

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

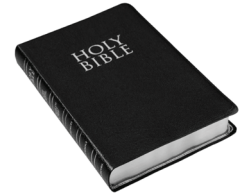
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**“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”**

Matthew 6:33



Issue 910

## PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE CHURCHES

We want to continue with the book of Hebrews this issue. As previously stated, we are presuming Paul to be the author of the book, though we are not told who the author actually is. This will complete our look at Paul's epistles to the churches.

We saw last lesson that God had sworn in Psa. 110:4, prophesying of Jesus Christ, **“The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”** For our introduction to Melchizedek, we need to take a look at Gen. 14. There was a battle with five kings on one side and four on the other. The four kings won the battle and took a great spoil which included Lot, Abraham's nephew, and his family. When Abraham heard about it he armed his own servants and pursued the victors and defeated them and took back the spoil they had taken and returned back to his home. He was met by one of the defeated kings, the king of Sodom. Then in verse 18, another king appears on the scene and we're told, **“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”** This is our introduction to Melchizedek. Keep this in

mind as we continue our study.

What Paul wants to teach us next, he considers to be real meat of the Word, but he feels it difficult to teach to those who still need milk. But in Heb. 6:1-2, he says he wants to go beyond the doctrines of repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. He says in Heb. 6:11-12, **“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”**

When God made the promises to Abraham, He swore by Himself since He could swear by no greater. In Heb. 6:18, we're told, **“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation,...”** The first of these two immutable things (unchangeable things) is God swearing by Himself to Abraham. The second is His swearing Christ to be a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Because of these two immutable things (unconditional promises), we have strong consolation set before us **“...which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”** (Heb. 6:19-20)

We're told that this Melchizedek, to whom Abraham gave a tenth, or a tithe, of the spoils he brought back, was **“Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto**

**the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.**” (Heb. 7:3) and that his priesthood was of a higher order than the Aaronic priesthood. As evidence of this, he tells us, speaking of the Levites and the Aaronic priesthood, **“And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.”** (Heb. 7:8-10) Paul reasons that Melchizedek would be the greater because he ever lives and because Levi paid tithes to him in Abraham.

Remember that the first covenant (Ex. 19:5-6) had a big “if” in it. It was conditioned upon obedience of the people to God. The full significance of the actual difference between the old and new covenants is very important and a lengthy study, but the difference is simply stated in Heb. 7:11, **“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron?”** The people did not meet the condition of that first covenant; the priesthood who’s responsibility it was to see that the people were obedient, i.e. keep the law, failed to do so. Thus, to meet the condition of that covenant, God did not change the covenant, but rather changed the priesthood responsible for being sure the people were presented sinless before God. Heb. 7:12 tells us then, **“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.”** Since God made the law, only God can change the law. We’re told He did so, but notice He did not change the necessity of the priesthood, but rather the priesthood from a failed man staffed priesthood to one staffed by one who, though He was made a man after the seed of Abraham, that He might know our temptation and suffering, has risen to the right hand of God and to whom God has given everything in subjection under Him.

This change of high priests, or mediators, now makes possible the meeting of the condition, **“if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my**

**covenant,”** (Ex. 19:5) of the first (or old) covenant. While this new priesthood does not keep us from sinning, at least not yet, it does present us sinless, before God.

We’ll see shortly that Paul considered these covenants to be wills, as in last will and testament. They were God’s will, His Last Will and Testament, as it were. The covenant we read in Ex. 19 had all of the elements of a will by our standards today except for an executor, or mediator. Studying further will show us that the Aaronic priesthood was then given this job. The inheritance is the world, for God said all the world was His. The heir was the kingdom of Israel. However, there was a condition to the will that said that Israel must obey God, a condition they found to be an impossible one to meet. However, it was the Aaronic priesthood’s responsibility to help, or cause the people to meet this special condition. They soon found that the people simply could not keep the commandments, statutes and judgments so it became the job of the priesthood to attempt to make the people righteous through the ordinances, the sacrifice and tabernacle laws which simply could not change the conscience of the people to make them righteous. The priesthood failed to accomplish their mission.

Now, we have a change of priesthood to a High Priest that can accomplish what the former priesthood could not do; present the people before God perfect, not because they are perfect, but because God looks on Christ’s righteousness instead of ours, Christ’s life, or blood, instead of ours.

