

A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS

- “We shall reign with Him”

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Scripture is from New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION

Before Israel had a king, she was governed by priests from the Tribe of Levi. The prophet Moses led Israel out of Egypt, to Mount Sinai. On that mountain, the LORD gave Moses the Ten Commandments. Then He commanded the construction of a Tabernacle. After the Golden Calf rebellion, the LORD chose the family of Aaron from the tribe of Levi, for the priesthood.

After Moses and his successor Joshua died, **the priests of the Tabernacle continued to serve as mediators between the people and Yahweh**. They taught the people right from wrong (*according to the Torah*). They made atonement for the people through sacrifices. They maintained the Tabernacle with the golden altar of incense, the table of bread, the veils and the golden Ark of the Covenant. **The priests also served as judges of last resort** (*Deut. 17:8-11*). The High Priest wore the stones of judgment on his shoulders. This was the role of the priesthood during the period known as the Old Testament.

The Tabernacle - the priesthood, the sacrifices, the ceremonies, and the appointed Feasts - all of it - was an amazing prophecy of Christ and His work of redemption. The Tabernacle was a symbolic representation of Heaven itself - the “true Tabernacle” (*Heb. 8:2-5*). The high priest of the Tabernacle was a TYPE (a living symbol) of Christ to come. He is now our High Priest in Heaven (*Heb. 4:14-15, Heb. 5:10, Heb. 6:20, Heb. 7:26, Heb. 8:1, Heb. 9:11, Heb. 10:21*). He makes atonement for us, presenting His own blood as the perfect offering.

The priests who served *under* the high priest, were also a TYPE, or symbolic prophecy. They represented the coming government of Messiah on this earth. All those who believe in Christ, are being “built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices” (*1 Peter 2:5*).

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.”

Several QUESTIONS come immediately to mind.

What need will there be for priests AFTER Jesus has come in glory? What need will there be for judges to settle disputes? Who will they teach? Who will they govern?

This study will present my answers to those questions.

Scripture describes THREE groups of people, in terms of their choice - to serve the LORD, or to rebel against Him.

1. Those who have loved and served the LORD will be removed from this earth when Jesus returns in glory. They will go with Christ to the "Father's House". I have already presented my reasons for believing that no one - remaining on this earth - will survive the last plagues. Please see the study "[Millennium](#)".

2. Those who knowingly and persistently refuse to serve the LORD. These will face judgment and then death when Christ returns in glory (*Daniel 12:1-3*).
Please see the study "[Judgment Day](#)".

3. THE REST

Revelation 20:5 "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished."

The "rest" of the dead, will be those who lived and died in ignorance of Yahweh. They could NOT CHOOSE to serve Him. They were unaware. And if God is just, then He must also give these people the opportunity to "learn of Him".

NOTE: This is NOT a second chance, for those who persistently and knowingly refused Him in life. No! Such will perish when Christ returns (Daniel 12:1-3).

There are millions of human beings who have lived and died WITHOUT **the opportunity to choose**. They may have died before missionaries could reach them. They may have died as infants or young children. They may have suffered from a mental disability. They may have been taught all their lives, that the God of the Bible is a false God, or that God never beget a son. They may have been abused by persons who claimed to worship the God of the Bible. (Such a circumstance would cause the person to reject the beliefs of his/her abuser.) Whatever the reason, such persons never received the information needed to allow for a freewill CHOICE - to love and serve God, or to resist His spirit and to rebel against Him.

When Jesus Christ returns in glory, THE REST will not be resurrected. They will remain in the sleep of death for a thousand years - thru the 7th millennium. They will be raised to live again, at the 8th millennium - the 8th day.

2Peter 3:8 “But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day” (NAU).

Revelation 20:5 “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”

For this study, I want to concentrate on the role of the priesthood, and their ministry for “the rest” - for those resurrected to live again at the 8th millennium.

A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS

From Mount Sinai, the LORD 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.”

Here we have the LORD’s original intent and purpose for Israel.

They were to be a kingdom of priests.

