

KINGDOM SPIRIT

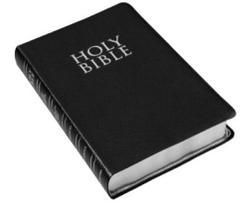
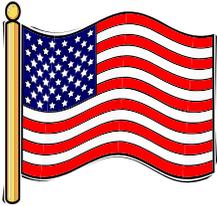
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“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

Matthew 6:33



Issue 1308

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

In Revelation 8:13 we were told, **“And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!** In our last issue we covered the first “woe” or the blowing of the fifth trumpet. We want to continue with the second “woe” or the blowing of the sixth trumpet in this issue.

To understand better the events depicted in the second woe, or the sounding of the sixth trumpet, we need to know some of the history that had taken place. Dr. Stephen Jones has written a summary of the history of that time that I would like to quote from to give us at least a little better understanding of the things that happened that brought about the sounding of the sixth trumpet.

During this time, Islam ridiculed the Christian West for their veneration of statues and images, calling them idol worship. The Christian response was that they did not worship them, but merely venerated them. However, the same argument might have been made by the ancient idol worshippers, who also venerated their statues, for they represented and pictured the gods that they worshipped.

Yet the Christian religion had become so impersonal that the people themselves clung to their statues as a way to make the religion more personal. Even so, under pressure from Islam, in 726 Leo, the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, issued a proclamation ordering the destruction of all statues, prohibiting the use of images in the Church.

Leo III was the Roman Emperor, although the capital of the Empire was no longer in Rome, but in Byzantium, known also as Constantinople, the “City of Constantine.” You recall that the original emperor, Constantine, had built

his “New Rome” on the Black Sea in what is now Turkey. The seat of empire thus moved East. Italy and the Western part of the Roman Empire soon came under attack by wave after wave of “barbarians” from the north, but received little or no help from the Emperor at Byzantium.

Even so, the Byzantine Emperor was still nominally the recognized emperor even of the West, although the power vacuum left by his absence was more and more filled by the power of the papacy. At first the papal power was purely spiritual in nature. In 606 Pope Boniface III laid exclusive claim to the title of “Universal Bishop,” but did not claim political power. In later years, however, as Islam continued to erode the political power of the emperor in the East, the Roman bishops began to seek or assume political power as well. This became a source of endless trouble for them and for all of Europe for many centuries.

In 717-18 the Saracens laid siege to Constantinople (for the second time). They were unsuccessful, but Leo felt the pressure. At the same time he was disgusted with the image trade and the superstitious claims being made to sell their products.

As we said, in 726 the Emperor Leo issued an edict ordering the destruction of all images in both the East and the West. This edict proved to be the beginning of the end of his rule in the West. Pope Gregory in Rome opposed Leo's edict and became the spokesman for the passionate voices of the people in the West which honored the images.

The Emperor sent an army to put down the revolt, but they were defeated in bloody battles at Ravenna. After the open warfare abated, the emperor still remained the nominal head of the West. Gregory did not intend to usurp any political power, but he set a precedent that later popes were to follow. In 731, just five years after Leo's edict, a synod in Rome excommunicated all those who would attack the images of the saints. Though the emperor was not mentioned by name, it was clear to all that he and his theologians in the East had been excommunicated by the one who called himself “Universal Bishop.”

It was inevitable, then, that the power vacuum would be filled by the Pope. This was the beginning of the great division, not only of the political empire, but also of the Church itself. The division over images, however, proved to be only temporary, for Leo's axe had chopped down the tree, but could not destroy the root of image-worship among the people and the monks. And so this crisis

passed and the split was postponed until a later time.

Even so, the decline of Byzantine power in Italy was matched by the rising power of the Lombards, who took many cities in Italy and soon threatened Rome itself. This, in 755, caused Pope Stephen to seek help from Pepin, King of the Franks in the north. Their arrangement was that Pepin would help the Pope retake those cities, but instead of giving them back to the nominal rule of the Emperor in the East, they would be given as Papal States to the Roman Bishop.

