

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

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

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1002

## GENESIS:1

We are beginning a new study this issue with a deeper look at the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis was written by Moses some 2500 years after the creation of Adam. Though there were at least some records at the time, we don't really know how much he depended on records and how much on divine inspiration. I believe the majority was the latter. We're told this was the first book he wrote. He wrote a total of five, which we today refer to as the Pentetuch. If you try to record what all you did last week, or what happened in the world last week, I believe you can appreciate how much history and detail Moses was able to relate of 2500 years in this book (some 80 pages in my Bible). We can also understand why many details we would like to know are not in the book. We need to look at the Bible, including Genesis, as a blue print, or a plan outline of what God has planned for all mankind from creation to the "restoration of all things" following the events of the Great White Throne of Judgment. As such it doesn't deal with many of the details that we might think important.

The book of Genesis gives us the very foundation of the rest of the Bible. Without an understanding of Genesis, I submit that it would be impossible to understand either the Old or the New Testament. Because of this, the account given in Genesis has come under constant attack, especially in the last couple of centuries. The atheists, the agnostics, the skeptics are all aware that if

they can destroy the credibility of this wonderful book, they can basically destroy the Bible as a whole. Unfortunately, even people with good intentions have created division among otherwise Bible believing people by insisting on certain doctrines, that when the truth be told, they cannot prove nor can others prove them wrong.

The problem, as I see it, is that, because doubt and division are created in many people's minds, facts that we really need to know and adhere to are lost in the turmoil. So as we begin a more comprehensive study of Genesis than we have heretofore presented, please understand that there may be statements made that you may not be in agreement with. I ask that you not let these become stumbling blocks, but that you study along with me and search out that which is true. The apostle Paul, in Romans 14:13, says, **“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fail in his brothers way.”** I certainly do not want to be guilty of this, so where possible, I will try to present both sides of arguments, but will try to give my reasons for the way I believe. I pray that this study will cause each of us further study and create in us a greater desire to learn God's Word.

In the interest of saving space, I will be asking you to read most scriptures from your own Bibles as we proceed. I use the King James translation myself, though I may, from time to time refer to other translations in an effort to gain a more complete understanding.

**“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”** This verse tells us a great

deal. First, there was a beginning for the heavens and the earth. We're not told when that beginning was. It also tells us that God was pre-existent to that beginning. It is very difficult for us as humans to comprehend a God with no beginning and no end. Time as we know it was part of His creation, thus there was a beginning of our earth and universe. On this, science and the Bible agree. But what constituted this beginning? The answer has to be, that which was created. But from what was it created. Again there is general agreement between the Bible and science. Romans 1:20 tells us, **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."** Science tells us that the ingredient (for lack of a better word) of everything is energy. With the splitting of the atom has come at least a partial understanding of how great this energy, or power, is from which Paul, in Romans, tells us everything is made. There is disagreement as to how this energy was harnessed into the things that were made. Most theories that have been advanced are only that, theories. Only God has the true answer.

Between verse 1 and verse 2, there is a bit of a mystery. The first part of verse 2 says, **"And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."** The prophet Jeremiah, in Jer. 4:23 (Read), in lamenting the coming destruction of Judah by the Babylonians, uses the same words as Gen. 1:2 as a description to which he was comparing the destruction of Judah. He indicates in this chapter that the earth was created for habitation, then destroyed, and remade as described in Gen. 1. Isaiah confirms this in Isa. 45:18 (Read). The phrase **"in vain"** is from the same Hebrew word, *"tohu"* that the phrase **"without form"** in both Jer. 4:23 and Gen. 1:2 is translated. I am not prepared to speculate on what happened, but thought it interesting enough to make note of it in our study.

That water covered everything is evident from the rest of Gen. 1:2, **"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."**

(Read Gen. 1:3-5) Note that this light existed before the sun and the moon were created.