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...”

NOTE: All faithful believers are grafted into Israel (Ephesians 2, Romans 11), therefore all faithful believers will become the LORD’s “priesthood”. The unfaithful will be “cut off” from Israel - 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.”

NOTE: The “first resurrection” is the one which will take place at the return of Christ in glory. The “dead in Christ will rise first” and the living will be caught up with them, to meet the LORD in the sky (1Thessalonians 4:16-17, 1Cor. 15:23). The “second resurrection” will take place after the 7th millennium.

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.”

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 or representation of “heaven itself” (Heb. 9:24), and Christ Himself is the “bread from heaven” (John 6:32-33). Only those who “overcome” will partake of Christ in Heaven itself. 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 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.”

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).

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

And let me also mention that in Christ there is “neither male nor female” (Gal. 3:28). In the resurrection there will BE no sexual orientation - no marriage or giving in marriage (Matt. 22:30) therefore faithful believers who lived as women during this age, will also become “priests of God and of Christ”. Jesus said, “The first will be last and the last first” (Matt. 19:30). When it comes to men vs women, women have certainly been “last” in this world, and have acted the part of servant more often.

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 to be (are being prepared to be) priests and kings. They are not reigning yet. And when they do reign, it will be “on the earth”. Their consecration will not be complete until “the 8th 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 serving for two weeks of the year - 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.

I believe these “elders” were resurrected by Jesus Christ, after He was raised by His Father (Matt. 27:51-53). They ascended with Christ, and they are presently in Heaven. 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 8th Day). But these twenty-four elders, who are being prepared for priesthood, are only the first wave. Every believer who is raised at the Second Coming, will also become part of the priesthood, and will “reign on the earth”.

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.”

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).

The Government of King Yeshua Messiah

The 12 Apostles

The 24 Elders

The Priesthood of Redeemed Israel

*God’s plan was to use Israel redeemed 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 8th 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 Tabernacle.*)

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 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 with the blood. 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.”

Moses was a TYPE of Christ, our true Shepherd. As Moses consecrated the first priests of the Tabernacle, so Christ will consecrate His priesthood - the redeemed of earth. If a “day” is a thousand years, then “seven days” would represent seven thousand years. The priesthood of Christ will not be fully consecrated until the end of the 7th millennium.

NOTE: I believe that Aaron and his sons remained inside the courtyard, between the Alter of sacrifice and the entrance veil into the Tabernacle. To remain inside the small first apartment of the Tabernacle for seven days, would have been logistically very difficult for four men 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*).

*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 of the prophecy, 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 7th millennium - until the 8th millennium - **The 8th Day**. At that time, Israel redeemed - a “kingdom of priests” will begin to “reign on the earth”.*

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 He was welcomed with great celebration. He would then have entered upon the seven days of consecration, for His role as High Priest.

On the 8th day (Pentecost), Christ 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 Father restored to Christ His power to be omnipresent. “The last Adam was made a life giving spirit” (1Cor. 15:45).

BEFORE WE CAN GOVERN - 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 how prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus the Christ. Everyone will have hundreds of questions to ask, concerning the actions of God. We will need to spend time with the Master. The wounds we have sustained during this lifetime, will need to be healed without scars. The bad habits will need to be erased.

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 from the effects of selfish and defensive thinking. Maybe the healing is what takes a thousand years.

Just as in the ancient type, we will not begin to serve as priests UNTIL the 8th day (the 8th millennium). Then we will “reign with Him” on the earth.

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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 on Mount Zion, as "My Father's House" (John 2:16). But the Temple (originally the Tabernacle) was a copy of "heaven itself" (Heb. 9:24). It is in Heaven itself - in the Father's House- that Jesus, as 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". Only priests could enter the Temple on earth. And only the priests of Israel redeemed, will enter this place which Jesus has gone to prepare in the Father's House.

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" (1Peter 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. the bodies of martyrs (Rom. 12:1)
5. gifts to the poor (Phil. 4:18)
6. visiting the sick or those in prison (Matt. 25:34-40)
7. offerings in support of the ministry (1Cor. 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).

