

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

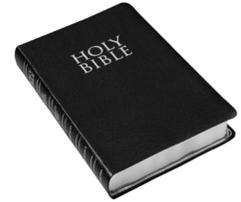
P O Box 279, Pleasant View, CO 81331

Phone 970-562-4874

e-mail [ksm@fone.net](mailto:ksm@fone.net)

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

Matthew 6:33



Issue 707

## EXODUS 19—LEVITICUS—NUMBERS

The children of Israel had reached Mt. Sinai in their exodus from Egypt and it was time to make some changes. It was God's intent to make a covenant with this people that would form them into a nation. It is this covenant that we want to start with this month. It is difficult to deal with this covenant as fully as we need to in the brief format that we are trying to follow. The children of Israel arrived at Mt. Sinai in the third month after they left Egypt. God had Moses call all the people together and then told him to tell them, as we read in Ex. 19:4-6, **“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”** Moses did as God told him and the people answered together and said, **“All that the LORD hath spoken we will do.”** (Ex. 19:8)

This covenant differs from the promises in that the promises were unconditional, depending only on the Word of God for their performance, but this covenant is conditional, depending upon the performance of the people to meet the “if” provision of it. But what does this covenant promise the people “if” they do obey His voice and keep His covenant? First, He says they will be a **“peculiar treasure unto me. (God).”**

“Peculiar” here means privately owned, not common, i.e. the children of Israel would be God's and God's alone. My pocket knife is peculiar to me in this sense, it is mine alone. In the case of the children of Israel, God is not going to share them with any other god or any other entity.

Then, He told them they would be a **“kingdom of priests.”** If we can use an example God gives us with Israel a little further ahead in our study, God selected the tribe of Levi to be a tribe of priests in Israel. We'll see that they were not to have a land inheritance, just cities, and while they were to administer the religious affairs, they were to also administer the civil affairs as well. “Priests” here simply means “administrators” or “rulers.” What He promised was that they would be a kingdom of rulers and since He had just said, **“for all the earth is mine,”** I think it can be presumed the earth is that which they would rule over. Then, He said they would be **“an holy nation.”** “Holy” simply means “set apart.” So basically, the thrust of this covenant is the same as the “promises” made to Abraham—they would be a kingdom of rulers to rule the world.

However, the promises to Abraham were unconditional, but this covenant, which seems to promise the same thing, is conditional. This might lead us to think that God has changed His mind, but we know that God does not change. (Mal. 3:6) I call this a paradox and define a paradox as something that can't be, but is. Keep this apparent paradox in mind as we continue our study, while keeping in mind that God cannot lie. Watch how God uses this covenant to work out

the promises. Again keep Prov. 25:2 in mind, **“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.”**

God, through several of the prophets later on, characterizes this covenant, agreed to by both God and Israel, as a marriage of the two parties. I think if you consider all the elements of the marriage contract, you would agree all the elements are there. The author of the book of Hebrews characterizes this covenant as a “last will and testament” of God. We will investigate this further when we look at the book of Hebrews, but I believe you will agree that all the elements of a will are there also.

Let us back up for a moment and consider the condition, the “if” of this covenant. God said, **“If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant.”** Up to this point, God hasn’t really specified what they were to obey. The foundation of this voice and covenant that they were to obey begins in Ex. 20. The only time we have record of God speaking to the people as a group is here where His total speech consisted of the Ten Commandments. The people really didn’t like God speaking to them and asked Moses to speak to God for them and to listen to Him for them. But in these Ten Commandments, we have the foundation of the law, the law that was the voice and covenant of God that the people were to obey and keep. If we study the complete law from Ex. 20 through the book of Deuteronomy, we will see that the law developed from these Ten Commandments is broken down into “commandments” (laws primarily for the individual), “statutes” (laws primarily for the government or the people as a whole), and “judgments” (laws prescribing sentences for the violation of either the commandments or statutes.

Most of these laws were not brand new. Many of these laws had been guides for living since Adam, but they had never been written, or codified, for a particular nation or people before. Understanding that sin is transgression of the law (I John 3:4) might help us understand better what Paul tells us in Rom. 5:13 **“For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when**

**there is no law.”** From this point on the people of this new nation were going to be held accountable to this law that dealt with every aspect of their life. Not only were they responsible to each other under the law, but now by their own agreement, they were responsible to God as well.

