

KINGDOM SPIRIT



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“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

Matthew 6:33



Issue 803

ISAIAH 54-66 MICAH

Israel is told by Isaiah to sing as she (the desolate) will have more children than she did before being cast out (i.e. while she was still married). She will forget the shame of her youth and God, her redeemer, the Holy One of Israel will again be her husband. **“For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.”** (Isa. 54:7)

Evangelism becomes Isaiah’s sense of direction as he calls for Israel to come to God for food and drink at no price. God will pardon when they return to righteousness for God’s thoughts and ways are not the thoughts and ways of men. God declares His word is like the rain and snow—it shall not return unto Him void—and it shall accomplish what he pleases.

While Israel is exhorted to keep judgment, they are told that God will gather others besides the outcasts of Israel to Him also. The stranger who hath joined himself to the LORD shall be rewarded.

Isaiah spent quite a bit of his writings dealing with what was to happen to Israel from the time of their captivity on. He keeps them mindful of the sin that put them into the captivity as He warns them of their idol worship, their ignorance, their greed, and their wickedness. When they turn from their pleasures on the Sabbath to honoring God, then shall their delight be in the LORD. Isaiah makes confession to God for Israel

acknowledging that uncleanness, unrighteousness, and iniquities have taken them away and then tells God in Isa. 64:8, **“We are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are the work of thine hand.”** Then he pleads with God to withdraw His wrath.

But Isaiah dwells more on the fact that God’s arm is not shortened so that He cannot save. The promised redemption, the joy, the prosperity, peace and great blessings occupy more of Isaiah’s writings. He tells them that they shall build the old wastes and raise up former desolations; strangers and aliens shall be their servants; Israel shall be named the Priests of the Lord, Ministers of our God; they shall be acknowledged among the nations as blessed by God; and tells them God is going to call Israel by a new name. He pleads with the people to turn to God in righteousness. He tells them in Isa. 64:4, **“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”** He tells of God’s promise to avenge the enemies of Israel. Isa. 63 begins, **“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?”** God answers that it is He, He that speaks righteousness. The question is then asked, **“Wherefore are thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?”** Again God answers, **“I have trodden the wine press alone.”** (Again, remember that God has taken the full responsibility on Himself alone to bring to pass the promises to Abraham.) He goes on to tell

us that His day of vengeance has come and He has trodden down His enemies (note that He has come from Edom) and their blood is sprinkled on His garments.

Isaiah explains the part Jesus Christ is to play in this plan and Christ later verified it was He of whom Isaiah spoke as He quoted Isa. 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18-19 and applied it to Himself. **“The Spirit of the LORD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”** That this all had to do with Israel is also confirmed by Jesus as He said in Matt. 15:24, **“I am not sent but unto the lost** (put away and punished—Strong’s Concordance.) **sheep of the house of Israel.”** This servant people had a definite part to fulfill in God’s plan and Isaiah understood this part. He understood they were in captivity because this was as per God’s plan. It did not just happen and then God had to re-adjust His plan accordingly.

In the last chapter of Isaiah, he quotes God in verse 9 as saying, **“Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb?* saith thy God.”** All that has happened from Adam to Abraham, the choosing of Abraham; Egypt and God’s redemption of Israel from it; the establishment of His kingdom in Israel; their development and now their turning to idolatry and being cast out from before God is considered by God to being brought to the birth. What great things He must have in mind for this people from this point. He says He will send them throughout the nations and **“they shall declare my glory.”** This is their job, their part in the plan. In verse 22, God says **“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I shall make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.”**

Two other prophets of Isaiah’s time, who we have writings of in the Old Testament, are Nahum and Micah. Nahum directed his attention to

Nineveh, capitol of Assyria. Though Nahum wrote before the capture and transport of Israel, he wrote as if it were after. While God is slow to anger, Nahum assures us His power is beyond our imagination and His vengeance most sure. For those who trust Him, He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, but like an overrunning flood in pursuit of His enemies. He tells Judah that Assyria will not pass through her again, but the excellency of Israel has been turned away and this has assured the destruction of Nineveh and Assyria. In spite of Assyria’s strength, she will be laid waste. There is no escaping the judgment of God.

