Following is quoted from a Bible study, The Book of Revelation by Dr. Stephen Jones.

“The extended Roman Empire began to be challenged by a new power in 1789-1794 with the French Revolution. The French Revolution was carried out by men who were well schooled in the occult—today we call it ‘New Age’ teaching. The man at the top who planned it (or at least who put the plan into execution) was a former Jesuit professor at Inglestadt University in Bavaria. His name was Adam Weishaupt. He used his Jesuit training to shape what he called the ‘Illuminati,’ which was Latin for ‘enlightened ones, or illuminated ones.’

“The Jesuit order was founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1540. They functioned really as a military order to defend the Papacy. The order was built around absolute obedience and submission to the Pope—and, of course, to the General of the order. However, the fall of the city of Constantinople in 1453 had brought Greek culture to the West as streams of Greek-speaking refugees had been forced to flee that city. With them came manuscripts and a new knowledge of ancient Greece and Greek philosophy.

“The idea of Democracy had been developed in ancient Athens, and this idea began to circulate in Europe. It was directly opposed to the idea that monarchs enjoyed a ‘divine right’ to rule others. These democratic views also directly opposed the idea of a Papal right to rule others. Freedom of religion, then, began to be popularized.

“And because the Scriptures were being pub-

lished by the new printing presses throughout Europe, more and more people saw the discrepancies between the Bible and Roman Catholic teaching. A great many sincere Christians had believed that the Church was God’s organization on earth regardless of its corruption. They regretted the corruption, but they merely regretted that God had chosen corrupt Popes and wealthy Cardinals to rule in the Church. Most did not question the Pope’s ‘divine right’ to rule. “But all of these events were leading to a massive change in the Christian world. This change affected people in either of two ways. Some, like the Protestants, tried to set up a better, more democratic form of Christianity, ruled not by one man, but by elders or by the congregations themselves. Others, however, sought an alternative to Christianity itself, seeking ‘lost knowledge’ from the distant past that might empower them to overthrow the Pope—and Christ Himself. This second path became the foundation of the modern occult, the new power of the second beast in Revelation 13.”

In verse 3 of Rev. 13, we were told that the one of the heads of the beast was wounded fatally, at least it appeared that way. This is said before we’re told in verse 5 that power was given to the beast 1260 days, or years. We just read in Daniel 7 that the “little horn,” or the beast here in Rev. 13, would prevail over the saints of the most high until Ancient of days would come, which we interpreted to mean the first resurrection. It appears logical to me, after doing more study, that rather than the beast being killed and revived before the 1260 years began, it would be at the end of the 1260 years, and then when revived, it continues to prevail against the saints of the most high until the second coming of Christ. If I am correct, then, this fatal wound would have to come at the end of the 1260 years which takes us to the French Revolution. Prior to the revolution, France was probably the strongest Catholic nation on earth, both from the standpoint of military strength and of adherent’s zeal for the Church. The reason for this fatal wound is given in Rev. 13:10. The Catholic Church had certainly been guilty of forcing its adherents into captivity to the Church through the element of fear. Untold thousands, or even millions, had been killed for their failure to agree with the Church. This fatal wound is God’s judgment of the Church for these sins. The Church had to suffer the same that it had caused to be done to the people.

Before we take a look at the second beast portrayed in chapt. 13, we need to take a little

closer look at some other things that were happening prior to the French Revolution. It has long been man's goal to be God like and to rule over other men. Part of the deception by the serpent over Eve was that he told her, **"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."** (Gen. 3:5) This was part of the enticement to get her to eat of the forbidden fruit and to give it to her husband as well. As we have already discussed concerning Nimrod, we're told in Gen. 11:4, **"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."** The Hebrew word for "name" is "shem." "Shem", the son of Noah, happened to be the person who had authority from God to be ruling at that time. Nimrod was rebelling against Shem and yet was wanting to establish himself in the same position. Had they been able to carry out their plan, things would have been very different for God said in verse 6, **"and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."** Nimrod apparently was close to learning secrets that God has withheld from man to this point and God is saying that if he was allowed to attain to the goal that he had set out to reach, nothing would then be restrained from him, thus God confounded their language and whatever secrets that Nimrod and his people were close to discovering remains a secret yet today.

At the time prior to the French Revolution, there were several organizations in addition to the Roman Catholic Church that were set on man bringing the Kingdom of God to the earth that they might rule it. Some were somewhat secret, other were not. Of course, most notable among them was the Roman Catholic Church which openly taught that God had given it authority to rule the world. The Church based its claim on a supposed "apostolic succession" from Peter.

