

# A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS

## - “We shall reign with Him”

*compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, October 2012  
Scripture is from New King James Version unless otherwise noted.*

Before Israel had a king, she was governed by the LORD through a prophet and shepherd (*Moses - later Joshua*) who was a type of Messiah. Along with the leader, the High Priest and the priesthood, served as mediators between the people and their God. They taught the people right from wrong (*according to the Torah*) and they officiated at the sacrificial offerings. They were also the judges of last resort (*Deut. 17:8-11*). This was the role of the priesthood.

From Mount Sinai, the LORD had promised Israel:

Exodus 19:5-6 “. . . if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”  
(*Priest is kohen - Strong’s #03548.*)

***Here we have the LORD’s original intent and purpose for Israel.***  
*Remember - His word will be accomplished (Isaiah 55:11).*

1 Peter 2:5, 9, 10 [Speaking to believers after the resurrection.] “. . . you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ . . . you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation [*Israel*], His own special people...”

*All faithful believers are grafted into Israel (Ephesians 2, Romans 11), therefore all those delivered at the Second Coming will go on to serve as priests. The unfaithful will be “cut off” from the people of God.*

### RESURRECTED TO BECOME PRIESTS

Revelation 20:6 “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

Revelation 7:9, 13-14 The “great multitude” who “come out of great tribulation,” are “arrayed in white robes” [*priestly garments*] and “serve Him day and night in His temple.”

*NOTE: Only priests were allowed to enter the Temple.*

Revelation 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat."

*NOTE: The twelve loaves of the shewbread were originally made from manna and were "hidden" from view, set on a golden table inside the first apartment of the Sanctuary tent. Only the priests ate of this bread (Lev. 24:9). The Tabernacle was a copy of "heaven itself" (Heb. 9:24), and Christ Himself is the "bread from heaven" (John 6:32-33). Only those who "overcome" will partake. Faithful believers will become priests, and will partake of this "hidden manna" as they fellowship with Christ in the "Father's House."*

Revelation 1:6, Revelation 5:9-10 The twenty four elders [*presently in heaven*] proclaim that Christ "has made us kings and priests to His God and Father."

You Jesus "were slain"... "and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

*NOTE: These "priests" are redeemed from "every tribe, tongue, people and nation." They are NOT all Hebrews, much less Levites! (Rev. 5:9-10)*

*NOTE: The verbs here are in the Greek aorist tense, meaning that this is an ongoing process, not a completed fact. These 24 elders are being made (are being prepared to be) priests and kings. Notice where they will reign - "on the earth." They are not reigning yet. Their consecration will not be complete until "the 8<sup>th</sup> day."*

*NOTE: By the time of David, the eligible descendants of Aaron had become too numerous for every one of them to officiate - at the same time - in the Temple. King David divided the priesthood into 24 courses - each course coming up for two weeks of the year - to officiate in the Temple (1 Chronicles Chapter 24). The reference to "24 elders" in the Book of Revelation may be telling us that there are 24 "courses" of elders - not just 24 of them.*

*These "elders" were raised from the dead by Christ, after He was raised by His Father (Matt. 27:51-53). They were the "spring harvest" of which Christ was the "firstfruits." There will be a summer harvest (at the Second Coming), and a fall harvest (at the 8<sup>th</sup> Day).*

## PRIESTS AND KINGS - ON THE EARTH

1. We will be priests (Rev. 20:6, Rev. 1:6, Rev. 5:9-10).
2. We will reign/rule with Him - over the nations (Rev. 2:26).
3. Therefore we will reign with HIM - as "kings and priests" (Rev. 1:6, 5:10, 3:21).
4. We will reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

Revelation 2:26 “And he who overcomes . . . to him I will give power over the nations – He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter’s vessels shall be broken to pieces.”

2 Timothy 2:12 “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.”

Revelation 3:21 “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

**The Government of Yeshua Messiah**

The 12 Apostles

The 24 Elders

The 144,000

***As priests, they will teach the Law, judge, settle disputes, administer justice and offer up “spiritual sacrifices” (Deut. 17:8-11, Deut. 21:5, Deut. 33:8, Ezra 8:7-8, Eze. 44:23-24).***

*God’s plan was to use Israel as His priesthood - to teach and govern the nations. This He will finally accomplish.*

Question: When will redeemed Israel begin to minister as priests on the earth?

