

KINGDOM SPIRIT

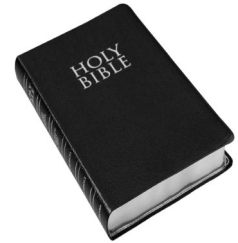
P O Box 279, Pleasant View, CO 81331

Phone 970-562-4874

e-mail ksm@fone.net

“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1708

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF LUKE

We are ready for Luke 5 this issue. (Read Luke 5:1-11) This is a little different account of how Jesus called Peter, James and John as apostles. As we have said before, Peter was quite materialistic. This great catch got to him and caused him to repent. But in repenting, he wanted Jesus to go away, presumably so that he would not have to face Him every day.

(Read Luke 5:12-16) We discussed part of the law concerning the healing of leprosy in our last lesson for a different purpose. Notice that Jesus is telling this man whom he had healed to follow that law by going to the priest with his sacrifice. We said in our last lesson that part of the reason for going to the priest was so that the priest could act as a second witness that the man was healed. Jesus told the man not to tell any man what had happened to him. By going to the priest, he had a second witness of his healing. Saying he was healed by himself possibly would not be accepted as fact by many people, but with the double witness, Jesus' fame spread abroad causing great multitudes to come to Jesus for healing.

(Read Luke 5:17-26) A part of Jesus' ministry was confronting the Pharisees, scribes, and priests. Part of the problem with these people was that they wanted all power to themselves. They were able to keep the people subservient to themselves with all of the laws that they had made up. To see Jesus take it upon Himself to have the power to forgive sin was blasphemy against God to them, but when He healed the paralyzed man,

this confirmed that He had power.

(Read Luke 5:27-32) Levi and Matthew are the same person. Publicans, or tax collectors were some of the most hated people there were. In Luke 3:12, 13 we read, after John the Baptist had told the people that they needed to bring forth fruit of repentance, **“Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.”** It was well known that these tax collectors would collect more than they were supposed to in order to enrich themselves, thus they were greatly hated. John told them that fruit of repentance in their case would be to collect only the amount that they were supposed to. For Jesus to sit down to eat with publicans and others of dubious reputations was a certain no-no to the scribes and Pharisees. Thus they asked why. Jesus' answer was really a put down to them in that He insinuated that they considered themselves sinless, thus above these publicans and sinners. The publicans and sinners were admitting their sin while the scribes and Pharisees considered themselves sinless.

(Read Luke 5:33-35) Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees a great deal here, though I doubt that they realized just how much he told them. First, He claims the title of the bridegroom. Hosea makes it clear that God is the bridegroom and I don't doubt that these scribes and Pharisees were aware of this. He also inferred that He would be taken from them. Again, I believe this was a clue that the scribes and Pharisees, if they had allowed themselves, would have recognized as referring to the Messiah. They were well versed in the writings of the prophets. Their ignorance in the case of Christ was self imposed. Jesus also took a swipe at their traditions that they put so much

stock in.

(Read Luke 5:36-39) Jesus is actually referring to the New Covenant in relation to the Old Covenant. It was not possible to mix the two. One could not repair the Old Covenant weakness with a part of the New Covenant, nor to try to repackage, so to speak, the Old Covenant with the New. The New Covenant had to be taken all or nothing. The difference between “if you will obey” and “I will put my laws in your mind” is an un-reconcilable difference.

(Read Luke 6:1-5) Vs. 1 tells us that this happened during a feast week. The first Sabbath would have been the first day of the feast, which in this case was probably Passover, and the second Sabbath would have been the regular Sabbath later in the week of the feast. The Pharisees were accusing Jesus and His disciples of working on the Sabbath by picking and rubbing the grain in their hand to remove the hull. Some say that the accusation was that of theft in that they were stealing grain. However, by God’s law it was lawful for them to pick grain or grapes from another man’s field or vineyard so long as they did not have a container to put it in or did not use a sickle to cut the grain down. (Deut. 23:24, 25)

So why did Jesus reply with the story of David eating the showbread that was only lawful for priests to eat? The answer is in Psalms 110:4, **“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”** This was a prophecy of Jesus Christ given to David by God. David being the forerunner of Christ, I believe this applied to him as well. As we have already discussed, Jesus became the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek following the death of John the Baptist. If David was then a priest after the order of Melchizedek, then it would have been lawful for he and his men to eat the showbread. Jesus then says **“That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath”**, i.e. as the High Priest, He had the authority to determine what was lawful on the Sabbath, not the Pharisees.