Micah directs his attention to Israel and provides another witness to Isaiah’s testimony. (Remember, God’s law requires more than one witness.) He warns that because of the transgression of Israel, God is coming out of His place to the earth. He places blame at Samaria (capitol of Israel) and at Jerusalem (capitol of Judah). In other words, he blames the leadership of these two kingdoms. They are going into captivity and their graven images are to be beaten in pieces—their religion destroyed.

He accuses the Israel leadership of loving evil and hating good; of exploiting the people. They covet the property of the people and devise ways to take them by violence. They have polluted the land, therefore it can no longer be a rest to them.

Micah, like the other prophets, also tells of the day of Israel’s re-gathering. He says they will break forth and pass through the gate out of their captivity with God before them (Micah 2:13). He says in chapter 4 that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the LORD (symbolism for the kingdom of Israel) shall be established in the top (as rulers over) of the mountains (kingdoms) and shall be exalted above the hills (smaller kingdoms or governments) and people shall flow unto it. It will be the responsibility of Israel (God’s kingdom) to teach God’s ways and to expound and demonstrate the Laws of God to the nations of the world.

Micah, like Isaiah, prophesies of Christ by telling Bethlehem that though she be little in Ju-

dah, yet out of her shall come forth unto God He that is to be ruler in Israel. Micah 5:3 says, **“Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.”** This appears to be telling us God will give up the remnant of Judah until Christ is born and then the remnant shall return unto the children of Israel. Christ will ultimately rule and protect Israel from her enemies. Micah calls to the mountains and hills to hear the controversy of God with His people. God asks Israel, **“What have I done unto thee?”** i.e. what has He done wrong unto them? He then recounts all that He has done unto them for the good. He asks if they think that the sacrifices are all that God requires. Micah tells them that what God requires is for them to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. Part of their problem is that they are keeping the statutes of Omri (former king of Israel), as opposed to the laws of God, and walking in the counsels of Ahab and Omri.

Micah sums up by again telling Israel of her sin and assures her that she will bear the indignation of the LORD because of it, but then God would pardon and bless so that all the nations will see. Then in the last verse of the book, he says of God, **“Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou has sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.”** So again we see the importance of those unconditional promises to Abraham.

Now let us pick up the actual historical account again in II Chron. 33 and II Kings 21. Following the death of Hezekiah, Manasseh, his son, took the throne in Jerusalem and reigned for 55 years. He did that which was evil by rebuilding the high places, even building a temple to Baalim, making groves and worshipping the host of heaven. He so provoked God that God delivered him into the hand of the captains of the king of Assyria who took him to Babylon. However, Manasseh humbled himself before God while in Babylon and God returned him to Jerusalem where he undid a lot of what he had done and

even expanded Jerusalem. When he died, his son Ammon took the throne. But he was very evil and was killed by a conspiracy of his servants after only two years. He son, Josiah, only eight years old, took the throne and reigned 31 years. He did that which was right including destroying idol worship and restoring the temple. During the temple restoration, the book of the law was found by Hilkiah, the high priest. After hearing the reading of the law, Josiah realized why, and how great, God’s wrath was against them. When he inquired of Huldah, a prophetess, about it, God told him, through Huldah, all the judgments that would come on Judah, but not in Josiah’s lifetime because of his righteousness. Josiah made a covenant with God and made the people stand to it. He destroyed all that pertained to idol worship and proclaimed the Passover again. Josiah was ultimately killed in a battle with the king of Egypt and the succession of his sons and grandson to the throne is somewhat confusing. Jehoahaz, his son, took the throne, but was taken captive after only three months, by the king of Egypt. The king put Eliakim, brother to Jehoahaz, on the throne and changed his name to Jehoiakim. Though Jehoiakim was evil, he reigned 11 years before Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against him and took him captive to Babylon. Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, took the throne, but 100 days later, Nebuchadnezzar took him captive to Babylon and put Zedekiah, brother to Jehoiakim and Jehoahaz, on the throne. Zedekiah was evil and after 11 years on the throne, he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. The king of Babylon returned and took Zedekiah captive, killed all of his sons and spoiled and burnt the city, including complete destruction of the temple. We’re told they were in captivity for 70 years until the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, who made a proclamation to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem.