Thus, Pope Stephen obtained political power over about 20 cities, including Ravenna, Ancona, Bologna, Ferrara, Lodi, and Gubbio, giving him a good-sized wedge of territory along the Adriatic coast of Italy. This made the Pope a feudal lord and gave the papacy the right to collect taxes from those cities.

From this point on, the papacy became a prize, not only for the spiritually ambitious, but also for those who desired political power and the wealth that could be made from it. As E. R. Chamberlin wrote in his 1969 book, The Bad Popes, page 17,

“But now that the bishop of Rome held not only the keys of heaven but also the keys of more than a score of cities, each with its revenues, the attraction of the office was considerably magnified.

“The first of the papal riots arising from the donation (the papal states to the papacy) occurred in 767, when, on the death of the reigning pope, one of the numerous local lordlings recognized the opportunity and hastening to Rome, proposed his own brother as successor. The fact that the brother was disqualified because he was a layman was easily overcome, for he was ordained cleric, subdeacon, deacon, and priest—and then consecrated as bishop and pope on the same day. Rival factions immediately arose and two more popes appeared. The first contestant had his eyes dug out and was left for dead. The second was murdered outright and it was only when the third appealed to the hated Lombards for protection that some sort of order was restored.”

Those who have not studied the history of the papacy might be shocked that such things could happen. But this is only the tiniest tip of the iceberg. The moral character of the popes was so carnal and even downright criminal that the people in Italy soon became immune to it. They came to expect such behavior. Most did not question the divine right of the popes to rule men, but they did regret that God had given them such a right. In the centuries that followed, nearly all of the popes had multiple mistresses, who bore them many illegitimate children—many of whom became cardinals and popes after them.

But in this short study, we cannot spend more time on this. We mention it only as another reason for God's judgment upon the Church. It is part of the reason why God raised up Islam to judge the Church.

The final split in the Church occurred in 1054. It appears that what finally brought this about between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Vatican had to do with the Latin word “*filioque*.” In the original Nicene Creed in 325 A.D., the bishops determined that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father.” In the 6th century, the Church in Spain added to this, saying that the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the

Father and the Son (*filioque*). This custom spread west, however, Rome itself did not officially adopt the alteration until 936. Then because the Eastern Churches did not use it, the Vatican accused these Eastern Churches of heresy. Finally, in 1054, Cardinal Humbert excommunicated Michael Cerularius, Patriarch of Constantinople. The Patriarch responded in kind. The Church has been split ever since.

Revelation 9:13-21 records the portrayal symbolically of the events brought about by the sounding of the sixth trumpet, the second woe. (Read) Remember we said earlier that the Roman Empire was divided into three parts, Europe, North Africa, and the area controlled by Constantinople, including Greece, the Balkans, Asia Minor, and Syria-Palestine. It is this latter third of the Empire that the judgment is upon that is to be rendered by the four angels that have been bound in the great river Euphrates.

Verse 15 gives a timing, it says, for the four angels to slay the third part of men. Looking at this timing in a long term prophetic sense, a year would be 360 days, or in the long term 360 years. Likewise a month would be 30 days, or 30 years and a day would be 1 year. An hour would be 2 weeks. If we add the years together, $360+30+1=391$ years. Among the writers that I have studied, all agree that the year that the verses 13-21 applies to is 1453 A.D. However, some hold that this 391 years applies to the time leading up to 1453 while others hold that it applies to the time following 1453. I believe we need to look at both as there is credibility to both. In 1055, Tughril Beg, who was head of the Seljuk Turkish empire conquered Baghdad. He died in 1063 and his nephew, Alp Arslan succeeded him. Alp first conquered Georgia and Armenia from the Byzantines, or the Eastern Roman Empire. As he was preparing to conquer Egypt, a new Byzantine army marched against him which he crushed catastrophically. Thus his efforts were the beginning of a 391 year period in which the Turks worked toward their ultimate goal, the overthrow of Constantinople. The Islamic Arabs had lost their “fire” and this new force, the Turks came into play.