Again, if we understand that God created everything from energy, we can at least have an idea where this light came from. The concept of day as opposed to night is introduced during this creation period, even though we are told in verse 14 that when the sun and moon were created, their rotations determined the seasons, days and years.

There are differences of opinion as to what is meant by the word "day" as used in the rest of this chapter in speaking of the 6 days of creation.. Some hold the very strong opinion that it means a 24 hour day, as we know it in our time. Others hold just as strong an opinion that the "day" means ages, though there is wide variation of opinions as to the length of these ages. "Day" is from the Hebrew word *"yom."* Though it is most often translated "day" in the King James translation, it is also translated "time, age, life, year, years, and season" among others. What little I know about geology leads me to think of "day" in this chapter as ages. I would not speculate on the length of the ages as I know of nothing that proves this one way or the other. Whichever way one believes, the important thing we need to accept is that it is God, or, as we are told in Col. 1:16 (Read), it is Jesus Christ who created all things. If God had wanted us to know more of these details of creation, I'm convinced He would have given us more details to work with.

(Read Gen. 1:6-8) The firmament dividing the waters, with water above the firmament, producing a very different environmental effect from what we know today. This explains the very fast, lush growth of vegetation that is evident in our coal seams today. This water above the firmament was the source of water for the flood in Noah's time. Somehow, food didn't spoil, as was evidenced by the fact that the wine Noah drank after the flood was fermented, thus causing Noah to become drunk, obviously unaware of such a thing happening.

(Read Gen. 1:9-13) This is our first indication of life in this new creation that we have. Vegetation was introduced and grew on the dry land. The water above the firmament apparently caused a tropical climate, a greenhouse effect, in which vegetative growth was very rapid. Each

kind of plant life yielded seed after its own kind.

(Read Gen. 1:14-19) Even though there was already light and darkness, we now have the source of lights that we are familiar with today. The statement, **“he made the stars also,”** seems to indicate that the creation of the stars could have happened at an earlier period. But the rotation cycles that were put in motion put heavenly bodies in orbits that provide scientist today with a great heavenly clock that helps them look into both the past and the future. Obviously, the years, seasons, and days as we know them were not known until this fourth day, or time period. Calling the sun and the moon the greater and lesser lights helps define the diffusion of lights that would have been the case with the watery canopy above the earth.

Note that beginning with the third day, or period, we’re told that with each addition to the creation, God saw that it was good. This is important to remember as we progress through the creation process.

(Read Gen. 1:20-23) The first animal life is fowls of the air and aquatic creatures. It has been my belief that this was the time period in which the dinosaurs existed. Dinosaurs have always been a mystery to me. I don’t remember what I was taught as a child about creation, but one of the biggest shocks of my young life was when in my early teens, I made my first visit to a natural history museum and saw my first dinosaur skeleton. To say that my faith was shaken at the time would be to put it mildly. Now, after having the privilege of being in various coal and uranium mines and having a little knowledge of the oil and gas industry, I marvel at how God planned everything for us to meet the needs we have in our society today, the millenniums past and the future. Study in the books of Daniel and Revelation teach me that this earth will be inhabited for a very long time yet, but seeing how God has provided for our needs to present, I have no fears that the future will be provided for as well.

(Read Gen. 1:24-25) This sixth day, or period, has required considerable preparation so that life of man and animals could be sustained. Though I believe we are still seeing creation hap-

pen, the animals life of that time was created first, kind after kind. In spite of all the credibility given the evolution theories in our educational institutions today, I think it well to point out that there has never been any proof that one species evolved into another specie. Moses, in his record of creation here, simply tells us that God created the animals so that they produced kind after kind. This is a simple thing to believe. Species have come and gone throughout history (creation is still in progress as we have said), but never has there been any evidence of one specie changing into another specie.

(Read Gen. 1:26-31) To us, the most important creature created is that of man. We’re told in verse 26 that God said, **“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”** We probably won’t understand this to its fullness until after the resurrection. Since I believe creation is actually an ongoing process, I believe that it could well be that the complete fulfillment of God’s statement won’t be fully realized until after man is in his resurrected body.