As we have already seen, this people’s chance of keeping this law is not that good. In fact, they didn’t even make it until God was through giving all the law, that we’ve discussed, to Moses. God called Moses up into the mount for instructions in building a tabernacle and to give him stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them. While he was gone, the people got impatient and talked Aaron into making a golden molten calf, and then they bowed down to worship it.

Because it was part of God’s plan and purpose, He had foreknowledge of what the people were going to do. So He gave Moses a new set of laws that fall into a new category, for the most part, that He called “ordinances.” In these ordinances He established a priesthood with rituals and sacrifices they were to do because of their failure to keep the commandments, statutes and judgments. This included primarily the blood sacrifice and tabernacle laws. Paul, in discussing these laws in Galatians 3 indicated they came 430 years after the promises to Abraham and he tells us in verse 19, **“It was added because of transgressions.”** If we study the judgments, we realize they deal with correcting, or restoring, the damage caused by man to other men. Basically, the ordinances deal with correcting, or restoring, man’s position with God which has been lost because man sinned, or failed his responsibility to God that he incurred through acceptance of the covenant. So we know that because of transgressions of the law (commandments, statutes and judgments), these laws (ordinances) were added. But Paul also tells us this law was **“our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”** (Gal. 3:24) It was to teach the way God had planned, through Jesus Christ, to help remove the paradox we discussed earlier between the unconditional promises to Abraham and this conditional covenant with Israel.

In a sense, this “schoolmaster” consisted of a twofold approach. First, as we’ve already mentioned, we have the sacrifice laws teaching the necessity of atonement, or covering, for sin by the blood which would ultimately be the atonement through Christ’s blood. Second, we have the tabernacle teaching the separation, or holiness, of God through the division by a veil into its two parts, the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies. To understand the significance of the renting of the veil of the temple between the two, at the time of Christ’s death, we must first understand the reason for the presence of the veil between the two here in the tabernacle. We also need to mention that within the Holy of Holies rested the Ark of the Covenant. Within it were items which stood as witness to the covenant God made with Israel; such as the stones with the Ten Commandments written on them, Aaron’s rod that budded, a sample of manna, etc. This ark was kept from the general public, but played a very important part in Israel’s history.

If we, like prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea, consider this covenanting ceremony that took place here at Mt. Sinai as a marriage between the children of Israel as the bride and God as the groom, we see that the children of Israel took the name of God, Isra-El, or ruling with God. Up to this point Jacob was named Israel and his descendants were children of Israel. But now, the people were Israel and will generally be referred to as such, at least until the kingdom splits after King Solomon’s time. We might note that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment is, **“Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.”** While most people regard this as a commandment against swearing using God’s name, I believe it also has to do with the people taking His name as their own and being commanded not to do so in vain.

As we move through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, we won’t discuss the laws in detail in this study as this is a good sized study within itself. But, God goes into considerable detail with all of the law in these books. He gave Israel every law they needed to

maintain a good relationship with each other, maintain good health, have a healthy economic system, maintain an ecological balance, wage war properly and to basically correctly exist as a nation. We do need to understand, however, that if this covenant God made with Israel is violated, it did not mean the covenant was rendered null and void. Deut. 28-30 shows us that when the covenant was kept, they would be blessed and when it was not, they would be cursed. With this we begin a very much up and down history of this new nation, formed in the wilderness, and having received a promise that they would ultimately rule the world. From this point on, this people will be the center focus of the rest of the Bible, Old and New Testaments.

I strongly recommend that each of you read and memorize the Ten Commandments first found in Ex. 20:2-17. Note that verse two starts off, **“I am the LORD thy God.”** Keep in mind there can only be one source of law. To have more than one will invariably bring laws into conflict with each other. Witness the workings of man’s laws here in the United States in the last 200 years. God makes it very clear the source of these laws, all real law, is the Lord Our God. There can be none other. He only is unchangeable and sovereign.

One other principle of the law that needs to be emphasized and remembered is that restitution is the principle of judgment. In other words, the only way justice can be served is to restore what was stolen, undo damage done, or pay for the damages regardless of cause. Some things, such as one’s life, cannot be restored, so God says that for these crimes, the perpetrator must be executed. I might point out that execution serves at least two purposes. First, it serves as a deterrent to others and second it preserves that person until he can face the perfect judge, God Himself, without further crimes. But keep in mind that even at that judgment, restitution is still God’s principle of judgment. We don’t know how God will deal with these types of sin, we just know His principles.