One of the challengers to this rule was what was and is called the Dragon Court. The members of this Court were European royal families who claimed a "messianic-bloodline," based on a supposed physical descent from Jesus through Mary Magdalene. We don't always see names of this type of organization, but we can and do see their works. In recent years we have seen

movies and stories, such as those about Nostradamus, that are really mind conditioning propaganda pieces sponsored by such organizations. By mixing a little bit of truth with a lot of fiction, this group believes that they are descended directly from Jesus and his brother James who is supposed to be Joseph of Arimathea. We know from history that Joseph was exiled in Britain and that his descendants married into the line of the kings of Europe which is truth, but that James and Joseph were the same is not. Another falsehood is that Jesus did not die on the cross, but rather married Mary Magdalene and had two sons, one of which was also named Jesus, who later received the Davidic Crown Prince's title of 'Justus.' There are 33 "Holy Grail" bloodline Royal Houses of Europe who lay claim to this divine right to rule. It is hoped by this group that their story outdoes the Vatican's claim of apostolic succession from Peter, since it makes no claim of direct bloodline descent from Peter.

Another powerful challenger organization is the Masonic Order. They wield great power in world affairs and are best known for sponsoring the French Revolution in 1789-1793. Most of us are somewhat familiar with local Masonic lodges, but are totally unfamiliar with the organization as a whole and their goal of world rule. While you won't necessarily find this in the lower order of Masonism, in the higher orders gnosticism plays a very large part in their beliefs.

Though there are several smaller organizations, the last major player we will list is Jewish Messianism. These people believe that they are chosen to rule the world. Their power in past centuries was largely limited by the Roman Church, but certain wealthy Jews attained great power over the various European monarchs by means of monetary loans. This power eventually frightened the monarchs, and one by one the nations of Europe expelled all Jews, the majority having to pay for the deeds of the few. In the 1800's, largely through the influence of a new Jewish banking house of the House of Rothschild, Jews were given freedom as citizens. From then on, their proportion of power has increased steadily to the point where they are today the dominant—though not the only—power. Jewish messianism has received huge support from the Protestant evangelical movements.

The one spirit that permeates all of the

above to one degree or another, which gives all these messianic movements a common thread, is their obsession with the occult. We could spend a great amount of time just skimming the surface of what these organizations have done, are doing, and have planned, but it is not for the faint hearted. We will explain a little more as to why we have brought these subjects up in our next lesson as we continue in Rev. 13, but I think that even this much will help us understand better a lot of the propaganda in the form of "entertainment," in movies, books, TV shows, etc. that we are being deluged with right now. "Harry Potter," "National Treasure," "The Da Vinci Code," and the Nostrodamus movies are all examples of this type of mind control. Many of the Disney movies that are continually promoting magic have their effect. I'm not telling anyone what they can or cannot watch, read, or listen to, but we need to be aware that there is an agenda behind all of this and why. JRL

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

In our last issue, we had begun studying Jer. 22 and are now ready to start with verse 10. (Read Jeremiah 22:10-12) If we put the names to those referred to, this passage will make more sense. God tells Jehoiakim to not weep for the dead (Josiah, Jehoiakim's father), but to weep for him (Jehoahaz) that goeth away. To briefly refresh our memories, Jehoahaz ascended to the throne when his father Josiah died, but he only reigned for 3 months before Necho, king of Egypt, took him captive and took him to Egypt where he died. Necho then installed Jehoiakim as king of Judah. "Shallum" in verse 11 is another name for Jehoahaz. God says that he has been taken away and will not return to Judah, but will die where he was taken. He was the first king in the line of David to die outside of Israel.

(Read Jeremiah 22:13-19) God then directs His words directly at Jehoiakim. He accuses him of building his house by unrighteousness, causing the builders to work as slaves without wages. God then asks Jehoiakim if he thinks he is going to reign because of the house that he has built for himself. He tells him to look at what his father did, i.e. execute judgment and justice, and reminds him that it was well with Josiah. God accuses Jehoiakim of ruling by shedding innocent blood, oppression, and violence. He then tells Jehoiakim that he will be buried with the burial of an ass, i.e. he wouldn't be buried at all. If an ass died, it would have been drug outside the city and left to the carrion. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly what happened to Jehoiakim. II Chronicles 36:6 tells us that Nebuchadnezzar had him bound in fetters to take him to Babylon. But Josephus tells us that at he apparently died before the journey began and at the instigation of Nebuchadnezzar, his body was thrown outside the city walls and left. Though Jehoahaz died in Egypt, we assume he was buried, but there is no record of Jehoiakim ever being buried, the only king in the line of David to suffer such a consequence.