By 1150, gunpowder had been discovered in China. Its first use in battle was to frighten the horses. However, in the 13th century the Mongols came west terrorizing people from Russia to Arabia. They captured and plundered Baghdad in 1258. As a result, many of the Baghdad residents fled to Anatolia in Western Turkey, which added

substantially to the number of the Osmani Turks, who, led by their own chieftain named Osman, were forming a new empire of their own. These Osman (or Ottoman) Turks, who came to power after the Mongols left, had learned about gunpowder and in time developed its use in cannons. Their first great use of gunpowder came in their siege of Constantinople in 1453, where their cannons breached the walls of the city on May 29, 1453, the 391st year from Alp Arslan's first battles against the Eastern Empire.

This helps us understand verses 17-19. **“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.”**

Mr. Howard Rand wrote in his book “A Study in Revelation”, page 98, “While walking along the embankment near the Tower of London some few years ago I came across many cannons captured by the British in past wars. It is always interesting to note the evolution in style and design of such weapons until we reach the modern breech loader and rapid-fire cannon in use today. My attention was attracted to an old cannon among this collection, cast in the form of an animal sitting upon its haunches. Immediately the passage cited above came to mind as I exclaimed, ‘There, that is what John saw.’ He further elaborated in another book, “Marvels of Prophecy,” page 81-82 saying, “Anything with four legs used in war, John would designate as a horse. He beheld men astride these iron horses. He watched them ramming in the powder and the shot. He observed the burning of the old-fashioned fuse, serpent-like, with its sputtering flame of fire at the tail, or touchhole, of the cannon. This was followed by the fire, smoke and brimstone issuing out of the mouths of these iron horses with lion's heads, for the cannon used in the siege of Constantinople were cast in the form of lions.”

The fall of Constantinople cost the Eastern Orthodox Church its main power base in 1453. Many Greek-speaking theologians of the Church fled into Europe, bringing with them Greek manuscripts of the Scriptures. Men could now translate the Bible into English directly from the Greek text instead of relying upon the Latin Vulgate. At the

same time, Johannes Gutenberg of Mainz, Germany was beginning to print the Bible on his newly invented printing press.

The post 1453 theory is that 391 years later takes us to 1844. Though the Ottoman Turkish Empire did not come to an official end until 1918, by 1844 it was known as the “sick man of Europe.” There were other events in 1844 that we will discuss later that, though not directly related to the Ottoman Empire, did help in its ultimate demise.

Yet, as Rev. 9:20, 21 tell us the Church still refused to repent but continued with the same debauchery that they had been doing for centuries. However, a change was coming in what we call the Reformation as we will see as we continue into Revelation 10.

(Read Revelation 10:1-2) . John had seen several angels during this revelation that he was being given, but this is the first time we have the word “mighty” describing one. The description of this “mighty angel” sounds very much like that of the One sitting on the throne in Rev. 4, so I think we can assume the two to be the same. The little book is the Bible that had been made little by the printing press. The Bibles of that time were very large hand written books that were usually chained to the altar at the front of the cathedrals, and usually written in Latin so that people neither had access to them nor could they read them if they did. Now, this mighty angel has the Bible in a little book and it is open, signifying that it was available and readable to all. We are talking about the time of the Reformation. I think it important that we know at least the general historical order of events of the time to be able to understand the real significance of what we are reading here in Revelation 10.

I am going to quote from a couple of sources to give us this history. I am first quoting from the Study In Revelation by Howard B. Rand published by Destiny Publishers.

There never was a time, even during the long period known as the Dark Ages, when there was not manifested, in the very strongholds of Papal power, insurrection, and rebellion. No sooner had the solidity of the Roman Church been effected than she began to advance her claims to absolute dominion over the human mind, and men then began to resist her claims and assert their right to freedom.