In Matt. 25:34, Jesus makes the statement, **“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”** In understanding the sovereignty of our God, we need first to understand that His plan was complete when He created the earth. With this in mind, let us begin traveling with this new nation as they leave Mt. Sinai. They have been there for about one year. Much has been accomplished. They came simply a large group of people. They left a nation organized governmentally, religiously, economically and militarily. They came to escape servitude. They left with a purpose. They have built a portable tabernacle and have met and learned of their God.

We’ll continue our travels with the kingdom of Israel next month. Please read through the book of Joshua if you are reading along with us. JRL.

## RESURRECTION

Resurrection is usually considered a major tenant of the Christian religion, yet, just what most Christians believe resurrection to be varies very widely. Unfortunately, the Greek philosophy concerning matter and spirit crept into Christian thought and theology relatively soon in the early church through “Gnosticism.” This perspective is opposed to the original Hebrew perspective and the perspective actually presented by our Bible. This Greek view has been found intermixed with the original Hebrew view from the days of Christ through the present day. The Greek view is basically that all matter is evil and the spirit is good. Known as dualism, this line of thinking basically promotes the belief that our body (matter) is a prison for our “spiritual soul.” The only way then for the “spiritual soul” to escape the evil physical body is for the body to die and set the soul free. As this Greek philosophy became integrated into Hebrew thought and later into Christianity, it has produced a number of divergent and usually confusing doctrines.

Some teach that Christ, or the Word, did NOT really come in the flesh as a good God can not be in contact with evil matter and not be influenced by it. The Apostle John addressed this in verse 14 of John 1, **“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,...”** and again in I John 4:3, **“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”**

Others attempt to deny the physical resurrection of the dead by teaching a spiritualized view. They teach that the resurrection is simply the “life” a Christian receives when he or she is justified by faith, or “saved.”

A variation of this is that “being saved” is the first resurrection and the second resurrection is a physical resurrection. A Christian would then go through two resurrections by this teaching.

The more extreme view teaches that men, or their spirits, simply go to heaven when they die, where they receive the full promise of paradise they perceive Scripture to teach. Thus there is no need for a resurrection at all, though some allow that Jesus’ resurrection was an exception to this.

We only have one example of one who has risen from the dead and become immortal, Jesus Christ. So let us see what we can learn from this example. First, this resurrection was NOT just a spiritual resurrection. Joseph, or Arimathea, had taken the body of Christ from the cross and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in a sepulcher that had been hewn out of stone. (Luke 23:50-53) The chief priests and the Pharisees had then sealed the stone covering the opening to the sepulcher and had set a watch over it. (Matt. 27:62-66) Then we’re told that several women came to the sepulcher early in the morning on the first day of the week to put spices and ointments, that they had prepared, on the body. When they arrived, the stone cover had been rolled away and Jesus’ body was not in the tomb. Peter, when he was told about this, went to the sepulcher to see for himself and he too found no body, but rather only the linen cloth that Jesus’ body had been wrapped in. So it obviously was a physical resurrection.

As the apostles were gathered together in Jerusalem discussing this great event, we're told in Luke 24:36-43, **"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."** Jesus went to great lengths to prove He was not just a spirit. The fact that he suddenly appeared in their midst and then that he told them to touch and feel him and then that he ate, answers a theoretical question posed by Paul in I Cor. 15:35, **"With what body do they come?"** The obvious answer here in the example that Jesus provided his disciples and that Paul then explains, if you read further in I Cor. 15, is that it is both a spiritual and a physical body. Jesus could enter the spiritual dimension or the physical dimension at will. Jesus told His disciples in Matt. 28:18, **"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."** He could be in the spiritual realm, or heavenly realm, and could suddenly come into a room though the doors were shut, as He did in John 20:26, and He could take on physical or earthly form, as we related above. Though no mention is made of Him having blood, He was made up of flesh and bones; He had a physical body as well as a spiritual form. He was not limited in either the physical world or the spiritual realm.