I have explained that the “whole House of Israel” - resurrected and returned to the land, will be Israel redeemed. This is not about DNA descent. This is the Israel of faith, into which are grafted believers from “every nation, kindred, tongue and people”. Please see the study, “[Who are Israel?](#)”

NOTE: Through 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.” Remember - this is prophecy. In the New Testament, we are told to present ourselves, as “living sacrifices” to the LORD (Rom. 12:1). In the end, Jesus 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: There are Gentiles (strangers, foreigners) who serve these priests of Israel. Where do they come from? These are from “the rest of the dead,” raised to life after the 1000 years of the 7th millennium (Rev. 20:5-6). They are from “the nations” of Revelation Chapter 20.

NOTE: The firstborn inherited a “double portion” (Deut. 22:17). And before the LORD limited the priesthood to the family of Aaron, the inheritance of the firstborn also included 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 and a double portion in “the land”. Israel redeemed will serve as the priesthood for “the nations” who are resurrected at “the 8th day”.

NOTE: Levites were given NO inheritance in the land. Therefore this priesthood CANNOT be the Levite priesthood. This is the priesthood of Israel redeemed - the “firstborn”.

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

A DETOUR

If we are going to talk about the priesthood, then we need to talk about the animal sacrifices. How can there be another priesthood, WITHOUT animal sacrifices? That would mean there's been a change in the Law, given at Mount Sinai.

I don't know any other way to say it. You either believe the New Testament writers, or you don't.

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 of God and of Christ”. 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 [concerning the Christ]: ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’

Hebrews 7:12-19 [continued] 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 Levite/Aaronic priesthood was a temporary order. The Melchizedek priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the firstborn, replaces that (temporary) order! Or we could say, “It is the fulfillment of that prophecy.”

*A priest was absolutely necessary for the offering of an animal sacrifice! The Law of Moses mandated that every animal sacrifice be offered by an Aaronic priest, in the courtyard of the Tabernacle (later the Temple at Jerusalem) (Deut. 12:5-14). **If you do away with the Aaronic priesthood,** (without specifically commanding that animal sacrifices be brought to a different priesthood) **you are abolishing the system of animal sacrifices!***

Please see the study "[The End of Sacrifices](#)" on prophecyviewpoint.com.

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 the Law (Gen. 17:10, Exo. 12:44-48, Lev. 12:3, Jos. 5:3-5).

I mention this only to show that the Law was "changed" in significant ways. But let me try to be clear. Under the terms of the New Covenant, the LORD will write His Law on our hearts. His Law - condensed as Ten Commands - will be written on our hearts. This was the original covenant with Israel, and it will be the immortal covenant with Israel redeemed.

For more on the covenants, please see the study "[Two Covenants](#)".

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

1. the Aaronic priesthood (a temporary substitute for the original priesthood of the firstborn)
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 all the laws of the Oral Torah). 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 Cannon. 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 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 [Christ 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” encompassed those prophecies concerning His earthly life, His suffering and His sacrificial death as “the lamb of God”. It need NOT encompass every prophecy concerning his eternal rule as King of kings and Lord of Lords.

TIL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS

Jesus was master of the dual prophecy. Yes, heaven and earth will pass away when Jesus returns on glory. In fact - the earth will be burned up. But the prophecy “til heaven and earth pass”, held a second meaning. On the great veil of the Temple (paid for by King Herod) was a depiction of the creation - heaven and earth. That veil was torn by God the Father, at the moment Jesus died. It could not be repaired and had to be taken down.

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

At the foot of Mount Sinai, after most of Israel had broken 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 firstborn priests.

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.**”

The House of Aaron entered into a blood covenant with Yahweh! Death would be the punishment for breaking this covenant!