It is well to point out that God “spoke” the creation into being. As we advance through scripture and see the power attributed to the Word of God in various scenarios, remember the power of His Word in creation.

What is referred to as the “dominion mandate” was given to man once he was created. He has two major mandates, he is to be fruitful and fill the earth and he is to have dominion over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Verses 29 and 30 seem to indicate that initially, man and beast were to only eat vegetation. Meat was added in the dominion mandate given to Noah after the flood.

This first chapter, to me, is an overall outline of the creation process. It is kind of like an inventor having an idea. He sees the finished product in his mind, but it still has to be built. His job is to actually put it together piece by piece, but in his mind he has already seen the complete machine. What we see next in Genesis is the actual building, or forming, the creation God has planned. I do not see Gen. 1 and Gen. 2 as two separate creations, though I realize there are those

that do. We'll discuss this more as we study chapter 2 in our next issue. JRL

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

(Read John 13:1-4) As we have said before, this last supper was not the Passover Feast. It was before the Passover Feast as stated in verse one. The next day after this supper was preparation day in which the Passover lamb was killed and thus the day that Jesus Christ, the ultimate Passover Lamb, was killed. The Companion Bible has a note on the phrase “**unto the end**” that is worthy of repeating. He says, “end = furthest extent, referring not so much to a period of time, the end of His life, as to His readiness to descend to the humblest service in their behalf.”

In verse 2, “**supper being ended**” should read something similar to “supper being prepared or laid.” What happened next would have happened before the meal rather than after. The word translated “ended” literally means “to become.” Verse 26 verifies that they ate after what happens in verses 4-25.

The word “devil” in verse 2 is from the Greek “diabolos” which, as we have discussed means accuser or calumniator. According to Matt. 26:14-16, Judas had already gone to the chief priests and they had offered him money to betray Jesus, so in my mind, the “devil” here would have been these false accusers, these chief priests, who put it in Judas’ heart to betray Jesus.

John makes the statement in verse 3 to emphasize the humble condescension that Jesus was about to make. Keep in mind that the gospels were all written after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, not as the events were happening. So John already knew at the time he wrote this what Jesus did, so verse 3 was for the benefit of the readers to more fully appreciate this humble condescension.

(Read John 13:5-11) In verse 6, when Peter asked “**dost thou wash my feet?**” the pronouns “thou” and “my” are emphatic. Peter was not about to allow Jesus to wash his feet. To Pe-

ter, this was something he simply could not allow—Jesus, whom he rightly considered far greater than he, could not be allowed to lower Himself to wash Peter’s feet. Even after Jesus told him he did not understand at that point what Jesus was doing, he still would not allow it to happen. Then Jesus told him in verse 7, “**If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.**” Peter then did not only an about face, but told Jesus to wash his hands and head as well. Though he still did not understand what this was all about, impulsive Peter certainly wanted to remain loyal to Christ.

One of the most powerful sermons I have ever heard used these verses as text. We really need to think very seriously about what Jesus was teaching here. Some denominations have taken this literally and they wash each other’s feet every Sunday. This is kind of like giving your teeth an extra brushing just before you go to the dentist to get your teeth cleaned. I doubt if there is ever a dirty foot in the house. Clean feet is not the object here. The principle is being humble in our service to each other. I’m sure all of us are willing to help each other, and others, in certain ways, but I think most of us draw a line as to what we will do. It is the condition of the heart that is the point here, not the particular act. Somebody said to me recently that people do not, nor even know how, to commit themselves to other people or to certain causes today. He was talking about a community service organization, but it applies to our need to commit to each other, and others, as a daily attitude.