The order of Melchizedek is after the power of endless life, in that God said He would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek forever. **“For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.”** (Heb. 7:19) Because he everliveth, Christ’s priesthood is unchangeable. He need not sacrifice for His own sins—He sacrificed once when He offered up Himself.

Paul sums it up, **“We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”** (Heb.

8:2) On earth we have only a semblance of heavenly things, but our High Priest is in the true Holy of Holies (the presence of God). The promise of the new covenant, as given in Jer. 31, is repeated in Heb. 8:8-9. It is believed by most that verses 10 through 12 are the terms of that covenant, but I would suggest that we actually have two covenants here. The first is the new covenant replacing the old covenant given in Exodus 19:5-6. Keep in mind that though we often quote only Ex. 19:5-6 when we speak of the old covenant, that covenant included all of the law. This new covenant simply says **“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not saith the Lord.”** (Heb. 8:8-9) Note two things. First this covenant is to be made with the house of Israel **and** the house of Judah. Second, there are no terms given to this covenant. I submit that changing of the priesthood that Paul has been explaining is the change in the new covenant from the old. I believe it safe to say that the inheritance is still the world. Since God rules the world, if we are to inherit it, we must rule with God. Obviously not everyone is going to do so. What Paul has been explaining is how we, through faith in this new priesthood, can be among those who will rule in the presence of God. To be in the presence of God, one must be perfect, without sin. Through our Melchizedek High Priest, we can be perfect in the sight of God, without sin. Therefore, the covenant, or will, promising the world, or world rulership is now valid.

However, as we came to New Testament times, the house of Israel had been disowned, divorced and had no part in any covenant except the promises to Abraham. However, since they were disowned, they really had no part here either since they were no longer considered children. While the prophets talked of redemption of Israel and Jesus and the writers of the New Testament discuss it, I believe that Heb. 8:10-12 is the official

notice that Israel was now re-instated as part of the family. **“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”** Notice that this covenant is made with the house of Israel only. The reason that they were cast away in the first place is what is dealt with here. That reason has now been nullified by virtue of the new High Priest.

Paul then shows that with the first covenant we had the tabernacle, and the priest accomplished their service to God in the first tabernacle or room. But into the second, the Holy of Holies, only the high priest went once a year with blood to offer first for himself, then for the people. But Christ, being come a High Priest, by a greater tabernacle not built with hands, and not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, entered once into the true Holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us.

If the blood of animals sanctifieth (setteth apart) to the purifying of the flesh, how much more the blood of Christ shall purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. The sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats was a pattern of what was to come through Christ. **“And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.”** (Heb. 9:15-16) We mentioned that Paul considered these covenants to be wills. Here is our evidence. He is saying that so long as the one writing the will is alive, the will is of no effect. But once the person dies, the will then has the force of law. For God to write a will and not die

would have been an exercise in futility since it would never have had any value. However, we know that God as God cannot die. So His plan was that as man, Jesus Christ, He had to die. When He died, His will, or covenant, or testament had the full force of law, His law. The uniqueness of His plan is outstanding. God died in Jesus Christ on the cross that His will would go into effect. In His resurrection, Jesus Christ became the mediator or executor of His own will as the new High Priest. **“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** (Heb. 9:28)

The animal sacrifices were but a shadow of good things to come—not the very image of these things. In themselves, the sacrifices could not ever make perfect those making the offering. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, once, perfects (make complete) he that is sanctified (set apart) for ever.

The New Testament is the new will or covenant. It is based on a new Priesthood. It promises the same things as the Old Testament, or will, or covenant. But with the change in the Priesthood, and the death of the testator, God, as Jesus Christ, we now have absolute full assurance of inheritance of the estate. However, not all who are born of Israel will be heirs, but those who be Christ's. **“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** (Gal. 3:29)

We need to understand something seldom mentioned. We have read that Jesus is our forerunner within the veil. Our goal should be to be among those who will enter within the veil in the true Holy of Holies, i.e. into the very presence of our God. Jesus has entered so that we might enter as well. Paul tells us that through the new covenant we should, **“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”** (Heb.