Answer: Not until The 8<sup>th</sup> Day.

*“One day with the Lord is a thousand years” (2 Peter 3:8).*

## THE PRIESTS MUST FIRST BE CONSECRATED

Let’s look at the type. *(We must always go back to the original.)*

Exodus Chapter 29:7-35 & Leviticus Chapter 8:

Aaron and his sons and all future priests:

“Seven days you shall consecrate them.” Wash them with water [*baptism of the Holy Spirit*] then dress them in the white “priestly garments.” Anoint the head of Aaron with oil [*Holy Spirit*]. Kill the bull for a sin offering and the ram for a whole burnt offering. Kill the other ram – the ram of consecration. Anoint the tip of the right ear, thumb, and big toe of each man to be consecrated. Sprinkle some of the blood from the sacrifices mixed with the oil, on Aaron, on his sons, and on their garments.

Remain at the door of the tent [*Tabernacle*] until the 8th Day.

Leviticus 8:33-36 “And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For seven days he [Moses] shall consecrate you.”

*NOTE: I believe they remained inside the courtyard, just outside the veil (door) into the covered “tent.” To remain inside the first apartment of the Tabernacle would have been logistically very difficult with normal bodily functions.*

The priestly ministry began on the 8th day.

Leviticus 9:1-7 “It came to pass on the 8th day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons” . . . ‘Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people.’ [After the sacrifices and the Aaronic blessing] “Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before the LORD, and consumed the burnt offering” (Lev. 9:23-24).

## THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS ACTED PROPHECY

The Aaronic priesthood was a type or prophecy of the priesthood of Messiah Himself, and of the priesthood of redeemed Israel.

Hebrews 9:24 “For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;”

*The Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples 10 days after Yeshua ascended into heaven.*

*He remained on the earth with the disciples for 40 days following His resurrection. He then ascended to Heaven, where I am sure He was welcomed with great celebration. He would then have entered upon SEVEN DAYS OF CONSECRATION.*

*On the 8<sup>th</sup> day (Pentecost), He was glorified as High Priest, and poured out His Spirit upon the disciples who had waited for just this sign from Heaven. The Father glorified His Son with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5).*

***The consecration of the Israelite priesthood -will not be accomplished UNTIL the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium.** In the type, Aaron and his sons were individuals, consecrated for seven literal days. No human being has lived for 7000 years. For the fulfillment we must view all of those to be consecrated as one priesthood - one collective group. The consecration of this priesthood began with Adam, nearly 6000 years ago. It will continue through the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium - until the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium - **The 8<sup>th</sup> Day.***

*NOTE: The altar of sacrifice was also to be sanctified for 7 days (Exo. 29:37, Eze. 43:27).*

## BEFORE WE CAN RULE - WE WILL NEED PREPARATION

Every believer-regardless of age or experience will need time and training. Do you feel ready to govern in the name of Christ? I sure don't.

Those especially, who lived before the death of Christ will need to understand fulfilled prophecy. Everyone will have hundreds of questions to ask, concerning the actions of God. We will need to spend time with the Master - just as the first disciples listened to His every word for three and a half years.

Before we can represent the LORD to "the nations" we will need to spend 1000 years learning about the great war, the rebellion, the reconciliation, and the mysteries of God's character and government. I like to think of it as the "New Jerusalem University" where we will study the divine model of governance. In order to govern effectively, we will need to be healed of the effects of selfish and defensive thinking. Maybe that healing is what takes a thousand years.

Just as in the ancient type, we will not begin to serve as priests UNTIL the 8<sup>th</sup> day (the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium). After our consecration, we will be prepared to "reign with Him."