(Read Luke 6:6-11) We’re told this happened on another Sabbath. Jesus knowing the thoughts of the Pharisees challenged them by asking, **“is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?”** There was only one way they could answer Him, thus when He healed the man we’re told

they were filled with madness.

(Read Luke 6:12-19) Luke, like Matthew gives the names of the 12 apostles. That he is doing so in retrospect is evidenced by him saying of Simon, **(whom he also named Peter,)** since He did not name Simon Peter until later in His ministry.

(Read Luke 6:20-26) Verses 20-23 gives an abbreviated list of the Beatitudes that we read in Matt. 5. Luke adds some woes in the next 3 verses which are the reverse of some of the Beatitudes. The problem is not if someone is rich, but that the riches often become an idol of the heart. Neither is eating until full a problem, but rather that one fails to help those who are hungering. Laughing is not the problem, but rather why? Is one laughing at the expense of another? I once knew a pastor’s wife that believed that laughing was a sin, yet her children all seemed to have the nicest smiles and laughs that you could imagine, which seemed to be a true reflection of their personality. If praise from other people is what one wants, then they have their reward. Our concern should be what God thinks of us.

(Read Luke 6:27-45) Godly love is not well understood. We have discussed before the word “love” as we use it compared to the two primary Greek words in the New Testament that are translated “love” in our Bibles. The two words are *“agapao”* and *“phileo.”* I like to refer to agapao as head love and phileo as heart love. Head love is not a love that is necessarily a naturally occurring love, but rather a love that has to be worked at. Heart love is natural such as love of a friend. But it can never be as deep and fulfilling a love as head love can be. Agapao is a commanded love by God. He commands us to love (agapao) our enemies for example. God’s love toward us is agapao love. While a boy’s first love of a girl could be considered as phileo love, the enduring love, love that one has to work at, agapao love is what holds marriages together. Agapao love is the most rewarding love, whether it is loving one’s enemies or loving one’s wife, or loving God.

Agapao love is what makes verse 31 work, **“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”**

Vs. 37 is probably one of the most mis-used Scriptures in the Bible. The word as used in vs. 37 is from the Greek *“krino.”* While it is

translated “judge” most of the time in the New Testament, a couple of other words that it is sometimes translated are “determine” and “conclude.” If a person’s fruit makes it plain that they have been or are doing something wrong, we are not judging when we acknowledge it. If we are trying to determine what a person is thinking and we make our own conclusion, we are judging. If a person says he or she is a homosexual, we are not judging when we say that this is wrong. God says it is wrong. If we don’t know and there is no evidence to support a conclusion, but we conclude that a person is a homosexual, then we are judging.

But we have to be careful, when we see something that is wrong about another person because their fruits bear it out, that we are not guilty of the same thing. Hypocrisy is one of the most common and yet most despised of all sins.

Most of what is said in these verses requires common sense on our part of observe them. But if we keep the definition of love in our minds and willingly obey God concerning that love, we will be doing what is acceptable to God I believe.

(Read Luke 6:46-49) Not just learning God’s law is putting His law in our hearts and minds, but obeying His law is what does the engraving. God is faithful. If we do our part, He will do His.

(Read Luke 7:1-10) To get the full impact of this story, we need to know a little about the culture at that time. The Jews believed they were superior to any other people because they were “chosen.” Being superior, they had the right to make servants of people of other nations. The Romans, on the other hand believed they had the right (by might) to make servants of people of other nations. The Jews would accept people of other nations that converted to Judaism, but these converts were still not allowed past the people’s court in the temple or in their synagogues, i.e. they were not allowed to draw close to God as the Jews believed they did by being able to go into the inner court. Luke understood this better than any of the other authors of the gospels since he was a gentile Greek himself and was not allowed beyond the people’s court.