Even though we have this example, to understand what this is actually like is still beyond our comprehension. But the apostle John tells us in I John 3:2, **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear,**

**we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."** Rom. 6:5 tells us, **"For if we have been planted (united) together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."**

Somehow the Greek culture and philosophy has permeated our Christian culture to the extent that we have turned things up side down so far as understanding God's plan and purpose. By teaching that matter is evil, we want to escape the physical. Yet, Gen. 1:31 tells us, speaking of the physical universe and more specifically the earth and all that is in it, **"And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."** We know that sin has made its way into creation, but we need to recognize that this is something that is temporary, it is not a part of matter. Rom. 5:12 tells us that, **by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."** John the Baptist, upon seeing Jesus coming to him at the Jordan River where he was baptizing, said, **"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."** Not only does Jesus forgive sin, He has the power to remove sin completely. Death, which is the result of sin, we're told in I Cor. 15:26 will be ultimately totally destroyed. So sin is not an eternal part of matter, or creation, but rather a temporary infestation of creation that infected creation after it was created and will ultimately be destroyed by Jesus Christ, but creation will remain.

Greek philosophy taught that man's, or at least his spirit's, goal was to escape to heaven. Yet Jesus taught us that our goal should be to have the Kingdom of God on earth. In the prayer He taught His disciples in Matt. 6:9-13, Jesus admonished them to pray, **"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."** In Rev. 5:10, where the 24 elders were worshipping "the Lamb," they sang, **"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."** In Rev. 21, the earth, or the people of it, are not to go up to heaven to the New Jerusalem, but rather the New Jerusalem is to come down to the earth.

God's plan and purpose was to create matter (the physical earth and its inhabitants) that He

might manifest Himself not only on the spiritual plane that He was on before creation, but on the physical plane that we are on as well.

Quoting from *“The Purpose of Resurrection”* by Dr. Stephen E. Jones\* “The plan (God’s plan) is to restore all things, not to destroy all things. The plan is for all things to be placed under the rulership of Jesus Christ, not to retreat and leave most of creation to the devil. The plan is to resurrect the dead into a perfected, restored body (after the pattern of Jesus’ resurrected body), not to leave the physical existence and remain in a purely spiritual form in heaven.”

To consider resurrection to mean the life we lead after accepting Christ as our Saviour or going to heaven when we die, leaves far too many Scriptures that we either have to deny or admit our ignorance of. For example, Rom. 6:4 could be quoted as a proof that resurrection was simply becoming a Christian and being baptized. **“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”** Yet, if we read I Cor. 15, the same Paul that wrote the above passage in Romans, goes into great lengths to describe a future physical resurrection after the manner of Christ’s resurrection. He also tells us in II Tim. 2:18, speaking of Hymenaeus and Philotus, **“Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”**

If we haven’t already done so, we need to become familiar with “types and shadows” in the Bible. An example is found in Col. 2:16-17. **“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”** This is referring to some of the various rituals God gave to Moses for Israel to observe. Unfortunately, the majority of Israel started worshipping the rituals rather than understanding that

they were to observe these rituals, which pointed to the real person, event, or entity, etc. that was yet future, to help them look forward to and understand what the real things were. Baptism is a ritual that is a shadow of, or points to the real resurrection, it is not the resurrection itself.

Before we look at what the Bible promises about the resurrections and who will be in them, let’s conclude this month’s lesson with a look at some Scriptures teaching the necessity of resurrection.

In Heb. 11, the faith chapter, after speaking of the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah, we’re told in verse 13, **“These all died in faith, not having received the promises...”** Then after speaking further of some of these plus Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gedeon, Barak, Sampson, Jephthae, David and Samuel as well as many martyrs in general, we’re told again in verses 39-40, **“And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promises: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”** Thus until God either resurrects us or brings about our change (I Cor. 15:51-57), all of those who preceded us have to wait for us and those that follow us, at that day of resurrection (I Cor. 15:22)

In Rev. 22:12, Jesus says, **“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”** His rewards will not be given until He returns, which He tells us is in conjunction with the resurrection. JRL

## PERSIA-IRAN

The next country we want to look at is Persia. We will look at what the Bible has to say about this country next month but this month, as has been our practice, we want to look at the country as it is today. Today it is known as the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran is very much in the news today so the more we know about it, the better we might understand the news.

\*God’s Kingdom Ministries  
6201 University Ave. N.E.  
Fridley, MN 58432

I had a college friend back in the mid 50's who was from Iran, but he definitely did not want to be called an Iranian. He made sure we all knew he was a Persian.

The name, Islamic Republic of Iran is a relatively new name. It was known by its old name of Persia until 1935. The country covers approximately 636,296 square miles, approximately three times the size of the state of Arizona. The estimated population in 2006 was 68,688,433. Of this, about 12% live in the city of Tehran, the country's largest city and its capital.