Yes! 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 the high priest 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 ORDER of MELCHIZEDEK

Psalm 110:4 “The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.’” (NIV)

Hebrews 5:5 “In the same way, Christ did not take on himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.’ And he says in another place, **‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.’**” (NIV)

If the Son of God will be a priest forever, then He will still be our High Priest AFTER He becomes King on the earth, just as Melchizedek was the King and priest of Salem, the city which later became Jerusalem (*Gen. 14:18, Heb. 7:1-2*).

If Yeshua can only be a priest in the heavenly realm, then He is NOT “a priest forever, in the order of (in the likeness of) Melchizedek”. Why? Because Melchizedek was a priest and a king - on the earth.

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

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE FIRSTBORN

The original priests (before Mount Sinai) were simply **the “firstborn”** of family, or of clan. Jesus *was* the firstborn of Joseph and Mary, but much more, **He is God’s firstborn** and only son. He is called “the firstborn over all creation” (*Colossians 1:15*). He has become high priest over the entire creation of God, *because* He is God’s “firstborn”.

When the LORD limited the priesthood to the tribe of Levi and descendants of Aaron, this *was* a change! Please remember that. Up to this moment, the priesthood had always been inherited by the firstborn.

The priesthood *was changed* by the LORD Himself, at the foot of Mount Sinai.

When Christ was offered as the “once for all sacrifice”, the sin of Israel was washed away, and God himself changed the priesthood - once again - **back to the original order** of the firstborn.

Under the **order of the firstborn**, we have only to consider our next verse, to confirm that Israel will become the priesthood - under Christ - in the Kingdom of Messiah.

Exodus 4:22 “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD: “**Israel is My son, My firstborn.”**”

Israel IS the LORD’s “firstborn”!! Therefore, Israel will become “priests of God and of Christ.” This is the order of the firstborn - the ORIGINAL order of the priesthood.

IF HE WERE ON EARTH

Hebrews 8:4 “For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law . . .”

Some site this verse to teach a continuation of the Levite/Aaronic priesthood, and the continuation of animal sacrifices in the eternal Kingdom of Messiah. Let me explain my understanding of this verse.

Yeshua would become King of Israel. Therefore he could not be born into the tribe of Levi, or be from the line of Aaron. The prophecies all pointed to Messiah being a son of David, and therefore from the tribe of Judah. Yeshua will not rule as King on the earth, UNTIL the dominion was taken away from Satan at the end of this age. Until then, He serves within the true Tabernacle, which is Heaven itself. Don’t forget that in the end, Heaven will come down to earth. God the Father himself, with Yeshua His Son will *be* the Temple of the New Jerusalem, when it descends to earth.

The priests of the earthly Temple, served only the “copy and shadow of heavenly things” (*Heb. 8:5*). Their priesthood was a temporary measure, and it was a prophecy - pointing forward to the priesthood of Christ, and to the future priesthood of Israel redeemed. If Yeshua had been born into the tribe of Levi, He would have served only the copy, rather than the real thing.

Hebrews 9:13 “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”

The blood of bulls and goats could not cleanse the heart or the conscience. **The Aaronic priesthood on earth served only for “purifying of the flesh”** (*Heb. 9:13*). Think about it. The “flesh” is nothing! In the resurrection the old “flesh” will be gone. We will receive new spiritual bodies, which will need no cleansing.

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.** Let me be very clear. 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 our 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*). The Letter to the Hebrews is centered on this theme - that a man from the tribe of Judah is now our High Priest in Heaven, ministering His own blood on 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*). But our High Priest Yeshua 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.

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

NOTE: In Ezekiel’s vision “the prince” offered the sacrifice (Eze. 45:22). The 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) - His own precious blood.

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?

EZEKIEL’S TEMPLE

Why was Ezekiel shown animal sacrifice in the future Temple?

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 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, who would one day pour out his own blood. **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. This does not happen until *after* the return of Christ in glory. 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 prophecy is telling us.** Ezekiel’s vision was a prophecy of the coming 8th millennium.

In the vision, each animal sacrificed represents Yeshua. During the 8th millennium, Yeshua will present His own blood to God, as the ransom for another man or woman, clan or village, or nation. Yeshua is the sacrifice, and Yeshua is “the priest” who makes the atonement. And Yeshua is the “prince”.