With this in mind, let’s turn to our story. The Roman centurion obviously had converted to Judaism and in an effort to earn a place close to God had even built with his own money a syna-

gogue for the Jews in Capernaum. He was obviously a very humble man. He did not feel he had the right to approach Jesus himself, so he asked some of the Jewish elders to approach Jesus for him. The Jews apparently believed that if they told Jesus that the centurion loved their nation, this would entice Jesus to go and heal the centurion’s servant. But the fact that he loved his servant enough to seek out Jesus to heal him probably played a bigger part in Jesus’ mind than that he loved the the Jewish nation. (Incidentally, Luke makes a point here in the words he uses. Nation is from the Greek word “*ethnos*” which is the same word that the word “gentile” is translated from. In effect, Luke is pointing out to Theophilus that both nations were basically on equal footing.)

However, after sending the Jewish elders to request that Jesus come to his home to heal his servant, the centurion apparently realized that if Jesus came to his home, he would have been considered unclean for a full week, thus would miss going to the synagogue on the Sabbath. To correct this he went to meet Jesus before he arrived at his home and asked Him to just say the word and his servant would be healed. When Jesus heard this He turned to the crowd that was following Him and said He “**had not found so great faith,** ,

no, not in Israel.” It was unheard of that one could just say the word rather than have to go to the paralyzed person’s bedside to heal him. This truly did indicate a very great faith. The centurion understood authority since he had one hundred men under him plus his servants. He recognized the authority of Jesus.

In Mathew’s account of this story, Jesus then said, **“And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”** Jesus is openly repudiating the Jew’s belief that their genealogy was all it took to have a covenant relationship with God. He is saying that this Roman soldier would be among those who ruled and reigned with Jesus, but many of the Jewish elders who were arrogantly promoting themselves over other nationalities would find themselves cast out into outer darkness. I believe “outer darkness” means being in a nation that had not yet recognized Jesus as their King. Recall in Daniel 2 we were told that the stone that was cut out without hands would destroy the metal image, and then would grow to fill the whole earth. This growth will take time. There will be nations that will accept Jesus right away and God’s light will be on them, but there will be nations that at first will continue to reject Him, thus will be without the light, i.e. be in outer darkness. This can be and will be reversed as people repent and swear allegiance to Christ.

(Read Luke 7:11-17) There is an interesting tradition that was followed at funerals during that time. According to an article by Dr. Stephen Jones in which he paraphrases from the book, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah by Alfred Edersheim, he says, “If the procession and funeral was according to custom in Galilee, an orator would have led the way, proclaiming the good deeds of the deceased. The bier (dargash) would have been carried by friends, all unshod, and the dead man’s mother would have preceded it, weeping for her son”.

Dr. Jones then quotes Edersheim directly: “Immediately before the dead came the women, this being peculiar to Galilee, the Midrash giving this reason of it, that woman had introduced death into the world.” In effect, it was an admission of

guilt. But this gives us an interesting picture. Here was a large group led by what was considered the introducer of death meeting another large group going the opposite direction led by the introducer of life. What brought them together is the weeping of the mother and the compassion of Jesus.

As with the story of the Roman centurion, Jesus was willing to risk defilement, by the standards of the Jews. He did not have to go into the Roman’s house as the Roman came out to Him. Here, though He touched the bier, or coffin, which brought about certain defilement, He brought life to the dead. The people apparently forgot this possible defilement when they saw the dead man rise up.

Luke does not give us the name of the young man. But early church records remember him by his Latin name, Maternus (from the Latin word “maternal”, of his mother). In his book, The Coming of the Saints, J. W. Taylor tells us in a footnote: “Three Saints—Eucharius, Valerius, and Maternus—all of whom had been pupils of St. Peter at Rome, were sent by him to Trier to preach the gospel of Christ. Eucharius was appointed as bishop, and Valerius and Maternus as his assistants. Maternus was of Hebrew birth, and came from the little town of Nain in Palestine, being ‘the only son of his mother,’ whom Christ had raised from the dead. But no special honour was at this time accorded him. He was the least of the three missionary disciples, one of the ‘personal witnesses’ who, as long as they lived, accompanied the other evangelists in most of their distant journeys.

