

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

Twelve and Seventy

A Kingdom Born

The kingdom of Israel began based on a covenant that God had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God chose Jacob and changed his name to Israel. The man Jacob had twelve sons. These twelve sons married and multiplied into a multitude. The progeny of these twelve sons were divided into twelve tribes, commonly referred to as the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribes were known by the names of the twelve sons of Jacob.

During the days of the great famine in Egypt, Jacob and his family came to live in Egypt under the protective care of Joseph: Exo 1:1 "Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob.

2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already." From these twelve sons and seventy persons grew a nation within Egypt of nearly three million people who were delivered out of Egypt during the days of Moses.

In the wilderness God made a covenant with Israel and appointed over them twelve princes and seventy elders:

1. Num. 1: 4 "And with you there shall be a man of every tribe; every one head of the house of his fathers. 5 And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of Shedeur. 6 Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 7 Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 8 Of Issachar; Nethaneel the son of Zuar. 9 Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of Helon. 10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 11 Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni. 12 Of Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 13 Of Asher; Pagiel the son of Ocran. 14 Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of Deuel. 15 Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan. 16 These were the renowned of the congregation, **princes** of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel."

2. Exo 24:1 "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off."

3. Exo 24:9 "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel."

4. Num 11:16 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee."

5. Num 11:24 "And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle."

6. Num 11:25 "And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease."

The twelve princes of the twelve tribes of Israel became the governors of Israel and the seventy elders became the judges of Israel. What later became known as the Sanhedrin counsel had its roots in the seventy elders.

This pattern of the kingdom is presented to us in type at the place known as Elim:

1. Exo 15:27 "And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters."

2. Num 33:9 "And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees; and they pitched there." Elim was a place of refuge and comfort for the desert weary travelers. Here they refreshed themselves. Of course, this pointed back to the kingdom that began with twelve sons of Jacob and seventy descendants.

It also pointed forward to a future kingdom of heaven that would have twelve apostles judging the twelve tribes of Israel and seventy elders:

1. Mat 10:1 "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

2. Mat 10:2 "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother..."

3. Mat 10:5 "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."

4. Mat 11:1 "And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities."

5. Mat 19:28 "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

6. Luke 10:1 "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come."

7. Luke 10:17 "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."

The twelve apostles are the ones that Christ used as foundation stones to build his church kingdom upon: Eph. 2:20 "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The seventy elders are representative of the gospel ministry today who go at the direction of the Lord through the Holy Spirit.