10:19-22)

Let me pause to state what is probably obvious to most, but I feel it to be of utmost importance, if we are to understand the full story, or plan and purpose of God. When God made the promises to Abraham, He made them unconditionally, i.e. God took full responsibility to make sure they were kept; nothing was dependent on the performance of Abraham or his descendents. So it seemed strange to us that when God made the covenant with Israel in Ex. 19:5-6, He promised basically the same thing to Israel, Abraham's descendents, that He had promised to Abraham, but then He made these promises conditional. This seems to be a contradiction of what He told Abraham. But, notice what God did through this conditional covenant. He used the weakness of man to give Him an excuse or reason to send Jesus Christ, His Son. It is then through Jesus that God, by Himself, redeemed Israel and provided salvation to the world and in so doing, Christ (God) became the High Priest that then makes it possible for the promise of being rulers, or becoming heirs of the kingdom, to be accomplished. Man never does anything to warrant or expedite the fulfillment of those promises. If we can understand this, we will understand more the sovereignty of our God and the great love and mercy He has toward us. His plan and purpose is complete when those who have overcome are made joint rulers with Christ over the whole world. Understand that when I say “those who have overcome,” I am not saying that God's plan and promise is dependent on anyone overcoming. His promise to Abraham was to his descendents. His covenant was with the nation Israel, not with individuals except as they may be a part of that nation Israel. The promise and covenant is still with the nation. Our concern is whether we want to be a part of that nation, or kingdom, or not. If we do, we must accept by faith what God, as Jesus Christ, has done to make this possible for us. It is not something solely dependent on being born an Israelite. We must be born of the Spirit as well, i.e. we must be resurrected among those in the first resurrection.

Paul then exhorts us to provoke each other

to love and good works as we hold fast our profession of faith without wavering. How much greater is the judgment of God on one who has trodden underfoot the Son of God, than one who despised Moses' law and dies without mercy under two or three witnesses. For God has said, **"Vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompense saith the Lord."** (Heb. 10:30) Paul pleads with us to come to a knowledge of Christ and to not turn back from it. To always be of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

An essential for each one entering the rest of God, or into the Holy of Holies is faith. Paul defines faith in Heb. 11:1, **"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** It is through faith that we understand that the worlds, or ages were framed by the word of God—that the visible was made from the invisible.

Paul reviews what many of the Bible characters did by faith. Yet all these, though they received a good report, has not yet received the promises. **"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."** (Heb. 11:40)

We are not come to the old Mt. Sion but to the new, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, Paul says. He urges all to hear and to not refuse him that speaketh. That which is not of God will be shaken and removed. We are therefore receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, so **"Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."** (Heb. 12:28-29) Paul then completes this letter with a series of admonitions to help us live a Christian life. JRL

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

(Read John 7:1-9) In chapter 6, the time of the year was in the spring at Passover time. Jesus' telling the Jews that He is the Bread of Life and that He must be eaten (metaphorically) was in keeping with the Passover, which was the feast observance in which Jesus was crucified and then

resurrected. We now move to the Feast of Tabernacles time in the fall of presumably the same year as in chapter 6. The Feast of Tabernacles, according to Lev. 23:33-44, was to begin on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month (roughly equivalent to our October) and was to last 8 days. A holy convocation (or Sabbath) was to be held on the first and eighth days of the feast. The people were to take tree branches and build booths and live in those booths for the eight days. It was to be a time of rejoicing. Verse 43 gives us the purpose of the booths, **"That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."** This was the third and final harvest celebration of the year, the first two being the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or Passover (barley harvest) and the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost (wheat harvest). According to Deut. 16:13, Tabernacles was a feast to be held after everything had been gathered from the threshing floor and the wine press. Burnt offerings were to be made each day, but that it was to be a time of rejoicing is emphasized. The feast was to be held at a place of the Lord's choosing.

The seventh month was a very important month. The first day of the month was to be a Sabbath and was to be The Day of Blowing of Trumpets which came to be known as the Feast of Trumpets. The Day of Atonement was to be observed on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month.

At the time of Christ, Jerusalem was the apparent selected place for the Feast and all of the men, at least, of Judah went there to celebrate the Feast. It would have been normal for Jesus to go to this Feast, except that it had now become dangerous for Him to travel in Judea because many of the Jews were trying to kill Him. However, His brethren, presumably His family and/or the apostles, urged Him to go to Jerusalem and perform some of the miracles He had been doing there. Apparently, at this point, His brethren did not yet believe in Him and they apparently wanted to see more of these miracles themselves, but they told Him that if He was going to do these miracles, He needed to show them to the world. However, Je-

Jesus told them to go up to Jerusalem to this Feast, but that His time had not yet come. At this time He was still living in Galilee. The words translated **“Go ye up”** indicated that they should go up with a caravan of people going. He did not say He would not go, but that He would not go up with them.