If we look at the genealogy listed in Matt. 1, the genealogy jumps from Josiah to Jehoachin, his grandson. None of the three sons of Josiah are listed. This needs a little explanation while we are at this point. Since Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were all brothers, they represented only

one generation. Jehoahaz reigned only three months but Jehoiakim reigned 11 years, so it is really Jehoiakim who should be listed in the genealogy. But we'll find a little later in the book of Jeremiah, that Jehoiakim did something that cost him this right. Since he should have been the one, Jehoachin his son was the next generation listed and the scepter line was continued through him to his son. However, it appears the throne succession has ended, contrary to the promise God made to David. We'll discuss this more later.

Next, let's take a quick look at the prophets, Zephaniah and Habakkuk, to see why Judah went into captivity and then take a good look at Jeremiah, the major prophet of their era. We take up with Zephaniah in our next lesson. JRL

BAPTISM

We ended our article last issue with a discussion on what the Holy Spirit is. I would like to continue the discussion this issue by first looking at John 14:15-18, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."** In these verses Jesus is saying the Comforter equals the spirit of truth, or the witness of truth. If we go on to verse 26, **"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."** The Comforter, again, equals the Holy Ghost, or Spirit or the teacher who will teach or witness unto the apostles.

If we go on the chapt. 15:26-27, **"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he**

shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." With this evidence, I think it safe to say then that the Holy Spirit equals the spirit of truth which equals the witness which is going to testify of God. The Holy Spirit then is a witness of God's mind, which is going to teach us of God and His ways. This being the case, then what is involved in the principle of the baptism of the Spirit? Go to Matt. 7:21-23, **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."** "Iniquity" is from the Greek "*anomia*" meaning lawlessness, so He is saying "depart from me, ye that work lawlessness." Note that only those who do the will of the Father will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Most of us have been taught that being "saved" automatically qualifies us for the Kingdom of Heaven. This is at least partially true, but if we go to Rev. 20:6 we see that only those who have part in the first resurrection will be priests of God and rule and reign with Christ. If we back up to verse 4, I think we can safely say that those who are going to have part in that first resurrection does not include all Christians. I believe that Jesus is thinking of this group of "priests" who will be His rulers when He speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven here in Matt. 7. I believe we have to separate "justification," which correlates with most people's definition of salvation, from ruling and reigning. Justification is the first step and Rom. 3 tells us it is free to all—all we have to do is accept it. Christ did everything we need for justification. But to be among those who will rule and reign requires us to do something. We have to earn that right. Verse 21 above tells us that only those who do the will of the Father will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. What then is His will? He doesn't say what His will is, but rather what it is

not in verse 23— **“depart from me, ye that work iniquity (lawlessness).** Would it then be proper to say that God’s will would be the opposite of lawlessness, i.e. lawfulness. Please understand that I am not talking about justification, but rather the next step toward being an overcomer, one who will reign and rule with Christ. We often think that we would like to know what God’s will is. I understand that we have to make decisions and we want to know God’s will in that decision, but basically God’s will is His law. If we understand the principle of God’s law, we know what His basic will is. Even in many of the decisions that we pray to know His will, if we knew the law, we would probably be able to know His will in that decision. In John 16:13, Jesus told His apostles that when the Spirit of truth would come, He would guide them into all truth. His truth has to include His law. Verse 14 then tells us that the guiding into all truth will lead to the glorification of Christ.

I think we can see then, that if we are lawful, i.e. keep His will, we will enter the priesthood, or the kingdom of priests, or the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus, then, has promised to send His Holy Spirit which will guide us in His truth, that in so doing, we or the Holy Spirit in us witnesses with us, or through us to the glorification of Christ. That witnessing may be expressed, or manifested, in many ways. It certainly is not limited to speaking in tongues, or other languages. I Cor. 12 lists a number of ways in which the Spirit can be manifested in us. These include wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, discernment, tongues and interpretation. We need to think of these applying in our daily lives in what ever occupation or activity we may be engaged in. We might be a doctor, a truck driver, a housewife, a farmer, a preacher or any other occupation but wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, discernment, tongues or interpretation all have a part in these various paths of life. We need to keep in mind I Cor. 12:13, **“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and**

have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” I believe, then, that we can say that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the witness of God, in effect showing His approval of our intent and it can be manifested in a number of different ways.

Now, is there a medium or agent in this baptism? In the Old Testament, the one aspect of consecration of the priests, that we haven’t dealt with yet, is found in Ex. 29:7, **“Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head, and anoint him.”** The anointing with oil. In Ex. 30 God told Moses how to compound this oil and then tells him again to anoint Aaron and his sons that they might minister unto Him.

