

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

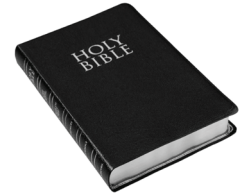
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**“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”**

Matthew 6:33



Issue 902

## GOSPELS

Jesus taught His disciples that the day would come when He would not be with them any longer. They were not to go here or there looking for Him **“For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.”** (Luke 17:24) He compared that day to the days of Noah and to the days of Lot. It would come suddenly upon people doing their normal daily business. Two would be working and one would be taken and the other left. If compared to Noah and Lot, this would mean the wicked would be taken and the righteous left.

But first, Jesus said He must suffer many things and be rejected of their generation. As they traveled back to Jerusalem for the last time, He told the apostles specifically what was going to happen to Him but they understood not what He meant.

Four of the apostles came to Jesus privately and asked Him about the end of the age. He told them not to be deceived, **“For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ: and shall deceive many.”** (Matt. 24:5) Then He told them that there would be wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earth quakes, but these were only the beginning of sorrows. Many Christians would be afflicted and killed. False prophets will arise and iniquity will abound. The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the

world for a witness unto all nations. Then, He said, the end would come. The balance of Matt. 24 and 25 continues to tell what to look for, to beware of, etc., but says no man nor angel knoweth that day or hour—only God the Father. He admonishes them to watch continually, however.

The time for Jesus’ crucifixion drew very near and the evening of His arrest He spent reclining with His twelve apostles at a meal before He went out to the place of His arrest. He washed the feet of the apostles over their objection, that He might teach them humbleness. He said they rightly called Him Lord and Teacher, but since the apostle was not greater than the one sending him, therefore they were bound to do as He had done. He also instituted what we call the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, with them at this time.

Following His resurrection, He appeared unto the apostles several times going over with them all that the prophets had said of Him that they might understand what had happened. He then began to, in effect, give them their orders. He told Peter to **“feed my sheep.”** (John 21:16) Then He told all of them, **“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”** (Mark 16:15) First, they were to remain in Jerusalem until their baptism in the Holy Spirit however. Then they asked Him if at this time He would restore the kingdom of Israel. He told them it was not for them to know the times or seasons, but that they would receive power (Holy Spirit) and were to be witnesses unto Him from Jerusalem even unto the ends of the earth. He

told them, **“All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...”** (Matt. 28:18-19)

The hatred of the Pharisees toward Jesus was to the death from the beginning of His ministry, but the Pharisee’s fear of the people prevented their doing anything about it. With the exception of a very few cases where Jesus dealt with a Pharisee on an individual basis, His experience with them was purely a confrontational one. Mark 4:34 tells us, concerning the multitudes which always had Pharisees among them, **“But without a parable spake he not unto them.”** He then gives the apostles the reason in Matt. 13:11-15, **“Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”**

His confrontation with them began on a near violent note at the beginning of His ministry as He went to Jerusalem for the Passover and found oxen, sheep and doves being sold in the temple plus the money changers doing business there as well. He drove them all out of the temple with a whip, or scourge, and poured out the changer’s money and overthrew their table. He did the same thing when He returned for the Passover just prior to His execution.

Jesus eroded their authority when He told the infirmed man at the pool, Bethesda, to take up his bed and walk. (John 5:8) When the Jews

confronted the man carrying his bed, telling him it was unlawful to carry his bed on the Sabbath, he considered Jesus more authority than them since Jesus was the one who had just cured him. When they found out who had told the man to take up his bed and walk and sought to slay Him, He made matters even worse by saying God was His Father and then ended by telling them that if they had believed Moses they would believe Him. This was a real insult to them.

At one point during a feast, Jesus was teaching in the temple and the Pharisees and chief priests sent some officers to take Jesus into custody. However, the officers came back without Him, but were astounded by Jesus’ teachings. When they reported to those who sent them, they excused their empty handedness saying, **“Never man spake like this man.”** (John 7:46) The Pharisees showed their arrogance in answering: **“Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.”** (John 7:47-49)

They set out to trick Him into a violation of the law, that they might have something to condemn Him. They brought a woman, taken in the act of committing adultery, before Jesus and said **“Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?”** (John 8:5) Jesus at first ignored them but as they pressed Him, He finally said, **“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”** (John 8:7) Being beat at their own game, that is, being out-smarted in the law, they all left after which Jesus told the woman to go and sin no more.