Like the Renaissance, which preceded it, and the French Revolution, which followed it, the Protestant Reformation was one of the three great revolutionary is-

sues which changed the course of history. Society of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was agitated to its profoundest depths by this great religious insurrection. It convulsed nations with warfare and incidentally was a contributing factor in the colonization of America. It was a revolt against the authority of the Church of Rome as reason asserted itself and men strove for freedom of thought and worship..... With the advent of the Mighty Angel from heaven, however, Rome was face to face with a power that she could not intimidate. Wherever the Reformation raised its voice there were men and women of the stock of Israel, by the power of the Spirit, proclaiming the truth in spite of opposition, persecution, and death. Rome possessed no weapon with which she could overthrow these overcomers!

JOHN WYCLIFFE In England, during the 14th century, John Wycliffe taught and wrote. He assailed the false teachings of the Church and the dogma of transubstantiation. There was no complete English translation of the Bible and he was responsible for an English version. The influence of his teaching was widespread and in England made him the champion of national rights as against foreign aggression. The Bulls issued against him by Pope Gregory XI in 1377 A.D. were not enforced.

JOHN HUSS John Huss was a Bohemian reformer who became dean of the Philosophical Society of the University of Prague. He was greatly influenced by the writings of Wycliffe and because of his teachings he was excommunicated.

The Council of Constance was evoked and one of its principal objectives was to reform the Church. After years of wrangling and vain debates this council adjourned without a decision on a single question except that Huss and Jerome of Prague should be burned as heretics. Huss had previously been provided with safe conduct to and from the council after he had been summoned to appear before it, but now he was seized and burned at the stake. Huss believed and taught that in the things pertaining to salvation God is to be obeyed rather than man. When at the stake he was urged to recant, he replied: "God is my witness that I have never taught or preached that which false witnesses have testified against me. He knows that the great object of all my preaching and writing was to convert men from sin. In the truth of that gospel which hitherto I have written, taught and preached, I now joyfully die." This martyr has the honor of having been the intermediary in handing on from Wycliffe to Luther the torch which kindled the Reformation. He was one of the bravest of martyrs who died in the cause of freedom and truth.

I would like to continue this history by quoting from a study on the book of Revelation by Dr. Stephen Jones, of God's Kingdom Ministries, who in turn quotes from a couple of historians of that period.

At the same time in history, the printing press came into use in Europe, turning the Bible into a LITTLE book. Up to that time, the Bibles were huge, hand-written volumes that were often chained at the front of the cathedrals. Furthermore, they were written in Latin, and few of the common people could read, even in their own tongue. Asimov's

Chronology of the World, edited by Peter Stearns (2001) p. 206, says, "Printing utterly changed the world and it (along with the fall of Constantinople, the end of the Hundred Years War, and the discovery of the American continents—all of which took place in this period) marks the transition from medieval to modern times. Printing, one must surely suspect, was the most fundamental of these changes." The Chinese were printing on paper since the 8th century. Using wood blocks for each page, they produced a complete 130-volume set of classics in the 10th century. They also invented the art of movable type printing as early as 1041 A.D., but they had used clay rather than wood or metal. Furthermore, because the Chinese did not have an alphabet, the printing press was not so practical for them, because they had to make a separate mould for every word in their language.

According to Asimov's Chronology of the World, page 206, it says this about the printing invention: "The Chinese had this notion before the Europeans did, and the news of it may have reached Europe in Mongolian times. The point is, though, that even if the concept was not original with the Europeans, it was more widely employed by them. This was not because the Europeans were more intelligent or ingenious than the Chinese... but because the Europeans had the alphabet and the Chinese did not."

The Mongol invasion of the Middle East in the 1200's most likely brought this idea to the West along with the use of gunpowder. No one knows exactly how Johannes Gutenberg came upon the idea of carving letters that could be put together into words in order to stamp them upon paper. It seems too coincidental that he would think of this within two centuries of the Mongol conquest of Baghdad.

The Muslims themselves knew about the art of printing, but they banned its use in 1493. The Encyclopedia of World History, says on page 127, "A Muslim ban on printing in Arabic and Turkish remained in effect until the 18th century and kept the new technology from spreading to the Muslim population earlier."