## THE PLACE OF PREPARATION - IN THE "FATHER'S HOUSE"

John 14:2 "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

***Yeshua (Jesus) referred to the Temple as "My Father's House"** (John 2:16). The Sanctuary (later the Temple) was a copy of "heaven itself," (Heb. 9:24), where Jesus as our High Priest, appears "in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 6:19-20).*

*Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us in His Father's House - in "heaven itself" which is the true Temple of God "not made with hands." Only priests could enter the Temple on earth, therefore only priests will enter this place which Jesus has gone to prepare in the Father's House.*

*Continued next page.*

## THE ROLE OF THE PRIESTHOOD IN THE COMING KINGDOM OF MESSIAH

The priests of God in the coming kingdom of Messiah on earth, will offer up “spiritual sacrifices” (1 Peter 2:5). They will also teach the law, judge, settle disputes and administer justice (Mal. 2:7, Exo. 29:35, Lev. 8:33-35 & 9:1, Deut. 17:8-12, Deut. 21:5 & 33:8, Ezra 8:7-8, Eze. 44:23-24).

The Apostolic Writings give several examples of “spiritual” sacrifices:

1. praise and thanks to God (Heb. 13:15),
2. our lives dedicated to God (2 Tim. 4:6),
3. the service of faith (Phil. 2:17),
4. our bodies (Rom. 12:1),
5. gifts to the poor (Phil. 4:18),
6. visiting the sick or those in prison (Matt. 25:34-40),
7. and offerings in support of the ministry (1 Cor. 9:13).

## A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE PRIESTHOOD

Ezekiel 28:25-26 “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely.’”

Ezekiel 20:40-44 “All the house of Israel” - “all of them in the land” will serve the LORD GOD “on My holy mountain” (v.40). “I will accept you as a sweet aroma” (v.41). “I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles” (v.41).

*The words in this passage - “sweet aroma” - refer to the aroma of a sacrificial offering, burning on the altar. Thru Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers - forty times - the words “sweet aroma” refer to the smell of something sacrificed. When the LORD says, “I will accept you as a sweet aroma,” - what does He mean?*

*Isaiah speaks of “all your brethren” brought to the Lord “as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD” (Isa. 66:20-22). In these passages, **living persons are presented to the LORD “as an offering.”***

*We are told to present ourselves, as “living sacrifices” to the LORD (Rom. 12:1).*

*I believe that Yeshua will present the redeemed to His Father - as His offering, just as He presented Himself as the “firstfruits” of the harvest, on the morning of His resurrection.*

Isaiah 61:4-9 “And they shall rebuild the old ruins. They shall raise up the former desolations. And they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. Strangers [*non-Israelites*] shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the foreigner [*non-Israelite*] shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. But you shall be named the Priests of the LORD. Men shall call you the Servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double [*the inheritance of the firstborn*].” “Everlasting joy shall be theirs. For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, and will make with them an everlasting covenant. Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the posterity whom the LORD has blessed.”

*NOTE: The firstborn inherited a “double portion” (Deut. 22:17). Their inheritance included a “double portion” of the land, AND the “priesthood.” Each firstborn son became the representative of the family unit before God. God said, “Israel is my son, even My firstborn” (Exo. 4:22). Therefore Israel (all of the redeemed) will inherit the priesthood.*

***NOTE: The Levites were given NO inheritance in the land. Therefore the priesthood presented in this prophecy CANNOT be the Levite priesthood.***

*NOTE: The “covenant” which the LORD will make with Israel (redeemed) is the “New Covenant” (Jer. 31:31-34, 32:40; Eze. 36:24-27; Heb. 8:10; Deut. 30:6).*

## THE PRIESTHOOD HAS BEEN CHANGED

I am not a male descendant of Levi. According to the Law of Moses, I cannot be a priest. But Scripture teaches plainly that all of the redeemed from the Second Coming will become priests. The order of the priesthood MUST have been changed.

Hebrews 7:12-19 “For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law . . . For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’ For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”

***The Melchizedek priesthood is NOT added to the Levite/Aaronic priesthood. It replaces that (temporary) order! Or we could say, “It is the fulfillment of that prophecy.”***

*A priest was absolutely necessary for the offering of a sacrifice! **The Law of Moses mandated that sacrifice be offered thru the Aaronic priesthood, in the courtyard of the Sanctuary, later the Temple at Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5-14). If you do away with the Aaronic priesthood, you are abolishing the system of animal sacrifices!***

*Under the Aaronic system, the animal was killed by the penitent, or at certain times, by the priest. A priest then caught the blood in a bowl and performed various ceremonial anointing. The priest prepped the whole animal (or parts of the animal) to be burned on the altar. In this role, the priests were said to “make atonement for” the penitent.*