Many who heard Jesus and saw His works believed Him, yet others refused and sought to discredit Him in every way. They argued with Him following Jesus’ statement, **“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free.”** (John 8:31-32) that they were the seed of Abraham and were never in bondage to any man, so how could He set them free. However, while Jesus did acknowledge that they were

indeed Abraham's seed, He accused them of seeking to kill Him because He did what God His Father directed and they did what their father directed. Though they still claimed Abraham as their father, Jesus told them they would do the works of Abraham if he was their father, and this would not include killing Him. They then claimed one father, God. Jesus then told them they were of their father, the devil (accuser), and certainly not of God. They then accused Him of having a devil which Jesus denied and told them that if a man kept His sayings, he would never see death. This completely threw them and they knew they had Him since Abraham was dead and the prophets were dead. Jesus told them that Abraham had rejoiced to see His day and saw it and was glad. When they questioned what He meant by this, He said, **"verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."** (John 8:58) This did it! They took up stones to cast at Him but He hid Himself and went out of the temple going through the midst of them.

John 9 relates the story of the healing of a man, blind from birth, on the Sabbath. There was considerable division among the Pharisees resulting from this incident and the dialogue that followed. Many of the Pharisees refused even to believe the man had been blind though all whom they had testify, testified that he was. Finally, calling the man himself to testify the second time, they said to him, **"We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."** (John 9:29) The man's answer is a classic. Quoting in part, he said beginning in verse 31 going through verse 33, **"Now we know that God heareth no sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God and doeth His will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God he could do nothing."**

This really got to the Pharisees who were questioning him. They threw him out. Jesus heard they had thrown him out and sought him out and asked him if he believed on the Son of God. When Jesus told him He was the Son of

God, the man replied, **"Lord, I believe."** And he worshipped Him. Jesus said, **"For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and they which see might be made blind."** (vs. 39) Some of the Pharisees that heard Him say this asked if they were blind also. He answered them, **"If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."** (vs. 41) He then talked to them in parables concerning His being the shepherd and also the door to the sheep, but they could not understand what He was talking about. Finally, they asked that if He were the Christ, to tell them plainly. Jesus then told them that He had already told them and they believed Him not and then He finally told them in John 10:30, **"I and my Father are one."**

They again took up stones to stone Him, but after telling them in verses 37 and 38 to at least believe His works whether they believed Him or not; He escaped out of their hands once again.

Jesus taught much concerning the Kingdom in the presence of the Pharisees, but He taught it all in parables such as the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32); the man who prepared a great feast and his invited guests not coming thus causing him to go out into the street for his guests (Luke 14); and the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)

He discussed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit as being unforgivable. A tree is known by its fruit, He said, and then He called them a generation of vipers, unable to speak good things because of their evilness.

They asked for a sign from Him to which He answered **"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:"** (Matt. 12:39), referring to His upcoming three days in the tomb.

Matt. 15:1-9 and Mark 6:1-13 deals with the heart of the problem of the Pharisees. They questioned Jesus as to why He allowed His disciples to eat without washing their hands, this being one of the laws put forth by the traditions of

the elders. Jesus in return asked them **“Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your traditions?”** He gives them an example and then quotes to them Isa. 29:13, **“This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”** This last phrase was the essence of the problem. They had made up their own set of laws, though originally they had begun with the Mosaic law but strayed very far afield as they wrote their own interpretations of these laws and then interpreted the interpretations, etc. These laws had then become the center piece of their religion rather than God.

The scribes and the Pharisees continued to try to trap Jesus on some point of law, but found themselves trapped instead each time they tried it. This only inflamed their hatred for Jesus all the more for most of them.

This brings us to the last week before the crucifixion. We'll pick it up here next issue. JRL

## **ECONOMIC CRISIS CAUSE AND CURE**

There are three basic systems necessary for the makeup of any nation, kingdom, or government. The ideologies involved in each of these systems determine how these systems work, thus these three systems determine the behavior of a particular nation, kingdom, or government. These systems are a political system, a religious system, and an economic system. There may appear to be a wide diversity of ideologies involved in these systems when comparing one government to another, though when the principles supporting these ideologies are examined, very often this diversity is cosmetic only. However, the core of these ideologies, though they may be few in actual number, are often very different from each other and are frequently directly opposed to the ideology that dominates the same system of a different government.