(Read Jeremiah 22:20-30) The “passages” in verse 20 means Abarim, the mountains beyond Jordan, the range of Nebo. God is telling him to go to the mountains where he can see into the countries that he went to when he had troubles, rather than come to God. God says that He spoke to Jehoiakim when he was prosperous, but he would not obey His voice. Now all of the rulers (pastors) of these other nations (lovers) shall go into captivity. This should make Jehoiakim ashamed and confounded for all of his wickedness. In verse 23 God is referring to king Jehoiakim. Lebanon is put here for the cedars that are grown there and cedars is put for houses built from the timber of these cedars. God mocks Jehoiakim by saying, **“how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail!”**

The Companion Bible has the following note concerning “Coniah” in verse 24. *He is called “Jeconiah” (I Chron.8:16), which means “Let Jehovah establish”; but the cutting off of the Divine name “Je” (for Jah or Jehovah) is meant to show the departure of Jehovah from Jeconiah, and that he himself would be cut off.* This is also another name for Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim. Basically, God is telling Jehoiachin (who followed Jehoiakim to the throne, but only for 3 months) that even if he was so favored to be signet ring on God’s right hand, He would still pluck him up. God says he is going to give him and his mother into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar who is going to take him into another land and he would not return to the land of Judah, but would die where Nebuchadnezzar took him. Then we find a very important curse that God put on Jehoiachin in verse 30, **“Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah.”** We’re not told here why God put this curse on Jehoiachin, we’ll find it a little later in our studies. We know from other records plus Matt. L that Jehoiachin did have 5 sons. What is meant here by **“Write ye this man childless”** is that none of his sons or his seed would ever succeed him to the throne of David. In Matt. 1:12, recording the genealogy of Jesus Christ, we’re told, **“And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias (Jehoiachin or Coniah) begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel, etc.”** So we

know, as we look at the complete genealogy, that Christ descended from Jechoiachin, thus this curse would apply to Him as well. How was He to become King of Kings and ultimately take David’s throne then? The apostle Paul gives us the answer in Romans 7:1-3. By Paul’s reasoning and understanding of God’s law, Christ had to be born of a woman descended from David to inherit the throne. But then, according to Paul’s writing in Romans 7:1-3, He had to die to be released from the curse. So it will be in His second coming that, having done both things in His first coming, He will inherit the throne and receive the kingdom. His first coming prepared Him for taking the throne as King of Kings.

(Read Jeremiah 23:1-8) “Pastors” doesn’t necessarily refer to ecclesiastical leadership, it can refer to all rulers, civil and ecclesiastical. Obviously, Judah was experiencing a complete failure of leadership. Looking far into the future, God says that He will gather the remnant of His people and again they will be fruitful and increase. He will appoint the leadership and He says the people shall no more fear or be dismayed and they will not be lacking anything. To bring this about He says in verse 5, **“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.”** The word “Branch” is from the Hebrew *tsemach* or *zemach*. It means “a sprout” which would indicate a sprout or branch from the root, not from another branch. We have discussed some before about the story of the Bible being written in the stars. I don’t pretend to have any astronomical knowledge, but depend on those who do. It is interesting to me that “zemach” is the name of the brightest star in the Zodiac sign “Virgo.” It is appropriate to our conversation in this lesson that just after God pronounces a curse on the last possible inheritor to the Davidic throne, that He introduces the true King of Kings that will ultimately occupy that throne. When I say the last possible inheritor to the Davidic throne, this does not mean that the throne will disappear, but we will have to study further to see how God keeps His promise to David to maintain that throne until the true King of Kings occupies it.

He goes on to say that the name of that King of Kings will be “The LORD our Righteous-

ness” and that when He reigns, both Judah and Israel will dwell in safety. In the King James Bible, “The LORD our Righteousness” is in all capital letters. An excerpt from Appendix 48 of the Companion Bible says, *The use of the large capitals by the translators of the A.V. is destitute of any authority, and merely indicates the importance which they attached to such words and phrases thus indicated.* In this case, I don’t see a problem, but there are some instances where the translators have done this that have mislead people doctrinally, so it is something that has to be looked at when we are confronted with it.

In those days, God will be known as the **“(God) which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land”** instead of the God that brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

(Read Jeremiah 23:9-32) Jeremiah is beside himself because of how the priests and prophets have misled the people. He sees what is happening to the people and what is going to happen and it weakens Jeremiah in despair. God says that the prophet and the priest are profane, their wickedness is found in the temple even. Because of this, God says He will bring evil upon them. He says He has seen the folly of the prophets in Israel when they caused the people to err. Now He says He has seen it in the prophets of Jerusalem, only it sounds like it is worse here. He says the prophets commit adultery, walk in lies and strengthen the hands of the evil doers so that none return from their wickedness. Unto God He says they are as Sodom and Gomorrah.

