



Why Church?
Exodus 19:1-6

Exodus 19:1-6

19 In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai.

2 For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain.

3 And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:

4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.

5 Now therefore, 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.

6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

NKJV

After reminding the Jews that He had delivered them from Egypt and of the terms of His agreement with them, in verse six God told the Jews two things about themselves. God said they were...

- [A holy nation.](#)

When these events occurred, the word nation and the word kingdom were synonymous. Nations were Kingdoms and Kingdoms were nations. There was only one form of government. Every nation had a King.

Israel was a holy nation because they were chosen by God to be His kingdom and He would be there King. There was not another nation in the world like Israel that God chose to rule and bless.

They were a holy nation.

- [A kingdom of priests.](#)

There were men chosen from the house of Aaron and the tribe of Levi that were to lead the nation of Israel to fulfill the ceremonial laws that God prescribed for the temple.

Only the priests chosen from the tribe of Levi could offer the sacrifices at the temple.

But God said they were a Kingdom of priests. Every citizen was a priest. Every Jew was chosen to fulfill a priestly ministry.

The Jews were to live their whole life in service to God and to their fellow Jews.

Their responsibilities included...

- Living together in community (Lev. 23)
- Sharing the truth about God (Deut. 6:4-9; Deut. 11:13-21)
- Caring for one another's personal needs (Deut. 10:16-19)

They were a kingdom of priests.

What was true for the Jews the apostle Peter said is true for the church.

1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

NASU

God said through Peter that the church is a...

- Holy nation

The church is a holy nation because the church was chosen by God to be His nation on earth and Jesus was chosen to be the King of the church. Every member of the church is a citizen of His kingdom. While He commands His citizens to submit to the government of men, the church's loyalty to Him takes precedence over our loyalty to the ever-changing governments of the world. When there is a conflict between God's law and man's law, we submit to our King.

We are a holy nation!

- Kingdom of royal priests

Just as there were priests from the house of Israel that had specific responsibilities at the temple that were not shared by every citizen of Israel, there are specific responsibilities given to some priests in the church that are not shared by all the other citizens.

There are priests that are called by God to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. (Ephesians 4:11-12). These leaders equip all the other priests for works of ministry.

But Jesus said through Peter that every member of the church is a royal priest on the earth. Royal means belonging to the king. In this context the King is Jesus. Every citizen of the church is a priest that serves and represents the King.

As priests, we are responsible to live our whole life in service to God and for our fellow citizens.

Our royal priestly responsibilities include...

- Living together in community (Hebrews 10:24-25)
Hebrews 10:24-25
24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
NASU
- Sharing the truth about God (Hebrews 3:12-13)
Hebrews 3:12-13
12 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.
13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.
NIV
- Caring for one another's personal needs (Gal. 6:9-10)
Galatians 6:9-10
9 And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.
10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.
RSV

At Western Hills, we describe our royal priestly ministry as...

- Sharing life together
- Sharing lessons together
- Sharing love together

At Western Hills, we believe that Jesus modeled for us the most effective way for the church to accomplish this priestly ministry when He chose 12 men to do this with Him.

Conclusion-The Jews and the church a great debt to God

The Jews owed God their lives for the mercy He showed them.

- He chose them to be His people.
- He delivered them from Egypt
- He blessed them with land and community.

The church owes God our lives for the mercy He has shown us.

- He chose the church to be His people.

- He delivered the church from sin
- He gave the church heaven and community.

Our debt to God for His mercy is even greater than the Jews.

For the Jews God prescribed a sacrificial system that enabled them to obtain mercy.

For the church, God became the sacrifice!

The church does not need a priesthood that offers sacrifices to God for our sins. Jesus is our high priest that entered the presence of God behind the veil and became the sacrifice.

Based on His sacrifice, what kind of priests should we be?

Why church? We are a holy nation and a kingdom of priests!

Invitation

Are you a member of God's holy nation called the church of Jesus Christ?

Are you fulfilling your priestly ministry?