We have a little more to discuss concerning Maternus that we will have to leave to our next issue. JRL

Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Prov. 27:1

Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips. Pros. 27:2

A STUDY OF THE BABYLONIAN SYSTEM

The Bible, both the New Testament and the Old Testament, is primarily to, for, and about Israel. This includes the story of creation and the flood, the Promises to Abraham, the history and the prophets, the Psalms and Proverbs and related books, the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the Apostles, and history pre-told from Christ's first advent until His second in the book of Revelations. However, there is a negative side to this story that is usually either ignored or very badly misunderstood. In our past work we have dealt primarily with the positive side of God's Plan and Purpose, but if we are to fully understand the fullness of God's plan, we need also to understand the negative side.

I like to look at God's plan as having two systems, both created by God, for the purpose of glorifying our God. I realize that many, if not most people will take offence at this statement. I believe that anyone who has studied along with us in our "God's Plan and Purpose for All Mankind" study will understand that we emphasized the positive system, i.e. the Kingdom of God. I pray that you will see me through this study as I attempt to present the story of the second system which I consider to be man's system, aka the Babylonian System. I prefer to use the term "system" in both instances as to me this infers a number of parts which, though separate, work together toward a common purpose.

Let me first emphasize that in saying that God created both systems, I am not saying that God is evil. Isa. 45:7 says, **"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."** This does not say that God does evil, or is evil, only that He created evil. I believe that as we go through this study of what I will refer to as the Babylonian System, I can show that to complete God's overall plan and purpose, the creation of an opposing force to His Kingdom is necessary. We need also to consider and remember that God is sovereign and creator, therefore He can do whatever He wants in the way He wants to accomplish His purpose. Our goal should be to be in agreement with Him.

Just as we had to start at the beginning in

our "Plan and Purpose" study, we need to start at the same place with our Babylon study. We first read in Genesis 1 of God's six days of creation culminating in the creation of man in God's own image. Then in Genesis 2:28 we're told, **"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."** Here we have what is considered the dominion mandate and the fruitfulness mandate. The important point we want to keep in mind is that God gave man dominion over the earth as well as the responsibility to populate the earth. If we don't understand these facts, we will fail to understand the effects of some very important events to both systems later.

These mandates first applied to Adam giving him authority over the then known world. As the population grew and Adam reached the end of his life, these mandates passed to his son Seth. Gen. 5 gives us the progression of these mandates passing them to Seth's son Enos, then to his son Cainan, etc. to Noah. If we count the number of the men descending from Adam to Noah, you will see that there are 9 men. However, II Peter 2:5 tells us **"And (God) spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."** This apparent discrepancy is explained in verses 18-24 of Gen. 5. Jared, son of Mahalaleel, lived 162 years before his son Enoch was born. Jared then lived a total of 962 years, 800 more years after the birth of Enoch. Enoch then lived 65 years and begat Methuselah. Then we're told that Enoch lived a total of 365 years before **"Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."** (vs. 24) So Jared lived 435 years after Enoch was taken by God, and the mandates passed to Methuselah by-passing Enoch thus making Noah the eighth person from Adam. But this tells us something we need to know a little later. No doubt each of these men had more sons, but these mandates passed to only one son, presumably the oldest son. Later we are going to find the term "birthright" used which has the same mandates as we see passing here through these eight men from Adam to Noah.