If we review history, e We will find that if the ideology that dominates a particular system, the religious system of a particular nation for example, changes to a different ideology, the change of that particular system could and very likely will cause a change to another system of that same governmental entity. For example, in recent history when Soviet Russia changed from a dictatorial political system, the economic system also changed to a more capitalistic system.

In our discussion here, I want to deal primarily with an economic system that I believe God's Word tells us has brought us to the current very serious economic crises we face, not only in the United States, but in the world as a whole. Understanding how and where this system originated, how it has developed through the centuries, and what its goals are now, will, I believe, help us understand changes that have occurred and continue to occur in religious systems and political systems in not only our nation but nations around the world.

The economic system I want to discuss is often referred to as the Babylonian Economic System. But before I start, let me stress emphatically that trying to correct or change this system by attacking it directly will avail nothing. The only way this system will be corrected or destroyed is through the influence of another system, the religious system. How this can and will be done might surprise you. We'll discuss this at length later. But let me caution you not to give into the tendency most of us have of trying to attack the system itself as we learn more about it.

Having said this, I am a believer in starting at the beginning and studying the foundation something is built on. The Bible provides us information concerning this foundation of the Babylonian economic system. There is no question that it is tied to particular religious and political systems, but which came first and by whose authority we will try to determine as we go along.

The Babylonian system had its beginning historically with a man named Nimrod. We find him first mentioned in Gen. 10:8 where we are

told he was a son of Cush and that he became a mighty hunter in the earth. Gen. 10 gives us a genealogy of the family of Noah. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Cush was one of the sons of Ham, so the story of Nimrod dates back to just a few years after Noah's flood, some 4000 years ago. Gen. 10:10 tells us that the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh in the land of Shinar. The land of Shinar corresponds today roughly with the country of Iraq. Gen. 11 tells us that originally, following the flood, the whole earth, i.e. Noah's family, traveled from the east to the land of Shinar and dwelt there. Everyone spoke the same language. Under the leadership of Nimrod, they decided to make brick and use asphalt for mortar and to build a city and a tower whose top would reach unto the heavens. Very briefly, secular history tells us that Nimrod combined two religions, "monotheism," which taught there is one God, and "animism," which taught that every object in nature was inhabited by a different spirit. The animist then prayed to the spirits they thought would be beneficial to them and tried to appease those they thought were against them. The result of this combination was a religion called "pantheism," which taught that God is nature itself and that each nature spirit then is part of God. This suppressed the idea of a Creator-God. Instead of God creating the universe, the universe became God. So the idea of building a tower to reach into the heavens was really to worship the Zodiac, the astrological signs. In doing this, it was believed they would make a name for themselves, or become renown, thus showing them to be independent from the Creator-God.

If you follow the story in the Bible, it goes on to tell us that God came down to see the city, and then to stop their building, He confounded their language so that they couldn't understand each other with the result they became scattered upon the face of the earth. For this reason, the city was called Babel, or Babylon, which means confusion.

Gen. 10:11 tells us that it was from the land of Shinar that Asshur came and built the city

of Nineveh. It was his descendents, the Assyrians, then that, so far as Biblical history is concerned, became the first world conquerors and founded the first world (the then known world) empire. However, it was not too long before the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Assyria as well as most of the countries in the then known world and they became the world empire. Though we are going to concentrate primarily on the economic system of this and succeeding empires, keep in mind the beginning of the Babylonian religious system, as well, as we will from time to time see how it developed and influenced the economic system.

II Kings 24 & 25 and II Chronicles 36 give us a brief history of the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, as Babylon began its rise to becoming the world empire of its day. The book of the prophet Jeremiah, in particular, gives the same history with more detail, but also warns that God is using Nebuchadnezzar as a tool to discipline Judah because of her sins.

Nebuchadnezzar first came against Jerusalem in the days of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and forced Jehoiakim into subjection to him. Three years later Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and God punished Jehoiakim and Judah for this rebellion by sending a number of armies against Judah. Jehoiakim died after ruling 11 years and his son Jehoiachin took the throne, but three months later Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the city and broke in and took Jehoiachin, his mother, and his servants and princes, along with treasures from the temple plus the mighty men, craftsmen and smiths back to Babylon and appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, to be king over Judah. Though subject to Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah ruled another 11 years and then he rebelled against the Babylonians. Nebuchadnezzar returned and this time destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple, and took the rest of the people, with the exception of a small remnant, captive back to Babylon.