The washings and the blood baptism that we have looked at have really been directed toward our benefit. They were to do something for us. However, the anointing with oil was not really for the benefit of the priests or of the people, but rather was to glorify God, to set them apart or to initiate them into the priesthood for God’s benefit—that they might minister unto Him. I believe the baptism of the Holy Spirit does essentially the same thing. It is God’s setting apart, or anointing, or approving of us, or at least of our intent, to be a part of His priesthood.

One more topic that we need to look at has its origin in I John 5:4-12. If you have, or can get access to, a Young’s Analytical Concordance, look in the front part of the book at the list of “Hints and Helps to Bible Interpretation.” Item 24 gives a list of interpolations—i.e. words or phrases that have been added to the original manuscript at a later date. Included in this list are portions of verses 7 and 8 of I John 5 which were added many years later, apparently in an effort to support the trinity doctrine adopted by the Roman Catholic Church. If you have a literal translation or some of the other translations other than the King James, these phrases are probably left out. I want to quote this passage leaving out these added words as it has an entirely different meaning than it does with these phrases in it. Starting with verse 4, **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is**

he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

We're told here there are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood. This correlates with the law of the tabernacle for the appearing before God, the laver, the altar, and the Holy of Holies. Remember Heb. 9:8-10, **“The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”**

Picture again the tabernacle with the court, the tabernacle, the laver and the altar. Then consider the three types of baptism, or the three agents we have associated with these baptisms. The altar would exemplify justification which would be the blood baptism which we see in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross which makes us righteous before God. The laver would exemplify sanctification which would be shown in water baptism in which we witness our committing ourselves to the service of God. The Holy of Holies in the tabernacle would exemplify glorification

which would be shown in baptism of the Holy Spirit, in which we glorify God in our lives that we might ultimately join our High Priest, Jesus Christ, in the true Holy of Holies as priests of God and rulers in the Kingdom of God. The pattern of the tabernacle that God gave to Moses at Mt. Sinai in the wilderness can then be seen as a shadow of things to come as Paul pointed out in Col. 2:17. Christ not only did not put away this pattern, but amplified it greatly as we approach the true or real and I believe we will see it in an even greater application when we truly are in the Kingdom of God. I pray this study has helped your understanding of God's plan and purpose and the part each one of us can and should play in it. To God be the glory. Amen. JRL

ASIA MINOR-TURKEY

This issue we want to look at the country of Phrygia. In New Testament times it was located just west of Galatia with Bithynia on the north and Pamphylia and Pisidia on the south. However, at one time the kingdom of Phrygia occupied a very large percentage of central Anatolia, or Asia Minor. Borders of these Anatolian countries varied considerable even after the Romans pretty much took control of them.

The earliest Phrygians probably migrated from Macedonia on the European continent. The date of their migration is not known for sure but the date of 1200 B.C. is generally accepted as being close. This was about the time of the fall of the Hittite Empire of which the land of Phrygia was a part, though it is not known what part for sure the Phrygians had either in the Empire or its fall.

It wasn't until the 8th century B.C. that the Phrygian state began to rise and expand over a good portion of Asia Minor. However, it was overrun by the Cimmerians in 696 B.C. Remember that the Cimmerians were part of the tribes of Israel that had been taken captive by the Assyrians and now had begun to break loose from that

captivity and begin to migrate westward.

There are a couple of expressions that we hear today that had their foundation in Phrygia just before the time of the Cimmerian invasion. Most of us have heard of the “Midas Touch” and the “Gordian Knot.” Though there is a little mythology involved, thus some variation in the stories, the men were real. At a time when Phrygia was without a king, an ancient oracle had foretold that there would be a man with a wagon, who, when he came to the area where the leaders of the people were meeting to decide what to do, would be their king. A farmer named Gordia happened to come driving by with an ox cart. The leaders determined he was the man of the oracle, so they made him king. His ox cart had the shaft tied to the cart with a rope made of cornel-bark and tied with a complex knot, having no ends exposed. Gordia named the town after himself, Gordium and he made a shrine of the ox cart with the peculiar knot. As the bark dried the knot became tighter and tighter and no one could figure how to untie it. It became a tourist attraction and it was considered bad luck if you left Gordium without trying to untie the knot. Another oracle said that who ever untied the knot would rule the world. Young King Alexander of Macedonia and his then rag tag army stopped at Gordium for inspiration from the gods. When he started to leave, he was told he had to try to loosen the knot or his army would have bad luck. He spent over two hours trying to figure how to solve the puzzle, then he suddenly had an inspiration and took out his sword and split the knot in half and sure enough, he went on to conquer the world. So someone today that comes across a knot they cannot untie often refers to it as a “Gordian Knot.”