(Read John 7:10-13) Once His brethren were gone, Jesus then went up also in secret. The Jews who had arrived at the Feast had fully expected Him to be there so were trying to find Him. The people still had not figured out who He was or why or how He performed the miracles He did. They talked about him among themselves but were careful not to speak openly of Him for fear of the Jews who were trying to kill Him.

(Read John 7:14-15) Note that Jesus appeared in the temple teaching in the midst, or middle of the Feast. If you recall, when we started this study in the Gospel of John, we discussed the 8 signs, or miracles that John records of Jesus doing. We also discussed the fact that Moses went up Mt. Sinai 8 times and that there were 8 days in the Feast of Tabernacles. There may be a connection between these three events that are all centered around the number 8. At least it is worth looking at I believe. There is not an agenda spelled out for the 8 days of Tabernacles except that the first and eighth days were to be Sabbaths and a schedule of the sacrifices is given for each day. For a little bit, let's consider first what happens here in John 7 at the midst, or middle of the Feast. Jesus, who was refraining from going into Judea because of the efforts of many of the Jews to kill Him, suddenly appears in the temple teaching the people. We are not told which day of the Feast this was, only that it was in the middle of the Feast.

We just discussed the fact that the fourth sign, or miracle recorded by John appeared to have more to do with Passover. But as we look at the fifth sign, the disciples had rowed approximately to the middle of the sea before the storm arose and then they see Jesus walking on the water to them. As recorded in Matthew, Peter went out to meet Jesus to accompany Him back to the ship. His faith weakened and he began to sink,

but Jesus stretched forth His hand and took him and they returned to the ship. As soon as they were in the ship, the ship and all the passengers were immediately in Capernaum. The name Capernaum means “the Covering of the Comforter.”

Moses' 4<sup>th</sup> trip up Mt. Sinai came immediately after God spoke the 10 Commandments to the children of Israel. The people were too afraid to hear all of the law, so Moses went up the mountain to receive the rest of the law (Ex. 20:21-Ex. 24:3). Ex. 24:9-11 records the fifth trip. **“Then went Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.”** So in this trip 74 people went to meet God. There is no mention of them returning, but it is implied by the fact that they were eating and drinking, i.e. they were still alive after seeing God.

What is common with each of these three incidents is first, the unexpected appearance or presence of Jesus Christ, or God. Second is that each incident happened in the middle of the Feast, the sea, or the number of trips made. Obviously, there is teaching in each incident. I am speculating somewhat, but, if Passover was the time of the crucifixion and resurrection and the timing and execution of the specified events of this Feast were met with Jesus Christ as the sacrifice, I think that there is a strong possibility that the second coming of Christ could correspond with the Feast of Tabernacles, and these incidents that we have discussed could show us a pattern of that return, or coming. There is more to be studied to confirm such a speculation, but I feel it is worthy of mention at this point for our consideration.

(Read John 7:16-24) Because Jesus had not been educated by the priesthood, it was quite a marvel to the Jews that He could know so much and teach with such authority. To answer this question that was in their minds, Jesus tells them that the doctrine He was teaching was not His, but that of the One who sent Him. He says that if (a

condition that could be possible to meet) anyone would do the Father's will, he would know whether the doctrine that Jesus was teaching was of God or something that Jesus was making up on His own. Doing God's will is obeying His law. Jesus is saying that what He was teaching was strictly in accordance with God's will, or law, so that anyone who was striving to obey God would recognize what Jesus was teaching was the same thing as, or in accordance with, God's law. We have to remember that what was taught by the priests and scribes of that day was a very corrupted teaching of the law, a corruption that often led to one actually violating God's law in an effort to obey the doctrine that they were being taught.

Again, we have to understand that the Messiah that the Jews were looking for would have been a leader who of necessity would have had to glorify himself as a leader to fill the description of what they were looking for. But Jesus is saying what verifies Him as the Messiah is that He is seeking the glory of the Father, not Himself. Instead of only Jesus witnessing of Himself, the Father, through the works and doctrine that Jesus is performing and teaching by the power of the Father, is also witnessing, thus providing a double witness so there is no unrighteousness in Jesus for Him to do what He is doing. He says that Moses gave them the law, yet none of them are keeping the law—specifically they were trying to kill Him, and He asks why?