Only about 9% of the land is suitable for farming, though some more is permanent pasture. There is a large mountain range, known as the Zagros Mountains that runs northwest to southeast along the border with Turkey and Iraq. However, the highest mountain is Mt. Damavend in another range of mountains south of the Caspian Sea called the Elburz Mountains. It is 18,934 ft. high. There is then a great basin which is mostly desert between and south of these mountains. Farmland crops include wheat, rice, other grains, sugar beets, fruits, nuts, cotton, dairy products, wool and caviar.

Natural resources include petroleum, natural gas, coal, chromium, copper, iron ore, lead, manganese, zinc and sulfur. Of these petroleum is the major export commodity accounting for about 80% of all exports. Another export item is their Persian rugs. The people have long been known for their craftsmanship in weaving these rugs.

Around 1500 B.C. the land was occupied by the Medes and Persians, both an Aryan people, but ultimately came to be ruled by the Persians until 331-330 B.C. when the country was conquered by Alexander the Great. It then had a succession of different rulers until the Mongol Invasion during the 12th century A.D. Eventually the Safavid dynasty came to power in 1501 and ruled until 1722. During the reign of this dynasty the national religion became Shiite Islam which would become a major factor in the gov-



ernment of Iran today. However, the Safavid dynasty was followed by the Qajar dynasty which ruled until 1925 at which time a Shah (king) began ruling. This lasted until 1979 when the Shah was driven from the country and the top Shiite Islamic cleric, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini took control of the government and established an Islamic Theocracy. He died in 1989 and was replaced by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who remains the supreme leader or chief of state today. Though Iran has a president and a 290 member governmental council, the Ayatollah is the supreme authority.

Nineth eight percent of the people are Islam by religion. 89% of the people belong to the Shi'a sect and 9% belong to the Sunni sect. When the Shahs were in power, considerable effort was made to westernize and modernize the country. However, when the Ayatollahs took control much of the westernization was erased in favor of Islamic traditions.

The country is divided into 30 provinces. There are several nationalities represented in the people with 51% being Persian, 24% are Azerbaijani, 8% are Gilaki and Mazanlarani, 7% are

Kurds, 3% are Arabs and all others represent 7% Likewise the languages spoken vary as well with about 58% of the people speaking Persian or Farsi, 26% speaking Turkic, 9% speaking Kurdish with the other 7% speaking languages such as Luri, Balochi, Arabic, Turkish, and others.

The climate of the country is mostly arid or semiarid with subtropical climate along the Caspian coast. However, between the high mountains, the large desert, and the coastlands along the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, there is usually a large variation of temperature and climate.

Though there are several small rivers, many of which are dry a good part of the year, there are no major rivers in the land.

Persia played a major role in Bible times, thus in the world, though its influence was fairly short lived. As God used Persia in Old Testament times, so He does today. It is important for us to familiarize ourselves with Bible history and prophecy that we might be better prepared for events yet to take place. We will look at part, at least, of that history and prophecy next month as we continue our study of Persia. JRL

## Mt. Sinai

Last month, in our article covering the first 18 chapters of Exodus, I made the statement, speaking of Israel, “God first led them south, once they crossed the Red Sea, to Mt. Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula.” One of our alert readers wrote me a note calling my attention to the fact that the mountain today called Mt. Sinai located in the

Sinai Peninsula, is not the Mt. Sinai of Exodus. I agree with him and usually point this out when I am lecturing but I let it slip by me in the article. However, I did not know where the real Mt. Sinai is located. Our alert reader was kind enough to send a copy of a video tape giving evidence that the real Mt. Sinai may be a mountain in what is now Saudi Arabia. We found it to be extremely interesting. Should you wish to explore this subject further, we suggest you call 1-800-680-3300 and ask to purchase the video, “The Search for the Real Mt. Sinai.” Or you can go online to [www.monumentpictures.com](http://www.monumentpictures.com) to purchase it, plus there is more information available there as well. Our thanks to our alert reader. JRL

We found the following quote from Ron Oja both amusing and enlightening—Hope you do also.

*“One day it occurred to me that **everybody** wants to be **somebody**, and there wasn’t **anybody** left to be **nobody**; so I took the job. Then later, imagine my pleasant surprise when I realized that **‘nobody’s perfect.’**”*

## GOOD STEWARDSHIP

In an effort to be good stewards of the resources God has provided, we would like to ask any one who does not desire to remain on our mailing list, after seeing our new format, please write us and let us know. In the same breath, should you know any one who would like to be added to our mailing list, please write and tell us as well. We will be happy to mail past copies if desired.