Another man from Macedonia named Midas had a reputation that everything he touched turned to gold. He came to Gordium and Gordia, being childless, selected Midas to succeed him when he died. He was king when the Cimmerians invaded and having lost a battle with them, he committed suicide by poisoning himself. But it is after him that people who prosper

well are often spoken of as having the “Midas Touch.”

With the death of Midas came the end of the Phrygian Empire. The Cimmerians did not attempt to colonize the country but they had weakened it so that neighboring Lydia came in and conquered Phrygia and took it over. This didn't last very long before Cyrus, King of Persia extended his empire to include Phrygia in 546 B.C. Alexander the Great then conquered the Persians and took over Phrygia in 333 B.C. Eventually in 133 B.C. it became a part of the Roman Empire and stayed a part of the Roman Empire, later the Byzantine Empire until it was taken over by the Turks and made a part of the Ottoman Empire.

Phrygia is a mountainous country being a part of Taurus mountain range. It is known for its many fortresses and its fast horses. In addition to their fine horses, they were known for the high quality wool that they produced. They were also known for their metal work, wood carvings and their carpet weaving. They are given credit for developing the art of embroidery.

The Cimmerians were cattle people and the good pastures of the valleys of the land kept many of them in the land. E. Raymond Capt, in his book “Missing Links Discovered in Assyrian Tablets” tells us that the Gauls (same people as the Cimmerians) invaded the western portion of Asia Minor in 280 B.C. and permanently maintained themselves in Phrygia naming the northern portion Galatia, the country we studied last issue. But these two invasions, first by the Cimmerians, then later by the Gauls, account for there being descendents of the ten-tribed Israel located in this area at the time of Paul's missionary journeys. There were Jews there as well as Acts 2 tells us.

Phrygia is mentioned 3 times in the New Testament. In Acts 2:6-11, men from Phrygia were part of the men in Jerusalem for the celebration of Pentecost that witnessed the apostles preaching in the language of the homelands of the various men after being touched by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 16:5-9 Phrygia was one of the countries that Paul went through on his second mis-

sionary journey. Then in Acts 18:22-23 Paul returned on his third missionary journey.

Some of the cities of Phrygia play a prominent roll in New Testament writings. The Christians in the city of Colosse were the people to whom Paul addressed his epistle to Colossians. The church at Laodicea was one of the seven churches to which Jesus commanded John to address in the book of Revelation. Other cities of mention are Hierapolis and Iconium.

Another country that is mentioned in the New Testament, but without much information about it is Pamphylia. It was located on the Mediterranean Sea coast between Cilicia on the east and Pisidia on the north and Lycia on the west. It was a fairly small country about 30 miles in breadth with about 75 miles of Mediterranean coast line. It was situated between the Sea and the mountains and was fairly fertile.

We don't really know for sure where the original Pamphylians originated. Their history is very similar to that of the other Asia Minor countries we have been looking at with the exception that we don't have any record of the Cimmerians or Gauls invading the country. It was originally under the Hittite Empire, then the Lydians, the Persians, the Greeks and finally under the Romans during the New Testament times. Of course, it later became a part of the Ottoman Empire until World War I.

Pirates used the Pamphylian coast line



until the Romans put a stop to their activity.

The country is mentioned in the New Testament both in Acts 2 where Jews from there were in Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost along with Jews from other nations, and in Acts 13, 14, & 15 recounting Paul's first missionary journey. Perga was the capitol city and is mentioned in the same above Scriptures as Paul and Barnabas passed through Perga. They did preach there, but we have no record of an established church there. Pamphylia is also mentioned as being passed by as Paul was taken to Rome by ship before he experienced the bad shipwreck at Malta (Acts 27).

The people were very much affected by the Greek culture. Perga today is in ruins but has some very spectacular memorials to this culture when Perga was at its height. We will try to complete our look at Asia Minor next issue. JRL