The people try to plead innocence and tell Him that He must have a demon to think that they are trying to kill Him. In His answer, I am assuming that Jesus is referencing the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath as this is the only recorded miracle that I can think of that Jesus did in Jerusalem prior to this. But He says that Moses gave them the law of circumcision, though He rightly points out that this was not part of the law that God gave to Moses at Mt Sinai. God gave the law of circumcision to Abraham and it was passed down, however, it was somewhat neglected by the time of Moses and had to be re-taught and enforced by Moses. The point is that Moses, in whom the Jews supposedly placed a lot of faith, gave them this law and it was

often carried out on the Sabbath since they were commanded to carry out this procedure on a male baby when he was 8 days old. Jesus says this seems to be okay with them, but when He heals a man, as opposed to causing injury to a baby or person, on the Sabbath, they then seek to kill Him. He tells them to use a little common sense, to judge righteous judgment.

(Read John 7:25-31) Then it occurs to someone that Jesus is the one whom certain of the Jews are trying to kill, yet here He is speaking very boldly in the temple, and yet nobody had said anything to Him or laid a hand on Him. The people in general appear confused. They, in effect, ask among themselves if the rulers haven't figured out yet whether He was the Christ. They had been taught that the Christ would come from Bethlehem and then would be hid, but no one knew where. But here, this man was from Galilee and they at least thought they knew who He was, so He didn't fill the bill in their mind, thus the questioning among them.

Jesus tries to answer their question in verses 28-29 by telling them in no uncertain terms that He came from the Father, He knew the Father, and He was sent by the Father, but this only caused those trying to kill Him to try all the harder. Yet John tells us no man laid hands on Him **"because His hour was not yet come."** However many people did believe on Him because of the miracles He had done. Their reasoning was that when Christ was to come, He couldn't do more than this man was doing, so He must be the Messiah.

(Read John 7:32-36) When the Pharisees heard that the people were reasoning like this among themselves, they sent officers to arrest Him. But Jesus continued by saying in verses 33-34, **"Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am thither ye cannot come."** This then led to considerable speculation among the people. Among themselves, they discussed where He could go that they could not find Him. It is interesting as to the one possibility that John records that they thought of. That possibility was that He might go to the

dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles. "Gentiles" here comes from the Greek word "Hellen," meaning Greeks thus distinguishing them from Jews. The dispersed is a reference to descendents of 10-tribed Israel that were at that time scattered across Asia Minor and at least southern Europe. Though this fact has been lost by most Bible teachers and preachers of our day, it was understood by the people of that day, at least to some degree. Both the epistles of James and of Peter are directly addressed to these people and Paul acknowledges this fact in several of his epistles. "Gentiles" in the New Testament normally comes from the word "ethnos" which means "nation," but in this case narrows down where the "dispersed" were to the Greek states within the Roman Empire.

(Read John 7:37-44) Finally, on the last day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."** There are a number of scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to living waters coming from God. Jesus references these scriptures in general, then using a figure of speech where a part is used for the whole, i.e. He says of the belly, meaning the whole, or Himself, comes forth rivers of living water. John goes on then to explain that the living waters mean the Holy Spirit that believers would receive, though at that time it would not have happened yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified, i.e. been resurrected in His new body. Many people believed that He was that Prophet, or the Christ, but some, not knowing that He was born in Bethlehem, were still questioning this because He came from Galilee. This caused a division among the people and some were still trying to kill Him, but no one laid a hand on Him.

(Read John 7:45-53) The officers that had been sent by the Pharisees and chief priests to arrest Jesus came back empty handed. When asked why, their answer was that **"Never man spake like this man."** This disturbed those who had sent them very much. Very arrogantly they asked **"Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?"** If they had not believed on him, then it would have been impossible for Him to be the Messiah. Their arrogance is astounding. They blamed the fact that many people did believe on Jesus on their being ignorant of the law (their law) and said they would be cursed. Nicodemus, who was a member of the Sanhedrin, tried to reason with them by telling them that by their law, no one was to be condemned before they could know what he did and he had a chance to defend himself. But their answer was that no prophet was to arise out of Galilee; they suggested that Nicodemus go search the Scripture himself. JRL

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*I have a great need for Christ; I have a great Christ for my need.*

*C. H. Spurgeon*

*He who is born of God is certain to resemble his Father.*

*There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up.*

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