

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Eight and Fifty

New Kingdom

God established the children of Israel into a kingdom and made them a great nation. They were to observe his laws and keep his commandments and it would go well with them in that kingdom. God gave them the Levitical priesthood and gave them a high priest after the order of Aaron. God was at first their king, and he gave them judges to judge them for a substantial period of time. Then the people asked for a king like unto other nations, and God gave them Saul. Afterwards, because of Saul's rebellion and disobedience, God gave them David to be king over them and afterwards, the descendants of David through Solomon's lineage. This kingdom continued though greatly reduced because of their disobedience until the time of Christ.

In the Old Testament God made promise of a new kingdom to come, called a new heaven and a new earth:

1. Isa 65:17 "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."
2. Isa 66:22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain."

Twice in the New Testament this kingdom is referred to as a new heaven and a new earth:

1. 2 Pet 3:13 "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."
2. Rev 21:1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

This made a total of four verses in which reference is made to a new heaven and a new earth with the word, "new," found eight times.

More often, this kingdom is referred to as the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. The Lord said it had its beginning with the preaching of John the Baptist:

Luke 16:16 "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

This kingdom is a spiritual kingdom: Rom. 14:17 "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Furthermore, this kingdom comes not with observation: Lk. 17:20 "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

The king of this kingdom is Jesus: Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." The subjects of this kingdom are of the elect of God and are his people that have pressed into the kingdom of God.

Jesus is the High Priest of this kingdom after the order of Melchisedec:

1. Heb 3:1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

2. Heb 4:14 "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession."

3. Heb. 5:5 "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Rather than the Levitical priesthood, the redeemed of God are made kings and priests unto God: Rev. 1:5 "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." As kings and priests we are made a spiritual priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices: 1 Pet. 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

This new kingdom is a new beginning for the children of God.