This "birthright" apparently passed from

Noah to his son Shem. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Because of a serious sin by Ham, Noah's wife had another son, Canaan, by her son Ham. It is possible, based on Gen. 5:32, that Shem, Ham and Japheth were triplets. Gen. 10 gives us a limited list of the descendants of these sons of Shem, Ham, Japheth and Canaan. There are two individuals in this list that are important to our study. The first is a man named Abram, later Abraham, who was a descendant of Shem. God caused him to move from the Mesopotamian area to a land new to Abraham, the land of Canaan. Very briefly, Abraham was a righteous man and very loyal to God. God made some unconditional promises to Abraham and his seed which form the foundation of the rest of the Bible. These promises are a study unto themselves so we are not going to study them as part of this study, but it is important that we be aware of them and understand that they are unconditional. As to the importance of these promises to our study of the Babylon System, they give us the reason that the Babylonian System must ultimately fail. Roman 4:13 sums up these promises into one promise, **"For the promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."**

The other individuals we want to take a special look at is Nimrod, son of Cush, son of Ham. I would like to quote a portion of Appendix 28 in the Companion Bible. "Josephus (Ant. Jud. i.e.4.2) says: 'Nimrod persuaded mankind not to ascribe their happiness to God, but to think that his own excellency was the source of it. And he soon changed things into a tyranny thinking there was no other way to wean men from the fear of God, than by making them rely upon his own power.'

The Targum of Johnathan says: 'From the foundation of the world none was ever found like Nimrod, powerful in hunting, and in rebellions against the Lord.'

The Jerusalem Targum says: 'He was powerful in hunting and in wickedness before the Lord, for he was a hunter of the sons of men, and he said to them, Depart from the judgment of the Lord, and adhere to the judgment of Nimrod! Therefore is it said: As Nimrod [is] the strong one, strong in hunting, and in wickedness before the Lord.'

The Chaldee paraphrase of I Chron. 1:10 says: 'Cush begat Nimrod, who began to prevail in wickedness, for he shed innocent blood, and rebelled against Jehovah.'

Gen. 10:10 says, **"And the beginning of his (Nimrod) kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."** Gen. 11:1-9 gives us a brief story of the founding of Babel and the reason for it. In verse 4 the people said **"let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."** The Companion Bible has a note concerning the word "name": "Manifesting independence of God. Nimrod being the rebel leader." There are two things that we need to pay attention to in this story. One is the name. Nimrod wanted to establish an identity the opposite of God, i.e. he wanted to establish himself as a god equal in power to God. Which brings us to the second thing we need to pay attention to. We're told in this story that all the people were of one language and decided to build the city and build a tower that reached into the heavens. I have heard of different ideas as to why the tower was to be build into the heavens, but the one I put the most credibility in is from the Ferrar Fenton translation where he says that it was built as a beacon. God came down to look at the city. Vs. 6 says, **"And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."** We have had great progress through the centuries in inventions, literature, and culture, but the one thing that has not been achieved is eternal life, yet it is probably the most sought after achievement in virtually every generation. At least once a week today I see a news article about some advancement that scientists think they have made toward this goal. God said that if the people were allowed to continue in their achievements nothing would be restrained from them. While God used confounding of the language to hold men back from reaching this ultimate goal, I believe He will use some similar method to confound men now, but I believe it is important that we recognize the real reason God confounded their language then.

One other story that is related in The Book of Jasher, that if true, will help us understand what was happening in Nimrod's day. The book relates the story that the garment of skins that God

made for Adam was apparently passed down father to son to Noah. As they were leaving the ark, Ham stole this garment. He then secretly gave it to Cush and Cush gave it to Nimrod. Nimrod seemed to believe that it gave him some super power when he wore it so he wore it as he gained fame as a great hunter. We'll discuss this more a little later.

The children of Japheth apparently made war against the other people of Noah's family. Nimrod gathered all of the men in his family, some four hundred sixty in all, plus some hired men so that he took an army of about five hundred against the children of Japheth defeating them decisively. The people then made him king. In appointing a cabinet as kings do, he appointed Terah, who begat Abraham, to be his captain of his host, or his army. When Abram, as he was first known, was born their appeared some unusual seismic activity in the heavens that the wise men of the area said meant Abram would "grow up, be fruitful, and possess all the earth, and he and his seed will slay great kings and inherit their lands." (Jasher VIII:4) When Nimrod was told this, he told Terah he wanted to purchase the baby. Terah knowing what Nimrod had in mind took a servant's baby to Nimrod who dashed the baby's head to the ground killing the baby while Terah hid Abram and his mother in a cave for ten years. If this story is true it is a shadow of Christ at His birth and King Herod.