When Nebuchadnezzar put Jehoiakim into subjection to himself, he took a number of young boys of Judah, among which was a young boy

named Daniel, back to Babylon with him. As Daniel grew and matured, God gave Daniel great wisdom and understanding. In Nebuchadnezzar's second year of his reign as king, he had a dream that disturbed him very greatly, but when he awoke he could not remember the dream, only that it disturbed him very much. He called all of his magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to him to show him what his dream was and what it meant. Of course, since he couldn't tell them what the dream was, they could not interpret it for him. So he commanded that they and all the wise men of Babylon be killed. When Daniel heard of this, he asked the king to give him some time and then to let him tell Nebuchadnezzar about the dream. The king granted him the time and God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel who then went before the king and revealed it to him. Daniel 2:31-35 tells us what Daniel told the king about the dream. **"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible (or awesome). This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."**

In verses 38-45 Daniel interprets the dream, but he first tells Nebuchadnezzar he is a king of kings and he is in this position because God put him there. Then he tells the king that the head of gold represents him and his kingdom. The silver breast and arms represents a kingdom that will follow Babylon but be inferior to it. The brass belly and thighs represents a third kingdom to follow the silver kingdom and the iron legs rep-

resents a fourth kingdom that shall be strong as iron that breaks in pieces and subdues all things. But then because the feet and toes were part of clay and part of iron, this kingdom of iron would become partly strong and partly broken.

The stone that was cut out without hands represents the kingdom of God and also had its beginning on earth during the beginning of these metal kingdoms.

This metal image then represented four successive world empires. We know now from history that the silver represented the Medo-Persian Empire, the brass represented the Grecian Empire, and the iron represented the Roman Empire as each of the empires successively conquered the empire before it and in turn became the dominant world empires from the time of Daniel until the very recent past. But note in the dream that this image remained intact until it was destroyed from the feet up by the stone cut out without hands. Even though the empires themselves disappeared in history, the image remained intact until it was destroyed as a whole.

So, this image is more than just the individual empires that each metal represented. As a whole, it then represents a greater system than any of the empires making it up and the individual systems within each empire that gave each empire its life. It also represents the whole of what each empire added to its development religiously, politically and economically. Keep a mental picture of this image in mind as we continue our study as I believe it will help each of us understand our problem much better. We'll deal with the stone cut out without hands a little later, so for now make a mental note of it and the destruction it wreaked with the image.

We'll continue our study from this point next issue. JRL

Always keep your head up, but be careful to keep your nose where it belongs.

Counting time is not so important as making time count.

The Ten Commandments are not multiple choice.

One thing we can give and still keep—Our Word.



## NUMBERS ARE IMPORTANT

I recently was visiting with one of my daughters about her home schooling her children. She told me some of the difficulties she was having teaching math. After our visit, though we all use numbers every day in one way or the other, the thought occurred to me that I doubt that most of us really appreciate how really important numbers are in the many ways that we use them. Math was relatively easy for me when I was in school, so I know that I expect more from others where numbers are concerned than I should. But I am convinced that we need to be as familiar using the language of numbers as we are the language of letters and words. Unfortunately, I believe that too often we get bogged down trying to memorize and deal with the process of mathematics because we don't realize that in the big picture, what math really teaches us is to reason and think. Of course, engineers, scientists, etc. need to use the numbers in their business, but for the rest of us, learning to use the language of numbers is really a way to help us develop the ability to solve problems and often to communicate those solutions.

There are some other ways that numbers are important that we need to be aware of as well. In the Hebrew and Greek, the languages that the Bible was originally written in, the letters had numerical value, so that if one was to add the numerical value of each letter in a word, the word then would have a numerical value. The same would apply to a sentence. Assigning numerical value to letters is called gematria. Sometimes in Scripture, these numerical values tell us as much as the words themselves do. There is no question that our Father in heaven is a mathematician. The mathematic perfection that is demonstrated in Scripture is proof enough in itself of the authenticity of the Bible.

Another way that numbers are important is that if we find a number in Scripture and record the circumstance that number is found in, chances are quite high that the next time we find that same number in Scripture, it will be in a like circum-

stance, so that a spiritual significance can be assigned to that number. Dr. Bullinger, in his Companion Bible, Appendix #10, has listed several numbers with their respective spiritual significance. I would like to quote some excerpts from this appendix to give you an idea of how this works. When a number becomes prominent in your life, like your age for example, compare the spiritual significance of that number to your circumstance and see how they compare. I think you might be pleasantly surprised at the results.