God continues to accuse the prophets of lying. To catch the people’s attention, they begin with, “I have dreamed.” He accuses them of trying to cause the people to forget His name by their dreams. He tells them that if they have a dream, to tell the people all of the dream. Then he who has the true Word of God is to speak His Word faithfully. He indicates the people will be able to tell which is the truth. It will be like the chaff and the wheat. One can tell the wheat from the chaff, so it would be if the so called prophets were to relate their dreams and compare them with the truth of God. God blames the condition of the people on the prophets who have prophesied lies. He did not send these prophets nor command

them to teach what they are teaching. They are directly contradicting Jeremiah by saying that Jerusalem would have peace and the no evil could come upon the people.

(Read Jeremiah 23:33-40) One trick these false prophets were using was that they would preface what they were going to say with “burden of the LORD” indicating that some special burden had been given them by God. They apparently would begin claiming a “burden of the LORD” and then say, “thus saith the LORD.” God says He will severely punish anyone using this approach to the people.

Jeremiah made some prophecies that have carried over into our day and time, though the initial fulfillment took place many centuries ago. Chapter 24 is an example of one of these prophecies. (Read Jeremiah 24:1-3) Note that God is showing this vision of the two baskets of figs to Jeremiah after Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, plus many of the princes (rulers), carpenters and smiths had been taken as captives to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. These were the choice people of the land. Incidentally, Daniel and his three friends, all young boys, were among these captives. The figs in one basket are very good figs while the figs in the other basket are very bad, not fit to eat.

(Read Jeremiah 24:4-7) Often in Scripture, God uses the fig tree to represent Judah and the olive tree to represent Israel. Here He is using the figs to represent Judah, but He is dividing them into good and bad. The good figs represent the people that God is sending out of the land of Judah for their good. Of these, God says He will bring them back to their land where He will build them and not pull them down. He will give them a heart to know Him; they will be His people and He will be their God.

(Read Jeremiah 24:8-10) The bad figs represent Zedekiah, his princes, the rest of the people that are left in the land and those that dwell in Egypt. Verse 9 is a prophecy that still haunts these people today, **“And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them.”** Of those that return to the land of Judah, there is still this division at the time of Christ. Those that accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah were the good figs and those that refused to accept Him were the bad figs. The same thing

happened again there. The majority of those who became Christians left the land of Judah prior to 70 A.D. Those who were left that survived the destruction by the Romans were then scattered again throughout the world. By 70 A.D. Christian churches were flourishing in the British Isles and throughout most of Europe and Asia Minor, which indicates that most of the Christians had left Jerusalem helping evangelize the rest of the world. While most of the people called Jews today are not genealogical Jews, the fact that in joining the genealogical Jews they have also subscribed to Judaism, which rejects Jesus Christ, which in turn puts them in the bad fig category as well. So the curse applies to them as it does to the Jews descended from Judah.

God goes on to say in verse 10 that He will send the sword, the famine and the pestilence among them until they are consumed off the land of Judah. As we continue our study, we will see that this is exactly what happened, with the exception of a very small remnant.

Chapter 25 also bears a prophecy that is still felt today. (Read Jeremiah 25:1-7) Jeremiah tells us this prophecy was given to him in the fourth year of Jehoiakim which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah says He has been prophesying for 23 years, but the people have not hearkened to what he has been telling them. Likewise they had not listened to other prophets that God had sent to them. They all were telling Judah to repent and turn away from their idol worship and evil ways. Yet the people have never hearkened to what God has been telling them through the prophets.

(Read Jeremiah 25:8-11) Therefore, God is going to send the Babylonians against not only Jerusalem and Judah, but against all the nations surrounding Judah. It was to these other nations' gods that the people of Judah were turning to instead of their own true God. Because these other

nations had urged their gods and their ways on the Jews that God was going to destroy them by the Babylonians. Jeremiah tells them that the whole land will be a desolation and the people would serve the Babylonians for 70 years.

We will continue with Jeremiah 25 in our next issue, but I would like to point out that we need to pay attention to numbers in the Bible. They are not there by chance. They have meaning in themselves. Also, like this 70 years, we need to know starting dates and then follow them through to see the end results. The 70 years of Judah's captivity had at least two start dates as well. JRL