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

IT WASN'T TIME

Ezekiel received his vision 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 a future return, for the “whole house of Israel”**. How do I know this? Because the “whole” House of Israel did not return to “the land” from Babylon. Most stayed in Babylon. The “whole” House of Israel includes the dead - not just the living. David and Daniel have not “returned” to the land. That return is future!!

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 perfectly match the vision seen by Ezekiel, but a healing stream did flow out from Jerusalem - the blood of Jesus Christ and His Spirit - which brought healing of spirit to those who accepted Him.

THE MESSAGE of EZEKIEL'S VISION - IS TWO FOLD

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 8th day kingdom:

You will return to "the land." My House will be raised up, where all of those resurrected at **The 8th 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 millions will be raised to continue their lives in the Kingdom of Messiah on the earth, during the 8th millennium (The 8th 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 8th millennium. During their lives they remained in ignorance. They never had a chance - to choose the LORD. The continuation of their lives at **The 8th Day**, represents for them a first opportunity.*

EXAMPLE TYPE: When Israel reached the border of Canaan, most refused to cross over. They feared the people of the land. They did not believe the LORD would give them victory. They rebelled against the LORD and attempted to return to Egypt. The story is in Numbers Chapter 14. At that time, the LORD (through Joshua) told them they would wander in the wilderness for 40 years, until every male over 20 years of age had died. Only the "young ones" would enter the land. These were not judged with their elders. Of those who came out from Egypt, only three men crossed the Jordan River, into "the land" - Caleb, Joshua, and the high priest Eleazar.

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. Israel redeemed will serve as priests, helping those who come in faith to claim for themselves the death of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), as the One True Offering.

If the work of redemption is finished at the Second Coming, there will be NO NEED for another temporary House of God, and NO NEED for a priesthood. Yet we are told that those who are raised in "the first resurrection" will become "priests of God and of Christ" (Rev. 20:5-6).

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 8th Day Kingdom.

The Temple of The 8th 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 will not be 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. It will be built during the 8th millennium - The 8th Day.

Please see the study "[The Temples of Yahweh](http://prophecyviewpoint.com)" on prophecyviewpoint.com.

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 in the Father's house (during the 7th millennium).

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

They will repair and rebuild. They will restore the Temple of Yahweh on Mount Zion.

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 Jesus, will learn of the Father's love.

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
Prophecy Viewpoint*

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.**

IDISAGREE: The LORD made a **blood covenant** with Phinehas, **not an unconditional “grant”** (*Num. 25:13*). The descendants of Phinehas broke the covenant, therefore they forfeit the promise.

ANSWER: The Law cannot be changed by any man, but it CAN be changed by God Himself. That was His plan from the beginning.

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*). This 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 will become priests under Christ, of the order of Melchizedek, along with “priests of God and of Christ” from every tribe of Israel, and from “every nation, kindred, tongue and people”.

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.

IDISAGREE: The prophecies pointed forward to a son of David, who would become King over Israel. If Yeshua had been born into the line of Aaron, he could not legally become KING.

IDISAGREE: Yeshua Messiah was made **a priest forever** LIKE Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a priest and a king - on this earth. Abraham paid tithes to him. If Yeshua can serve only in the heavenly realm as a priest, then His priesthood is *not* like that of Melchizedek.

In the Temple of the 8th Day Kingdom, Yahweh Himself will inhabit the Most Holy Place. Yeshua (Jesus) will mediate that worship as High Priest. He will also be King - reigning on David's throne in Jerusalem.

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." The prince 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 His blood is "the offering"**.

I believe that the "first" covenant with Israel came to an end with the death of Christ. The Sinai Covenant was a covenant of marriage, and it was rendered "obsolete" by the death of Israel's betrothed "husband" (*Romans 7*). We are now "betrothed to another" - to the risen Christ. We are "betrothed" to Christ by a *new marriage covenant*. The "first" covenant was a prophecy of the "new" covenant. Because it is "new" - this allows for changes, 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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