This ban on printing caused the Ottoman Empire to lose its technological advantage in the world. They have never recovered from this self-inflicted wound. In Europe printing allowed scientific works to be shared among other scientists quickly, and this dramatically increased the pace of scientific thought and invention.

Revelation 10:2 speaks of a little book that was open. We will continue with this history written by Dr. Stephen Jones in which the little book was opened in our next issue. JRL

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. (Prov. 22:1)

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender. (Prov. 22:7)

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah is the next prophet that we want to study. (Read Jeremiah 1:1-3) We're told that Jeremiah prophesied starting in the 13th year of Josiah going through the captivity and beyond. From the 13th year of Josiah to the final captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar would have been approximately 40 years. The name "Jeremiah" means "whom Jehovah raises up or launches forth." (Read Jer. 1:4-10) God makes it very clear to Jeremiah that God created him specifically for the job that He is giving him. There is no question about God's sovereignty so far as Jeremiah is concerned. Still, Jeremiah, like Moses was, does not feel up to the job. He says he is too young to be a prophet. God says to let not anyone tell him that, that he is going to say what God

wants him to say and He is going to protect Jeremiah.

Keep verse 10 in mind as we study. We will see that Jeremiah indeed was against nations and kings and the thrust of his prophecy will be to root out, pull down, destroy and throw down. However, we will not see him build and plant, so though we will leave Jeremiah healthy and strong, it would appear to me that he is not done with the job God has for him. However, once we study the book of Ezekiel, I believe we might have a clue as to how he finished the job.

(Read Jer. 1:11-16) Dr. Bullinger notes concerning the "rod of an almond tree" saying, "Denotes an almond tree staff, corresponding with a vigilant watchman" and then he further clarifies by saying the following about the almond tree, "a watcher, or an early waker, because it is the first of the trees to wake from its winter sleep, and is thus what the cock is among birds." The Hebrew word for "almond tree" is "shaged."

The Hebrew word for "hasten" in verse 12 is "shagad" and means "to watch." So to watch appears to be key. God says He is watching, which I take to mean that what He says is going to happen is a sure thing. Then God gives Jeremiah another vision, this time a seething or boiling pot. "**The face thereof is toward the north**" actually means that it was turned from the north with Jeremiah looking at it from the south. God then tells Jeremiah that this vision means that "**out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.**" This is speaking of Babylon which was east of Judah, but they were to come from the north through the tribal land of Dan as this was the usual route from Assyria. Otherwise they would have to come through a large desert.

In verse 15, God is talking about the rulers, the princes, of Babylon under the king. Keep in mind that the gates of the city were where the king and his princes ruled the city. If the enemy was in control of the gates of the city, they ruled the city. This prophecy is fulfilled in Jeremiah 39:1-3 (Read)

(Read Jeremiah 1:17-19) It would take a strong man to do as God tells Jeremiah here. Part of our problem today is that our preachers will not stand up against the people and tell them what they need to know instead of what they want to know. God promises protection for Jeremiah, and

as we study we will see that he certainly got that protection, but still had to go through some very climatic situations.

(Read Jeremiah 2:1-3) God is getting ready to ask some hard questions, but prefaces it here by first reminding Judah that during the time of the Exodus, Judah sought after God and Israel as a whole was set apart unto God and that He promised that anyone doing damage to Israel could expect disaster to come on them.

(Read Jeremiah 2:4-8) God addresses the whole house of Israel and asks what iniquity their fathers found in Him that they rejected Him and went and served vanity, or idols. They forgot what He had done to bring them through the wilderness to a land of plenty. They defiled the land that He brought them into by worshipping their idols.