Incidentally, Jesus uses different Greek words here to distinguish between bathing the whole body and washing only a portion of it, though both words are translated “wash” or “washed” in verse 10. The word “clean” in this verse is from the Greek, “katharos.” According to Young’s Concordance, it appears in the New Testament 28 times and is translated clean 10 times, clear 1 time, and pure 17 times. This should make it easier to understand why Jesus said in verse 11 “**Ye are not all clean.**”

(Read John 13:12-17) This gets us to the point of what Jesus did in washing the feet of His

disciples. Jesus was not instituting a new ritual that was to be followed by believers. Rather He was, by this humble condescending act of foot washing, showing by example what self-denying love really is and encouraging His disciples (and us) to live that self-denying life. We certainly are not greater than He, so if He willingly lowered Himself to this task, we cannot claim to be above such self-denial or expressing such love should the opportunity present itself.

(Read John 13:18-20) God does not pull surprises on us. This does not mean that we are not surprised at much of what happens, but this is because we have not studied His Word enough. Here, Jesus quotes from Psalms 41:9 a statement that David made concerning Ahithophel, David's counselor, who betrayed him to his son Absalom when Absalom tried to wrest the kingdom from David. The story of what happened to David in this situation is a prophecy of what would happen to Christ, though David was not killed. In quoting this passage from Psalms 41, Jesus tells His disciples what is going to happen to Him so that their belief, or faith, would be stronger once they see it happen. I think it must have been understood by the disciples that much of David's life, especially what is recorded in David's psalms, was prophetic of Jesus and the events of His life and death since Jesus doesn't try to explain, but matter of fact uses this passage to tell them what is going to happen concerning Judas in betraying Jesus.

I think we have to consider that it would have been more than a possibility that some would question Christ's sovereignty if He was not able to pick for His disciples, or apostles, better than Judas who would then betray Him. So it is necessary for Him to tell them first that He knows whom He has chosen. That Judas would betray Him was no surprise to Him. But that Scripture must be fulfilled, or we might say that the plan of God must be carried out, it was necessary that one who would betray Him be among those whom He had chosen as His closest disciples. But also Jesus felt it necessary that He establish that, while He was aware of a traitor among them, this did not lessen the importance of the rest. In verse 20 He says, "**He that receiveth whomsoever I send**

**receiveth me.**" They were going to be given the job or task of taking Christ to the world, a very great responsibility. Though I doubt that they had any idea of what this would mean for them at this point, Jesus is emphasizing their importance, but even more He tells them, "**and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.**" Their responsibility is huge and not to be blemished by the betrayal of Judas that was about to happen.

(Read John 13:21-30) Having said the above, Jesus became very troubled knowing one whom He loved would betray Him, and told the disciples in plain language that one of them would betray Him. This troubled the disciples and they began looking at each other trying to figure out who would do such a thing. John (referring to himself as a disciple whom Jesus loved), was apparently closest to Jesus at the table. The word "leaning" = "reclining" and is usually translated as "sitting" or "sitting at a meal together." The same word translated "leaning" here is translated "at the table" in verse 28. Peter, who was farther away from Christ at the table beckoned to John to ask who the traitor was. Instead of Jesus giving them a name, He answered that it would be he whom He gave a sop after He had dipped it. It was a mark of honor for the host to give a portion to one of his guests, so Jesus actually honored Judas by giving him a portion of the meal personally. Even though it was the plan of God that Judas betray Christ, Judas has first had his conscience appealed to by Jesus, and now by honoring him Jesus was appealing to his heart. Instead of changing the evil thoughts of Judas, this act by Jesus only fully confirmed in Judas's heart his thought to betray Jesus and he immediately left. The word "Satan" appears only here in the gospel of John. "Satan" is a transliterated Babylonian word and means "adversary." In this case, it doesn't necessarily mean a personage, but rather the change of heart from an evil thought to a confirmed plan. What Jesus said to Judas ("**That thou doest, do quickly.**") was not heard by the other disciples, so they were not aware yet that Judas was the one who would betray Jesus.