I don't know how credible The Book of Jasher is but if it is credible I believe this and other stories help us understand better the history presented by the Bible. The point of going through all this story is to help us better understand just who Nimrod is as he is actually the beginning of the Babylonian System so far as Biblical history is concerned. He caused the people to worship idols and not worship God even though he started out worshipping and making sacrifices to God. Worshipping idols is actually worshipping man which, as we will see in our study, is the main difference between man's system, or the Babylonian system and God's system where God only is worshipped.

Going back to the "birthright" we were discussing above, Shem outlived his son and his son's son, etc., even outliving Abraham. It appears that Shem passed the birthright to Isaac, son of Abraham. Isaac had two sons, Esau, the old-

est, though they may have been twins, and Jacob the youngest. Gen. 25 tells us that Esau was a cunning hunter while Jacob preferred to remain on the plains. Isaac apparently loved Esau over Jacob because he loved the meat that Esau brought to him, so it was naturally assumed that Esau would receive the birthright. Gen. 25 tells us the story of what happened to the birthright. Esau had been out hunting and came in totally exhausted where Jacob was cooking a stew. The Book of Jasher tells us that the reason Esau was so exhausted was that he had killed Nimrod and taken the garment of skins off of him and had been running from Nimrod's servants. He had escaped them, but was totally exhausted as a result. Gen. 25:30-34 tells us, "**And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.**"

The next time we hear more of the birthright is in Gen. 49 where Jacob is blessing his sons just before he died. Instead of passing the birthright to Reuben, his oldest son, he instead divided the birthright into the dominion mandate and the fruitfulness mandate and gave the dominion part to Judah and the fruitfulness part to Joseph. I Chronicles 5:1-2 confirms this, **Now the sons of Reuben the first born of Israel (for he was the firstborn ; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's).**

If you are familiar with the Old Testament, you know that from this point in Biblical history, the Bible deals almost all together with Israel until the captivities of Israel by the Assyrians. We have the exodus of Israel from Egypt including the giving of the terms of the First Covenant and the delivery of the Law, the 40 years in the wilderness and the moving into and taking of the

land of Canaan. Israel lived in relative peace for a time with an occasional captivity when the people stepped off course and worshipped idols. Finally, wanting to be like all the other nations, Israel demanded a king, which God gave them in the person of Saul. Saul was not of the dominion line of Judah, but was used of God to prepare David, a man after God's own heart, to be the first of the line of monarchs of the dominion line of Judah. David set the standard that God expected of kings, and though not perfect in his life, his love of and devotion to God gave reason for God to establish his throne as the throne upon which the King of Kings will ultimately sit. In II Samuel chapter 7 God again makes some unconditional promises, this time to David and his son Solomon, establishing this fact.

Theoretically, David is ruler of the world though there are other kingdoms throughout the world, because David has the dominion mandate which God recognizes as the king of kings, or ruler of the world. This is a shadow of what is to come when Christ returns and takes up the throne of David to rule the world.

David's son Solomon followed David to the throne and though he was the wisest man to have lived or was to live, he committed the sin of worshipping the idols of some of his many wives. As a result God caused the kingdom to split during the time of Solomon's son Rehoboam. Judah, Benjamin and part of the tribe of Levi formed the kingdom of Judah which had the dominion mandate. All the rest of the tribes of Israel headed up by the tribe of Ephraim, son of Joseph, inheritor of the birthright, or the fruitfulness mandate, formed the kingdom of Israel.

For the most part both of these kingdoms were wicked though the kingdom of Judah did have some righteous kings, but their righteousness was not usually carried on by their sons. The kings of the kingdom of Israel came from different tribes usually it being the fittest of the fit.

There were wars between the two kingdoms as well as with neighbors of these kingdoms. The kings of Judah were all descendants of David and Solomon. This takes us up to the captivities. In a series of three captivities Assyria took all of Israel and a major portion of Judah captive and moved them to the area south of and between the Caspian and Black Seas. (We will continue our study next issue.) JRL

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.
Prov. 28:9