(Read Jeremiah 2:9-13) Yet, God says that He will contend with them and with their children and their children's children. Then He asks them if they ever saw a nation that had no gods, i.e. idols, change their gods, yet He says that Israel has changed from the glory of the true God to no gods, or their idols. They have committed two evils, first they have forgotten the true God and second they have worshipped idols, or as He says, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

(Read Jeremiah 2:14-30) While Jeremiah is addressing the people of Jerusalem, the indictment up to this point has been concerning the whole house of Israel. Starting in verse 14, though addressing the people in Jerusalem, he first talks about Israel. Israel had become servants of Assyria in their own land before the captivity. Jeremiah asks, **"Why is he spoiled?"** Both the Assyrians and the Egyptians have contributed to the plundering of Israel. God answers the question with a question, God says in verse 17, **"Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when he led thee by the way?"** He says that their own wickedness and backslidings will correct and reprove them. Many times God has "rescued" them from the results of their wickedness with Israel saying that they will not sin while at the same time they have continued worshipping their idols. God planted them a noble vine, but they have changed into the degenerate plant of a strange vine. Israel says that she is not polluted, but God tells them to look at their ways. He compares

them to camels that break loose in their ways and to a wild ass that goes her way in the wilderness until she comes into heat and then she comes home. She says she does no wrong, but when she is caught, she is ashamed. They give a piece of wood credit for being their father and a stone for their material possessions. But when they come to a time of trouble, they turn to God and say, **"Arise and save us."**

The prophet then turns his attention to Judah and asks where their gods are. He says let them save you in your time of trouble. He says that their gods are as numerous as the cities of Judah.

Then God asks why they will plead with Him. They all have transgressed against Him. Though He has tried to correct them, they have killed the prophets like a roaring lion.

(Read Jeremiah 2:31-37) God wants to know if He has been a wilderness to them, i.e. something unreachable. Why do they think they have dominion and have no need of Him? he asks. In spite of all that He has done for them, He says they have forgotten Him days without number. They are guilty of the blood of many innocent people. God says He did not have to find this out by secret search—He says it is plainly seen.

Because they claim to be innocent, they think God will turn His anger from them. This was especially true of the people of Judah. Both Israel and Judah trusted and tried to rely on Assyria and Egypt to protect them only to find their confidences in them to turn against them. Since Israel had already found this out, God is predicting it again for Judah and telling them that they will be ashamed of the confidence in these supposed allies.

(Read Jeremiah 3:1-5) The margin of my Bible says that "put away" in verse 1 means divorce. I don't think this is right since God never did divorce Judah, at least until 70 A.D. The word that "put away" is translated from is translated in a number of different ways, though all have somewhat similar meanings. Adultery was never given as a reason for divorce since the penalty for adultery is death—there would be no need for a divorce. The meaning here as I see it is that the man in this example puts the wife out of his house in disgust with her behavior. God is using

this example and applying it to Judah saying that Judah has had many lovers (worshipped many false gods) and then when bad times come, she comes running back to God. He tells them to look for themselves at what they have done. He says He has withheld the latter rains, yet they have had a whore's forehead, meaning a whore's impudence, they refuse to be ashamed for what they have done.

Verses 4 and 5 reveal the hypocrisy of this people. While they do all the evil they can, they say to God **"my father, thou art the guide of my youth."** Then appears to ask if He will be angry with them for ever?

(Read Jeremiah 3:6-10) Josiah was the one repenting in Israel, not the people apparently. Israel continued to worship their stones (idols made from stones) and stocks (idols made of wood) so God says that He put them away and gave them a bill of divorcement. Yet, though seeing this, Judah not only did not repent, but continued worshipping her idols, or committing adultery with her idols.

(Read Jeremiah 3:11-20) Jeremiah is first told that Israel has justified herself more than her treacherous sister Judah. Then Jeremiah is to proclaim a message to Israel. First, if they would return to God, He would be merciful to them and not keep His anger forever. They needed to confess their sin, particularly that of idolatry and disobedience. Then the message takes us to the end of the age where God tells what is going to happen to Israel and Judah. God is going to take one of a city and two of a family, i.e. those who have been justified and sanctified, and to these He says they will no longer be concerned with the Old Covenant (uses the ark of the covenant to indicate this covenant), but will be part of the New Jerusalem, the New Covenant. Judah and Israel will again be one kingdom, the kingdom of God. At that time He says they will call Him, **"My father and shalt not turn away from me."** He then reminds them as to why He has divorced them in verse 20.