***If you do away with the Aaronic priesthood,  
you are abolishing  
the system of animal sacrifices!***

## A CHANGE OF THE LAW

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul clearly stated that physical circumcision for any man was no longer necessary. He went much further saying that those who became circumcised in order to become “partakers of the covenant,” were “fallen from grace” and “estranged from Christ” (*Gal. 5:5-6*). Certainly THIS was a “change of the law.” Circumcision was Law (*Gen. 17:10, Exo. 12:44-48, Lev. 12:3, Jos. 5:3-5*).

Before I go on, let me just state clearly that I do NOT believe that The Ten Commandments - “The Covenant” - has been changed or annulled (*1Cor. 7:19*).

The books of Hebrews and Galatians spell out clearly **what has been changed**:

1. the Aaronic priesthood (a temporary substitute),
2. the system of animal sacrifice (which could only be performed by the Aaronic priests)
3. the circumcision of the flesh (which was a blood sacrifice).

There were those in Paul’s day - converted Pharisees - who vehemently taught that all new converts must be physically circumcised, and must agree to keep all the Law of Moses (including the offering of animal sacrifices). These Pharisees did not believe that any part of the Torah could be changed. Paul soundly refuted them (*Acts 15:1, Phil. 3:3, Gal. 5:6*).

The Pharisees maintained their authority over the people - teaching the Law. **If Paul had advocated no change to the old system - he would not have been persecuted!**



Some do not believe that the Letter to the Hebrews belongs in the Holy Canon. I do NOT share their view. I see the work of a new generation of Pharisees, teaching a return to every aspect of law-keeping, including the sacrifice of animals and physical circumcision.

Hebrews 7:12 **“For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.”**

This is very serious! The LORD pronounced a curse upon “the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them” (*Deut. 27:26*). No wonder there was such a conflict! No wonder Paul was persecuted.

The Pharisees of Christ’s day believed that failure to keep every word of the Torah, would bring upon them the curse of God. They kept the letter - but not the spirit, of the law. Of course, there was the added element of money. The Sadducees made their money exchanging Roman currency for the acceptable Temple shekel (for a fee of course), and by selling animals for sacrifice. If the system of animal sacrifices went away - so would their stream of income.

## TILL ALL IS FULFILLED

Matthew 5:17-18 [Yeshua speaking] “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law **till all is accomplished.**” (ASV)

*He came “to fulfill” the Law, and He came “to fulfill” the Prophets.*

*Did He fulfill the Law? Yes! “He was obedient unto death” (Phil. 2:8). He was the perfect representation of the Law, lived out in a human life. Did He fulfill the prophecies concerning His earthly incarnation as a man and His death as “the lamb of God”? Yes!*

*The Law was not “destroyed” - it was “fulfilled.” We still live under a sacrificial system. We just have a better sacrifice, and we have a better priest - Yeshua Messiah!*

Acts 13:29 “Now when they **had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him**, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.”

Luke 24:44 [Speaking post resurrection] “Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled** which were written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me.”

Acts 3:18 “But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, **He has thus fulfilled.**”

John 19:28-30 “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

*NOTE: I believe the statement of Christ, “till all is accomplished” referred only to those prophecies concerning His earthly life and His sacrificial death as “the lamb of God”.”*

## TIL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS AWAY

Jesus was the master of dual prophecy. Was He also saying that “all” would be fulfilled only when “heaven and earth pass away” ?

Mark 13:31 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” *In context He was speaking of His own glorious return.*

2 Peter 3:10 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”

*Perhaps we could at least agree that AFTER the return of Christ in glory, the law may be changed, allowing for “spiritual sacrifices” only in the coming kingdom of Messiah.*

## THE END OF THE AARONIC ORDER - WAS PROPHESED

After most of Israel broke the covenant by their worship of the golden calf idol, the LORD named the tribe of Levi to serve the Sanctuary (*Exo. 32:26, Num. 1:50-53*). They stood with Moses against the ring leaders of the rebellion. Within that tribe, Aaron and his descendants would serve as priests.

