

Doctrine of the Priest Nation

1. Definition and Concept

1.1 There has only been only one priest nation--Israel.

1.2 Israel became a people, when at the command of God, Abram moved across the Tigris River on his way to a "promise land." The year was approximately 2000 B.C.

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Gen 12:4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

1.3 Israel did not become a priest nation until c. 1450 B.C. when Moses led them out of Egypt to possess the "promised-land."

Exo 3:7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Exo 3:8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exo 3:9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Exo 3:10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Exo 3:11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

Exo 3:12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Gen 15:18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates--

Gen 15:19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites,

Gen 15:20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites,

Gen 15:21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

Gen 22:15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time

Gen 22:16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,

Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,

Gen 22:18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

1.4 Israel was a priest nation from 1450 B.C. until A.D. 70 with the exception of their Babylonian exile--606 to 536 B.C.

2. Israel's tenure as a priest nation can best be described as follows:

(1) The Theocracy - Moses to Saul 1450-1080 B.C.

(2) The United Kingdom - Saul to Solomon 1080-925 B.C.

(3) Northern Kingdom - Jeroboam to Hosea 925-721 B.C.

(4) Southern Kingdom - Rehoboam to Zedekiah 925-586 B.C.

(5) A recalled Judah - Nehemiah to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

(6) There will be a future priest nation - the restored Israel of the Millennium.

Isa 49:5 And now the LORD says--he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength--

Isa 49:6 he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Isa 49:7 This is what the LORD says--the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel--to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: "Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

Isa 49:8 This is what the LORD says: "In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances,

Isa 49:9 to say to the captives, 'Come out,' and to those in darkness, 'Be free!' "They will feed beside the roads and find pasture on every barren hill.

Isa 49:10 They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.

Isa 49:11 I will turn all my mountains into roads, and my highways will be raised up.

Isa 49:12 See, they will come from afar-- some from the north, some from the west, some from the region of Aswan."

Isa 49:13 Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.

Isa 49:14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me."

Isa 49:15 "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!

Isa 49:16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

Isa 49:17 Your sons hasten back, and those who laid you waste depart from you.

Isa 49:18 Lift up your eyes and look around; all your sons gather and come to you. As surely as I live," declares the LORD, "you will wear them all as ornaments; you will put them on, like a bride.

Isa 49:19 "Though you were ruined and made desolate and your land laid waste, now you will be too small for your people, and those who devoured you will be far away.

Isa 49:20 The children born during your bereavement will yet say in your hearing, 'This place is too small for us; give us more space to live in.'

Isa 49:21 Then you will say in your heart, 'Who bore me these? I was bereaved and barren; I was exiled and rejected. Who brought these up? I was left all alone, but these--where have they come from?'"

Isa 49:22 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.

Isa 49:23 Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD; those who hope in me will not be disappointed."

Isa 49:24 Can plunder be taken from warriors, or captives rescued from the fierce?

Isa 49:25 But this is what the LORD says: "Yes, captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce; I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save.

Isa 49:26 I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine. Then all mankind will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

3. Israel the priest nation

3.1 The selection of Israel as God's priest nation is a matter solely of a divine election.

Exo 19:6 You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

Exo 19:7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak.

3.2 Israel and Judah were destroyed as priest nations because of negative volition to God's overtures.

Hosea Spoke of Israel's Demise

Hos 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

Hos 4:2 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

Hos 4:3 Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

Hos 4:4 Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest.

Hos 4:5 Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother.

Hos 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Hos 4:7 As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.

Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

Isa 1:3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Isa 1:4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Isa 1:5 Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Isa 1:6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

Isa 1:7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

Isa 1:8 And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

Isa 1:9 Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

Isa 1:10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

Amo 2:5 I will send fire upon Judah that will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem."

Amo 2:6 This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals.

Amo 2:7 They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name.

Amo 2:8 They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their god they drink wine taken as fines.

Amo 2:9 "I destroyed the Amorite before them, though he was tall as the cedars and strong as the oaks. I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below.

Amo 2:10 "I brought you up out of Egypt, and I led you forty years in the desert to give you the land of the Amorites.

Amo 2:11 I also raised up prophets from among your sons and Nazarites from among your young men. Is this not true, people of Israel?" declares the LORD.

Amo 2:12 "But you made the Nazarites drink wine and commanded the prophets not to prophesy.

Amo 2:13 "Now then, I will crush you as a cart crushes when loaded with grain.

Amo 2:14 The swift will not escape, the strong will not muster their strength, and the warrior will not save his life.

Amo 2:15 The archer will not stand his ground, the fleet-footed soldier will not get away, and the horseman will not save his life.

3.3 The last two verses of the Old Testament warned Israel not to reject the Messiah. They are warned that such a rejection would result in a loss of their priest nation status and a national curse.

Mal 4:5 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.

Mal 4:6 He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

3.4 A restored Israel will rule with Christ as a priest nation during the Millennium.

Jer 31:31 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

Jer 31:32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

Jer 31:33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Jer 31:34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Jer 31:35 This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar--the LORD Almighty is his name:

Jer 31:36 "Only if these decrees vanish from my sight," declares the LORD, "will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me."