Following are some excerpts of Appendix 10:

ONE. Denotes *unity, and commencement*. The first occurrences of words or utterances denote their essential significance, in interpretation. Words that occur only once, in the originals are emphatic and important. First day, Light.

TWO. Denotes *difference*. If two different persons *agree* in testimony it is conclusive. Otherwise two implies *opposition, enmity, and division*, as was the work of the Second day. Compare the use of the word "double" applied to "heart," "tongue," "mind," &c.

THREE. Denotes *completeness*, as three lines complete a plane figure. Hence, three is significant of Divine perfection and completeness. The third day completes the fundamentals of creation-work. The fourth, fifth, and sixth days are the counterpart and repetition of the first, second, and third, and correspond respectively. The number, three, includes *resurrection also...*

FOUR. Denotes *creative works* (3 + 1), and always has reference to the material creation, as pertaining to the *earth*, and things "under the sun" and things terrestrial.

FIVE. Denotes Divine *grace*. It is 4 + 1. It is God adding His gifts and blessing to the works of His hands. The Heb. *Ha'aretz* (the earth), by "Gematria" (i.e. the addition of the numerical value of the letters together) is a multiple of four, while *Hashamayim* (the heavens) is a multiple of five. The Gematria of *charis*, the Greek for *Grace*, is also a multiple of five. It is the leading factor in the Tabernacle measurements.

SIX. Denotes the *human number*. Man was creat-

ed on the *sixth* day; and this first occurrence of the number make it (and all multiples of it) the hall-mark of all connected with man. He works six days. The hours of his day are a multiple of six. Athaliah usurped the throne of Judah six years. The great men who have stood out in defiance of God (Goliath and Nebuchadnezzar and antichrist) are all emphatically marked by this number.

SEVEN. Denotes *spiritual perfection*. It is the number or hall-mark of the Holy Spirit's work. He is the Author of God's Word, and seven is stamped on it as the water mark is seen in the manufacture of paper. He is the Author and Giver of *life*; and seven is the number which regulates every period of Incubation and Gestation, in insects, birds, animals and man.

EIGHT. Denotes *resurrection, regeneration*; a new beginning or commencement. The eighth is a new first. Hence the octave in music, colour, days of the week, &c. It is the number which has to do with the LORD, Who rose on the eighth, or new "first-day." This is therefore, the *Dominical* number.

NINE. Denotes *Finality of judgment*. It is  $3 \times 3$ , the product of Divine completeness. The number nine, or its factors or multiples, is seen in all cases when *judgment is the subject*.

TEN. Denotes *Ordinal perfection*. Another new first; after the ninth digit, when numeration commences anew.

ELEVEN. Denotes *disorder, disorganization*, because it is one short of the number twelve (see below).

TWELVE. Denotes *Governmental perfection*. It is the number or factor of all numbers connected with government: whether by Tribes or Apostles, or in measurements of time, or in things which

have to do with government in the heavens and the earth.

THIRTEEN. Denotes *rebellion, apostasy, defection, disintegration, revolution, &c.* The first occurrence fixes this (Gen. 14:4); and the second confirms it (Gen. 17:25). It, and its multiples, are seen in all numbers and in the Gematria of all names and passages that are associated with rebellion, &c.

SEVENTEEN. Denotes a combination of *spirit and order* ( $10 + 7$ ). It is the seventh prime number (as 13 is the sixth prime number).

Other numbers follow the laws which govern the smaller numbers, as being their factors, sums, product, or multiples: e.g. 24 is  $12 \times 2$ , a higher form of 12.

$25 = 5^2$  Grace intensified.

$27 = 3^3$  Divinity intensified

$28 = 7 \times 4$  Spiritual perfection in connection with the earth

$30 = 3 \times 10$  Divine perfection applied to order.

$40 = 10 \times 4$  Divine order applied to earthly things. Hence, the number of *probation*.

The four *perfect numbers*, 3, 7, 10, and 12, have their product the remarkable number 2,520. It is the Least Common Multiple of the ten digits governing numeration; and can, therefore, be divided by each of the nine digits, without a remainder. It is the number of chronological perfection ( $7 \times 360$ ).

Even if working with numbers is difficult for you, realize that one can have a lot of fun with numbers just as you can have a lot of fun with letters and words. Possibly this realization will make it easier for you. JRL