**This Aaronic priesthood was a temporary measure**, until the death of Messiah. Yeshua then became our High Priest, and all of those who come into covenant with God through Him will become priests “after the order of Melchizedek.”

Exodus 40:13-15 “You [*Moses*] shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.” [*But what if their generations end?*]

*The House of Aaron entered into a blood covenant with Yahweh! Death would be the punishment for breaking this covenant! The LORD appointed Aaron and his descendants to an “everlasting priesthood,” but they did not continue in righteousness. They despised the LORD and abused their role as priests. A man of God came to Eli, with a prophecy and a curse. The LORD would bring an end to their priesthood. The promise to Aaron and his descendants was a conditional blood covenant promise - based upon their obedience to that covenant. By their actions, they despised that covenant! Their priesthood was forfeit!*

*The LORD keeps His covenant with those who love Him, and obey His commandments (Deut. 7:9, Isa. 56:6, Dan. 9:4). “Covenant” by definition, is a pledge, an agreement, a treaty, an understanding or obligation entered into by at least two individuals. The LORD is not bound to honor His covenant with those who despise Him, and violate (without repentance) the terms of that covenant.*

1 Samuel 2:30-35 “Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: ‘I said indeed that your house and the house of your father [Aaron] would walk before Me forever.’ **But now** the LORD says: ‘Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father’s house, [Aaron’s House] so that there will not be an old man in your house [a man of eligible age for the priesthood]. And you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever. . . . Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.”

*The “faithful priest” would be Yeshua Messiah. God would “build Him a sure house” and He would walk before the LORD, as His anointed priest - forever (Psa. 110:4).*

*The prophet of God said “You will see an enemy in My dwelling place.” By the time of Christ, the priesthood was bought and sold. The High Priest was a Roman appointee. If you study your history - He was actually an Edomite (descended from Esau). But I believe this prophecy is pointing to Antichrist of the last days, the “man of sin” who “sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2Th. 2:4). The “abomination that causes desolation” will be set up in the House of God.*

## THE MELCHIZEDEK ORDER

Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) became High Priest before the Father’s throne. God said, “**He is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek**” (Psa. 110:4, Heb. 5:6). He will still be our High Priest AFTER He becomes King on the earth, just as Melchizedek was King and Priest of Salem (Gen. 14:18, Heb. 7:1-2).

Zechariah prophesied that Joshua (Jesus) would build the Temple of the LORD, and **He will be a priest upon his throne**” (*Zechariah 6:11-13*).

**The Melchizedek “order” is much older than the Aaronic “order.”** It was the original order or “type” of priesthood, on the earth after the sin of Adam. **The coming priesthood on earth is a return to this original order, not something “new.”** Melchizedek was king and priest of Salem - “City of Peace” (*Gen. 14:18, Heb. 7:1-2*). Jesus will be King and High Priest of Jerusalem - “Teaching of Peace.” Those raised “first” will be “kings and priests” - like Melchizedek (*Rev. 5:10, 20:6*). The word “priest” can also be translated as “prince”.

## THE END OF ANIMAL SACRIFICE

There has been “a change in the law,” and that “change” involved the priesthood (*Heb. 7:12, 1Sam. 2:30-36*). “The former commandment” - the one concerning the priesthood (*and therefore the animal sacrifices*) has been **“annulled”** (*Heb. 7:18*). **WHY?** Because that law was “weak and unprofitable” (*Heb. 7:18*). It could not change the heart, or the conscience. That law was not a mistake on God’s part. **It was a wonderful prophecy** of what Messiah would do for humanity, but it *was* a prophecy - not the reality.

“The law [*of sacrifices*] made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God” (*Heb. 7:18*). That “better hope” is Messiah - who died for us. That “better hope” is Yeshua, who now makes atonement for us, as High Priest before the throne of God in Heaven.

Christ was appointed of God to be “a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek” (*Heb. 5:10, Psa. 11:4*). We cannot imagine Him in any role other than that of High Priest. The Letter to the Hebrews is centered on this theme - that a man from the tribe of Judah could now be our High Priest in Heaven, ministering His own blood in our behalf. We now look to Him as our High Priest - not to any Levite priest of “the order of Aaron.”