(Read Jeremiah 21-25) A voice of weeping is heard upon the high places as Israel repents and turns to God. He tells them to return and He will heal their backslidings. They acknowledge that salvation is from the LORD, not from their hills and multitude of mountains. This latter may

refer to the nations and kingdoms where the Israel people have been scattered to, or it may refer to the high places where they worshipped their idols. But they acknowledge their shame for their sins and disobedience.

(Read Jeremiah 4:1-2) This probably should have been a continuation of chapter 3. If Israel will return to Him, God tells them to return. If they will put away their abominations, their idols, then God says they will not be moved or shaken. They will swear, **"The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment (justice), and in righteousness."** Once they do this He says the nations shall bless themselves in Him and shall glory in Him. Again, I believe this speaks of the time of the first resurrection.

Then Jeremiah turns his attention to Judah. (Read Jeremiah 4:3-18) Jeremiah gives a very strong warning of the coming of the Babylonians. At this point, the men of Judah still have a chance to repent and turn to God, so this is the first thing that Jeremiah declares to them. But if they don't, he gives a rather vivid description of what is going to happen. A great destruction is coming from the north. Again, this denotes the way that the Babylonians will come to Judah. Verse 15 tells us that the warnings will come from Dan and from Ephraim, from the north, the normally traveled way from Babylon and Assyria into Judah. Babylon is called the destroyer of the nations. Like a lion coming out of his thicket, the king of Babylon is coming to make the land desolate and to destroy the cities. The king, the princes, the priests and the prophets have all become very corrupt, thus all four are singled out for the destruction and despair that is coming on them. Jeremiah tells God that He has deceived the people. This was probably in the form of a question from Jeremiah to God asking why? The deception has come about by the false prophets who have declared that Jerusalem would have peace. This deception, or blindness, is part of God's plan to lawfully put this people into captivity. As we will see as we study further, Judah had broken the law of the Sabbaths of the land and the time of judgment had come. The land was going to have its rests.

Jeremiah continues to first tell the people what is going to happen, and then he pleads with the people to repent. He reminds them that what is going to happen is their own fault.

(Read Jeremiah 5:1-9) God tells Jeremiah to run through the streets of Jerusalem and see if he can find any that executeth judgment and that seeks truth. If he can God will pardon the city. He says they say, **“The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.**

Jeremiah’s answer is basically that he can’t find any. No matter what God has done to them to try to get them to repent and turn to him, they have done just the opposite. He says that he decided to go to the leadership, but found they were corrupt also.

God then tells Jeremiah that destruction will come upon them as wild animals destroying them. He asks how He can pardon them? They have sworn by their idols, they have committed adultery both literally and spiritually.

(Read Jeremiah 5:10-19) God continues to warn the people. He tells them what is going to happen, yet again He says, He will not make a full end of them. Though many will be killed, those that remain are going to serve strangers in a land that is not theirs because they have served strange gods in their own land.

(Read Jeremiah 5:20-24) Jeremiah is told to declare and publish what God is going to say to both Israel and Judah. Then He calls them foolish people who have eyes to see, but see not; and ears to hear, but hear not. He asks if they don’t fear Him and then describes Himself as the one who sets the bounds of the oceans that the waters cannot pass. He accuses them of having a revolting and rebellious heart. They don’t consider that it is He that gives the rains.

(Read Jeremiah 5:25-29) God then tells the people that their iniquities have turned away the rains, have withholden good things from them. He says there are wicked men among them that set traps to catch men. Their houses are full of deceit, they surpass the deeds of the wicked, they refuse to take care of the fatherless, yet they prosper, but refuse to help the needy. God asks if this

is not reason enough for Him to punish.

(Read Jeremiah 5:30-31) A shameful and horrible thing is going on in the country he says. **“The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so.”** The Ferrar Fenton translation finishes off this verse as, **“and what can be done viler than that?”** JRL

*Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom and with all thy getting get understanding.
(Proverbs 4:7)*