(Read John 13:31-35) Judas' going out set in motion the events that were to take place over

the next 24 hours. Therefore we have Jesus' exclamation in verses 31-32. From this point on, it would be like a scripted play. Events would happen quite fast really, but this was what Jesus had come for and it would ultimately glorify Him and in so doing it would glorify the Father.

Yet in verse 33, Jesus felt it necessary to repeat one more time what He had told the Jews already. The Jews didn't understand it and at this point neither did the disciples. But Jesus felt it necessary to tell them this now as He would not have further opportunity. He also then gave them a new commandment, **"That ye love one another."** As we mentioned earlier, because of the possible perceived "crack" in the sovereignty of God that might result by the betrayal of Judas, this commandment, or admonishment, needed to be given to these disciples. As we will see, the disciples were scattered and quite dismayed by the events that were to follow that night and the next day. They needed re-enforcement and this is what Jesus was doing here. After the events culminated with the crucifixion, it was this re-enforcement that helped bring the disciples back together again.

(Read John 13:36-38) I think the training and maturing of the disciples could be compared to the training and maturing of a child into adulthood. Peter especially was quite impetuous. Apparently he thought that Jesus was saying He was going somewhere where it would be difficult for the disciples to go, meaning that they wouldn't have enough strength, will power, or skill to go as well. Peter expressed that he was willing commit to whatever it took, even to laying down his life if need be. Most of us probably believe that we would be willing to make the commitment that Peter thought he was making. Unfortunately, I am afraid that most of us would be too much like Peter as he denied Christ 3 times when he had to face reality. However, when Jesus told Peter in verse 36, **"but thou shalt follow me afterwards."** This was prophetic of Peter's death, traditionally by the same method of crucifixion, except that Peter is supposed to have requested to be crucified upside down, which request was appar-

ently granted. Most of the apostles died tragic deaths, some at fairly young ages. JRL

## CHRISTIANS AND POLITICS

I would like to digress temporarily from our stated purpose of providing only Bible study articles and discuss the subject that appears to be on everyone's mind, one way or the other, these days. The taking over of our federal government by the Obama administration has awakened many people to realizing that we all have a responsibility to our government if we wish to maintain our liberty in any sense at all. The problem is that most of us do not know what that responsibility really is. Liberty and freedom is based on Christian principles and if we remove those principles from government, we will completely lose all semblance of liberty and freedom. I think we all realize that we are very much in danger of exactly that happening. So I would like to discuss this a little.

First, I would like to pass along some things I have observed through the last several years. For the last 30 years or more, I and my family have enjoyed Bible retreats and camps sponsored by several various ministries. Most of these ministries are ones that teach identity. What has surprised me is that while identity has been a somewhat unifying force among those that attend these events, the real unifying force is a shared rebellious feeling against government and organized religion. I'm not talking about the kind of rebellion that brought about the Oklahoma bombing, though our liberal media would like everyone to think this is the case. Rather, it is a rebellion, for lack of a better word, that is a combination of several things; a dissatisfaction with the hypocrisy of the many career politicians we have at both federal and state levels, a feeling of over taxation, an ignorance of how government really works, or should work, a degree of selfishness, an ignorance of God's Word, especially His law, a dissatisfaction with the nation's banking system, to name a

few. These things are not necessarily different from what a lot of other Americans are feeling, and certainly not things that would lead to violence, but the identity movement gave them a place to share their grievances with others of a somewhat like mind.

Now with the Obama administration taking a very definite left turn, we have had the birth of other organizations, such as the Tea Parties and the 9-12 organization, to bring people with their grievances together as well. This certainly is not a bad thing if it is handled right. The problem that I see with both the identity movement and these new organizations is that the former failed to teach their people the function and operation of government and the latter is or will fail to teach their people of God and His plan for mankind. Because of this, I feel that we Christians need to roll up our sleeves and be a part of this political process.