Under the Law, the High Priest often killed the animal for sacrifice, especially on the Day of Atonement (*Lev. 9:8, 12, 15, 18 & Lev. 16: 6, 9, 11, 15*). Our High Priest does not need to offer up animals for sacrifice, “for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself” (*Heb. 7:27*).

**There can be ONLY ONE High Priest - and He is Yeshua Messiah.**

He WILL NOT offer the blood of animal sacrifices to His Heavenly Father - and neither will His priesthood of the redeemed, during the coming 8<sup>th</sup> Day!

*NOTE: In Ezekiel’s vision “the prince” offered sacrifice (Eze. 45:22). **They key to this vision is Christ - who is “the prince”, “the priest” and “the offering”.** I cannot imagine that Jesus Christ - our “Prince” - will slit the throat of a lamb, watch it die as it bleeds out, and then offer the blood of that dead animal to His Father in payment of sin. He has already offered “one sacrifice for sins forever” (Heb. 10:12).*

Hebrews 9:11-12 “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation [*Heaven itself*]. **Not with the blood of goats and calves**, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

*More perfect Tabernacle - More perfect Lamb - More perfect High Priest*

Hebrews 10:12 “But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,”

Hebrews 10:8-9 “Previously saying, ‘Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them’ (which are offered according to the law), then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second.”

***“He takes away the first***  
*(the system of animal sacrifices  
which could do nothing to change the heart)*  
***that He may establish the second.”***  
*(His own perfectly obedient will - offered instead).*

Hebrews 10:10 **We are sanctified**  
“by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all.**”

*The priests who serve under Christ will not need to offer up more animal sacrifices, because Yeshua was the only perfect sacrifice, acceptable to God for all time.*

*Most believers today do not understand that we still live under the sacrificial system - we just have a “better sacrifice” - a perfect sacrifice, and we have a better priest - a Perfected One - Yeshua the Son of God.*

*NOTE: The design of Ezekiel’s future Temple included four enormous kitchens. What food will the priests prepare? If the animals of that age are all vegetarian, including “the lion” which will “eat straw like the ox,” (Isa. 65:25) why would people still be eating flesh meat?*

*Continued next page.*

## EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

Does it mean the restoration of animal sacrifices?

There are Bible students who believe that animals will again be offered for sacrifice when **the Temple is restored in the coming kingdom of Messiah**. Ezekiel was shown an altar in the courtyard of a Temple, and tables with implements for preparation of sacrifices. In the vision, the priests and “the prince” offered sacrifices (*Ezek. 40:38-43; 42:13; 44:11; 46:4,12,13,15,20*).

Why was this vision given to Ezekiel?

What was the message of this vision?

This is a very controversial issue. I realize that I will offend some sincere people, but I personally DO NOT believe that animal sacrifices will be offered to the LORD during the future Messianic Kingdom. **This WAS a vision. This WAS a prophecy.**

The ancient wilderness Sanctuary (later the Temple of Solomon) was a copy or representation of the mediation of Christ in “heaven itself.” As the priests on earth anointed the altar, and poured out the blood, they portrayed the mediation of Christ, which would one day take place before the Father’s throne. **The same is true of Ezekiel’s Temple vision.**

This is the larger message!

Ezekiel presents the resurrection and return of the whole house of Israel to the land.

THEN - in this context - he is shown a Temple with tables and implements for sacrifice.

**We have been sidetracked by “arguments about the law” and we have failed to hear what the law is telling us.** The law was prophecy!!

In this vision given to Ezekiel, each animal sacrificed is Yeshua, who will offer His own blood for another man or woman, clan or village, or nation. Yeshua is “the priest” who makes the atonement. And Yeshua is the “prince”. **The ministration of the blood of Messiah WILL CONTINUE after redeemed Israel has been returned to “the land.” THIS is the message!!!**

Ezekiel “saw” animal sacrifices. We “see” Christ, presenting His own blood on behalf of those who come to the Father at **The 8<sup>th</sup> Day**. This ministry of His blood will continue until the last repentant sinner is washed and healed - to sin no more.

***The ministration of the blood of Messiah  
WILL CONTINUE  
after redeemed Israel has been returned to “the land.”***

***THIS is the message!!!***

## IT WASN'T TIME

The vision was given to Ezekiel during the time of the Babylonian captivity. The Israelites would indeed return to the land at the end of the 70 years. They would rebuild The City and the Temple, but **this return was only a type of THE FUTURE RETURN of the “whole house of Israel” to “the land.”**

If Ezekiel had been shown the future Temple WITHOUT the animal sacrifices, the returning Jews would have assumed that this system was no longer necessary, and it would have been discontinued. **But it was not yet time.** THE True Lamb had not yet been offered. The True Priest had not yet been consecrated.

The Temple constructed by the returning captives under Ezra and Nehemiah did not match the vision seen by Ezekiel, but a healing stream did flow out from Jerusalem - the blood of Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit - which brought healing of spirit to those who accept HIM.

## THE MESSAGE FOR ISRAEL - THRU EZEKIEL'S VISION

### **The message for the captives of Babylon:**

You will return to “the land.” You will rebuild My House. You will again have a place where you can meet with Me, and receive “atonement” thru sacrifice.

### **The message for the priesthood of The future 8<sup>th</sup> Day:**

You will return to “the land.” My House will be raised up, where all of those resurrected at **The 8<sup>th</sup> Day** may receive atonement, because I will continue to plead My blood for them.

## WHY A PRIESTHOOD - AFTER THE SECOND COMING ?

The role of the priests was one of mediation. They guided and taught the one who would approach the LORD. I believe that the priesthood will continue, with Christ as High Priest, because thousands (probably millions) will be raised to continue their lives in the Kingdom of Messiah on the earth, during the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium (The 8<sup>th</sup> Day).

These will be human beings who lived in ignorance of God and of His Law, or died before reaching the age of consent. Raised into the Kingdom of Messiah, they will learn of God and of His Son, and many will choose to serve Christ as LORD and King. Through the work of the priesthood, there will be many won to the Kingdom, of those who are raised “last.”

*NOTE: This does NOT represent a “second chance” for those raised at the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium. During their lives they remained in ignorance. They never had a chance - to chose the LORD. The continuation of their lives at **The 8<sup>th</sup> Day**, represents for them a first opportunity.*

## WHY A TEMPLE?

Like so many other prophecies, the vision of Ezekiel's Temple will be completely and perfectly fulfilled. The "whole house of Israel" will be returned to the land. (*This did not happen in the time of Ezra.*) The Temple of the LORD will be restored on Mt. Zion. At this Temple - Christ WILL BE the Lamb, and the High Priest, and the Prince. All Israel will serve as priests, helping those who come in faith to claim the death of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), as the One True Offering.

If the work of redemption was finished at the Second Coming, there would be NO NEED for another temporary House of God, and NO NEED for a priesthood.

In the New Jerusalem of the eternal kingdom, John "saw no Temple there" for "God and the Lamb are the Temple" therein (*Revelation 21:22*). This tells us that Ezekiel's Temple is temporary. It is the Temple of the Messianic 8<sup>th</sup> Day Kingdom.

The Temple of The 8<sup>th</sup> Day will be the center of learning and the center of worship. It will be the meeting place, where "all flesh will come to worship the King" (*Isa. 2*).

*NOTE: I believe that a Temple will be rebuilt on the Mount, before Jesus returns. It will be modeled after Ezekiel's vision. The system of animal sacrifices will be "restored" at that Temple. But the LORD is not there. Antichrist - the "abomination of desolation" will sit in that third Temple. I believe the restoration of that Temple is part of Satan's plan to "deceive - if possible, the very elect." Messiah's true future Temple will be the fourth Temple.*

## REDEEMED ISRAEL - "Priests of God and of Christ"

They will rise in the "first resurrection" - at the Second Coming (*Rev. 20:1-6*).

They will prepare for the priesthood - (during the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium).

They will spend this preparation time in the "Father's House."

Following their preparation/consecration they will return to "the land."

They will repair and rebuild. The House of the LORD will be restored.

With Christ - they will rule over "the nations" of the last great resurrection.

Then "the Law will go forth from Zion" (*Isa. 2:1-4*).

Those who have never heard the name of Christ, or known of the Father's love - will learn of HIM.