I am aware of those who believe that God is in control and things will work out just as He has planned. I am in full agreement. But I don't believe this gives a Christian the luxury of sitting back and doing nothing. If we look at men like Paul and Peter, for example, and their time in history, we could say that God had planned for the persecution of the Christian congregation, the fall of the Roman Empire with the emergence and taking control by the Papal Roman Empire, the dark ages, etc. If that is all that we saw, we could say that Paul and Peter wasted their time and ultimately died as martyrs for nothing.

I am also aware of those that feel that they are just one person, so what can just one person do. It is much easier not to ruffle any feathers, but to try to live a Christian life out of sight of the public, so to speak. To those, I ask, what does living a Christian life mean to you. What do you do when your children come home from the public school fully indoctrinated with the Marxist class warfare doctrine? What do you do when your minister, or your children's teacher, or the mayor of your town announces he is gay? What do you do when you realize that your children's heroes are sports celebrities who celebrate their immorality, or their knowledge of history is pri-

marily about people such as Martin Luther King Jr., Karl Marx, Chairman Mao and that they don't know who George Washington, Thomas Jefferson or Abraham Lincoln are? How much have you taught your children, and you, of God's Holy Word?

My point is, unless we as Christians become informed as to how government was intended by our forefathers to work, how it is working today, and what part individual citizens can play to make it work right, and then do it, we will deserve what we get. I am convinced that the ultimate answer to the problems that we face, both political and religious, is repentance, and asking for forgiveness as a nation. Who better to make our nation aware of this than we Christians. Judgment in the laws of God is restorative in nature. I do not think there is any question, but what we are coming under the judgment of God, not only as individuals, but as a nation and very great is our sin. We as Christians are part of the problem whether it be actual participation in the many sins of our people, or apathy. The apostle Peter tells us in I Peter 4:17-18 **“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”**

I would like to make some suggestions of things we can and should do. First, if you do not know how our election process works, please learn. Not all states are the same, so I cannot speak to the process in all states, but the principle should be the same. Here in Colorado, we have a caucus system. It starts with a precinct caucus which is a caucus of citizens in a small area called a precinct. Each party holds their own precinct caucus. At this caucus, the participants elect delegates to the county caucus. Anyone wishing to run for a county office announces their candidacy, and then those delegates to the county caucus vote on these county candidates at that caucus. If two or more candidates receive at least 30% of the vote, they then become candidates in a primary election, the winner of which then becomes that party's candidate in the general election. Also at

the county caucus, delegates are elected for the congressional district, judicial district, and state caucuses where the delegates then vote on candidates for each of these offices. Again, the same applies, in that a candidate must receive 30% or more of the delegate vote to appear on the primary election ballot for their respective parties. Those then that win the primary election are then put on the general election ballot. I think you can see that if a person starts out participating in the precinct caucus, that person will have a much bigger part in the election of a person than one who only votes in the general election. For this reason, it is very important that a person learn all he or she can about the candidates at all levels before the precinct caucus and then participate as far as they are able in the various caucuses to elect people who are like minded. If Christians will participate and do their due diligence in learning about the candidates, Christians can make a major difference in our elections. Both the major parties, as well as some of the lesser known parties are guilty of intentionally keeping their party members ignorant so that elections can be manipulated at party hierarchy levels. But this does not have to be. Informed voters can certainly have their say.

Second, I believe that Christians need to be prepared to counter misinformation that is being disseminated by our education system, our media, and by fellow citizens who are misinformed or uninformed. One of the most common items of wrong information concerns our history. Detractors would have us believe that our forefathers were not Christian, thus the documents authored by these men are not based on Christian principles. Nothing could be farther from the truth and these detractors need to be

held accountable for their false information. But the only way we can do this, whether personally, letters to the editor, talk programs, or as candidates, is to know our history. Let me give you a few quotes of our forefathers and you can make up your own mind.

In George Washington's farewell address, he said the following: "Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in the Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Thomas Jefferson proclaimed, "The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time. ...Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever."

Alexander Hamilton insisted, "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

These men are speaking of our Christian God, the only God. They nor us are perfect. But I urge us to be men, be Christian, serve Him. JRL