Isaiah 61:4-9 "And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. **Strangers** shall stand and feed your flocks, And **the sons of the foreigner** Shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But you shall be named the priests of the LORD, They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, And in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, And instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; Everlasting joy shall be theirs. 'For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, And will make with them an everlasting covenant. Their descendants shall be **known among the Gentiles**, And their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, That they are the posterity whom the LORD has blessed."

*NOTE: These are Melchizedek priests. These priests are given a "double portion" in the land, and "double honor" - the birthright of the first born. These CANNOT be Levite priests. The Levites were given NO inheritance in the land (Num. 18:20-24, Num. 26:62, Deut. 18:2, Josh. 13:33).*

*NOTE: There are Gentiles (strangers, foreigners) who serve these priests. Where do they come from? They are "the rest of the dead," raised to life after the 1000 years of the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium. They are "the nations" of Revelation Chapter 20.*

#### ADDENDUM: OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

OBJECTION: Some are teaching that the exclusive priesthood was "a grant" to descendants of Aaron, and specifically to descendants of Phinehas. This priesthood can be taken away for awhile - it is said - but can never be given to any other tribe or people. It is LAW which cannot be changed.

I DISAGREE: The LORD made a covenant with, not an unconditional "grant" to Phinehas (*Num. 25:13*).

Numbers 25:13 "and it shall be to him (Phinehas) and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel."

A covenant is NOT an unconditional "grant." Some would say that the act of Phinehas in taking a sword to the those chief in rebellion at Baal-Peor, fulfilled the only condition, but I would point to the ceremony of consecration for the priesthood. Sacrifices were offered specifically for those entering upon the office, and those to be consecrated were anointed with blood (*Lev. 8:22-24, 14, 18*). It was a "blood covenant" - and the terms included their promise to faithfully execute the office as prescribed by Yahweh. Should they violate those terms, they would pay with their lives.

Just after His triumphal entry and His cleansing of the Temple (*Matthew 21*) Yeshua spoke the parable of the wicked vine-dressers. The chief priests and Pharisees “perceived that He was speaking of them” (*Matt. 21:45*). “The Kingdom of God” He said, “will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it” (*Matt. 21:43*).

The LORD will keep His promise to Phinehas. His faithful descendants will become priests. They just won’t be the ONLY priests. There will be “priests of God and of Christ” from every tribe of Israel. They are represented in Revelation as the 144,000.

OBJECTION: Yeshua is High Priest in Heaven, but cannot be a priest on earth (*Heb. 8:4*). When He returns to set up His kingdom, He will be King, but will not be a priest. The priesthood in the Temple of the Messianic Kingdom will belong to the descendants of Levi, Aaron and Phinehas.

I DISAGREE: Yeshua Messiah was made a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek was king of Salem and was a priest of the most high God. **He was a king and a priest on the earth.** Yeshua Messiah has been made a priest after this order. He will be King and Priest on the earth. In the Temple of the 8<sup>th</sup> Day Kingdom, Yahweh Himself - God the Father - will be worshiped. Yahweh Himself will inhabit the Most Holy Place. Yeshua will mediate that worship as High Priest. He will also be King - in Jerusalem - City of Peace.

If you study the wording carefully, in Ezekiel Chapter 45, the prince “shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, and burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.” He is acting the part of priest (v.17). (See also v. 22-24.) But the offering that He presents will be His own blood. **He is “the prince”, “the priest” and “the offering”.**

I believe that the “first” covenant with Israel came to an end - was rendered “obsolete” by the death of her betrothed “husband” (Romans 7). We are now “betrothed to another” - the risen Christ. He has entered into a new marriage covenant, with Israel redeemed. The “first” covenant was a prophecy of the “new” covenant. Because it is “new” - this allows for changes to be made, concerning “the priesthood”. A high priest in Israel could not marry a widow, a woman defiled by idolatry, a harlot, or one who had been divorced. Israel was all of these. He also could not remarry his former wife.

For Yeshua to “marry” Israel, He must die - thus ending (blotting out) the “first” marriage covenant and any violation of that covenant. For Yeshua to “marry” Israel redeemed, He must restore His bride to a virginal state. This He will do! The 144,000 from every tribe of Israel are represented as virgins (*Rev. 14:1-5*).

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