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## The Making of the Holy KINGDOM of Royal PRIESTS

12,000 x 12

The journey of the Israelites after the Exodus out of Egypt through the wilderness, mirrors the journey of Christians since the first day the church began and will mirror yet again, a second exodus—the greatest exodus that will be remembered for all time. This journey the ancient Israelites travelled, would reveal the processes of the making of the holy kingdom of God's royal priests. It was the time when God revealed to His people, His religious office as Most Holy Priest. Previously, God had only revealed His national office, "God also said to Moses, 'I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as **God Almighty**, but **by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them**'" (Exodus 6:2-3). It was time for Israel to learn God's religion and become His kingdom of royal priests.

### TRUTH AND BAPTISM—FEARING AND TRUSTING GOD

It all began just before the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea. "The Egyptians—all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops—pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon" (Exodus 14:9). The people saw and feared the great representation of the god Zephon whose name in Greek is Zeus, guardian of maritime trade and they grumbled. Moses said, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:13-14). Before Baal Zephon, God parted the sea and the Israelites walked on dry ground. 21<sup>st</sup> century educators have mythicized the ancient gods as mere wooden or stone caricatures, but in ancient times, these gods indeed held power over the nations they ruled. Ancient battles have been fought between God Almighty and the rogue heavenly rulers over the nations, leaving once glorious cities in ruins of sand. The Egyptian army caught up to the Israelites and entered the Red Sea only to be totally consumed by the raging waters. God Zephon could not save the Egyptians nor was that god of any force against the Supreme God of the Israelites. The first lesson the 12 tribes of Israel learned was that their God has supreme power over all gods, even the great Zephon, Zeus of the Greeks. **Without opposition, the 12 tribes of Israel walked through the sea—a national baptism took place** and "**when the Israelites saw the great power of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant**" (Exodus 14:31). The Israelites witnessed a superior power in the heavens and they no longer feared the gods of Egypt.

**The first step in a Christians walk towards God, our LORD is hearing the truth, getting baptised and learning to fear and trust in Him—that is wisdom.**

“Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell?  
It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air.  
Destruction and Death say, ‘Only a rumor of it has reached our ears.’ **God understands the way to it and He alone knows where it dwells**, for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters, when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm, **then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; He confirmed it and tested it.**

And he said to man, **‘THE FEAR OF THE LORD—THAT IS WISDOM, AND TO SHUN EVIL IS UNDERSTANDING’** (Job 28:20-28).

### **RECEIVING GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT**

The Israelites traveled for **3 days**—the perfect timing for the next step—in the desert and they did not find water until they reached Marah, but the water there was undrinkable. The people grumbled and God performed another miracle before their eyes; He cleaned the water.

**Drinking this cleansed water imaged the act of receiving God’s Holy Spirit.**

There he taught them to “pay attention to His commands and decrees” and they would be free of disease (Exodus 15:26). **Receiving God’s Holy Spirit, makes it possible to understand God’s commandments and decrees and OBEY THEM.**

### **THE 12 SPRINGS: 12 TRIBES WILL BECOME WELLS OF REVIVING WATER.**

God’s kingdom of royal priests began taking shape. Obeying God’s commandments and decrees is the core to living God’s way. Next, they arrived at Elim “where there were 12 springs and 70 palm trees, and they camped there near the water” (Exodus 15:27). The first camp after crossing the Red Sea brought them to a place of refuge where each tribe had their own spring, **like an individually controlled source to God’s Holy Spirit, while being protected under a canopy of 70 palm trees that image the holy elders who uphold God’s perfect spiritual order.**

During this journey, the people of ancient Israel grumbled all the way. They desired to be like the nations: self-directed, self-reliant and self-glorifying. They wanted the greatness of Egypt and the admiration of all the nations around them, but God wanted a kingdom of humble, God-fearing and God-serving servants whose focus is on peace and selfless service.

### **GOD’S PLAN CANNOT BE THWARTED. GOD GAVE THEM MANNA.**

They arrived to the Desert of Sin, between Elim and Sinai and the people grumbled again because they did not have any food. On that night, God gave them quail until they made themselves sick. The greater miracle was the bread that He rained down from heaven (Exodus 16:4). God provided their daily bread and instructed them to gather twice as much on Fridays because the next day they would rest, on the Sabbath. Only the “manna” gathered on Friday did not spoil overnight. **“The Israelites ate manna forty years**, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan” (Exodus 16:35). As God provided for the ancient Israelites, God has provided spiritual food generously for His people, while they are pilgrims in this evil age. The important message God was teaching the ancient Israelites while eating manna—food from heaven, was the day that they were to rest—with

God. **God was teaching them that “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4), so they were given a day of rest from work to feast on the word of God. He taught them that He provides well for those who rest with Him on His Sabbath.**

While in the desert, the Israelites grumbled because there was again no water. God was fully aware of their need to be revived. God told Moses to “strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink” (Exodus 17:6). Water came from the rock and Moses called the place Massah and Meribah. A new series of lessons were now being revealed. Water is life-reviving. They found themselves without a source of water, but God provided the source. The ancient Israelites would come to learn that they need a Savior. The rock had to be struck before they could receive water. The strike on the rock was the imagery of the crucifixion of Christ. **It was like the ancient Israelites were playing a role that only 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians could understand.** “They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same **spiritual drink**; for they drank from the **spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ**” (I Corinthians 10:3-4).

“Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion **a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes will be unshakable**” (Isaiah 28:16), “And coming to Him as to a **living stone** which has been **rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God**” (I Peter 2:4).

#### **THE LORD WILL BE AT WAR AGAINST THE AMALEKITES FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.**

The first battle the Israelites fought before entering the Promised Land was against the Amalekites. God wanted this battle to be remembered for He told Moses, “**Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered** and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely erase the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven” (Exodus 17:14).

The ancient Israelites fought face-to-face with inhabitants on this earth that God Almighty vows that He will completely erase—from generation to generation. While the ancient Israelites saw this enemy, **21<sup>st</sup> century Christians are blind to them.** It may be yet a future event when these inhabitants are recognized for who they are. “The **inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world** will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come” (Revelation 17:8b) and “**All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life** belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). **These inhabitants are NOT God’s creation,** for God’s creation have their names written in the book of life from the creation of the earth. Something has been happening in the shadows on this planet.

Consider the words of the Psalmist. “Your hand will lay hold on all your enemies; your right hand will seize your foes. At the time of your appearing, you will make them as a fiery oven in the time of your anger; **the LORD will swallow them up in His wrath, and fire will devour them. Their offspring You will destroy from the earth, and THEIR DESCENDANTS FROM AMONG THE SONS OF**

**MEN.** Though they intended evil against You and devised a plot, they will not succeed” (Psalm 21:8-11).

### **THE MAKING OF A HOLY KINGDOM OF ROYAL PRIESTS REVEALED**

The next significant event recorded in Exodus was the division of priestly judgments recommended by Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law. “Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said” (Exodus 18:24). Now, God was ready to give the people of Israel His 10 commandments at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19). “You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now **if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession.** Although the whole earth I mine, **YOU WILL BE FOR ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND A HOLY NATION**” (Exodus 19:4-6). The people of ancient Israel responded, “We will do everything the LORD has said” (Exodus 19:8).

God was ready to reveal himself to these people on the **third day** after their commitment to obey Him. He “descended to the top of Mount Sinai” (Exodus 19:20) and called to Moses to come up where he received the 10 Commandments, laws of justice and God’s three annual festivals.

During their journey in the wilderness, God gave them His angel to guard them and bring them to the place that God had prepared (Exodus 23:20). God warned the Israelites to respect and listen to this angel because “**he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him**”—is a significant angel with power to forgive or not to forgive sins.

“But that **you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**”—he then said to the paralytic— “Rise, pick up your bed and go home” (Matthew 9:6).

The ancient Israelites were led into the Promised land by Jesus Christ who has power to forgive sins on earth.

“If you **listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say**, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. **My angel will go ahead of you** and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and **I will wipe them out**” (Exodus 23:23). The destruction of these inhabitants by God reveals a judgment against rogue entities and their earthly citizens who are in rebellion against God. It is difficult for mortals to see the heavenly battles that are taking place and the wicked forces on earth. That is why it is important for Christians to listen to the direction of their Savior who serves Almighty God.

### **THE 12 PILLARS OF STONE: THE 12 TRIBES WILL BECOME SPIRITUAL LEADERS SUPPORTED WITH 70 HOLY ELDERS.**

Moses set up 12 stone pillars representing the 12 tribes of Israel and offered burnt sacrifices as fellowship offerings to the LORD. He took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people and the covenant was confirmed with God. “Everything the LORD has said we will do” (Exodus 24:7). In a vision as vivid as reality, Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and the 70 elders saw the God of Israel sitting in His throne room and “they ate and drank” with Him (Exodus 24:11). The covenant was

confirmed, official and binding. The ancient Israelites agreed to be God's holy kingdom or royal priests.

Since the church began, nearly 2,000 years has elapsed and Israel, that is, the 21<sup>st</sup> century nations of Israel are still wandering in the wilderness—the age of wickedness. Ancient Israel became 12 nations into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These nations are not leaders of righteousness; they do not resemble priestly nations; they are even lost to themselves. The setting up of stone pillars—that is, 12 nations who stand as spiritual leaders mirroring the action of Moses in Exodus 24:4, must be still a future event.

Following the confirmation of the covenant, God gave Moses instructions for the building of His tabernacle and detailed instructions of the clothing to be worn by Aaron, God's High Priest on earth.

### **THE 12 PRECIOUS STONES ON THE BREASTPLATE: THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL WILL BECOME GOD'S PRECIOUS JUDGES.**

“Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you” (Exodus 25:8) and “Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him dignity and honor. Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest... Fashion a breast-piece for making decisions—the work of a skilled craftsman. Make it like the ephod... Then mount four rows of precious stones on it... There are to be **12 stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the 12 tribes...** Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breast-piece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD” (Exodus 28:15, 21, 29).

Though God has given the people of Israel great honor by acknowledging their names on the High priest's breastplate, they did not keep their word. They set up two golden calves and worshiped them. They broke the covenant they made with God Almighty, our LORD.

“Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. ‘O Lord, if I have found favor in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, **forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance**” (Exodus 34:8-9).

Moses begged for their forgiveness and that God keep them, the Israelites, as His inheritance. The nations of the world did not receive God Almighty as their inheritance; they received heavenly rulers who eventually turned against God. This led to the nations worshiping gods instead of the Creator (Deuteronomy 32:8-9). Fortunately, our Creator God is merciful. Hundreds of years have passed and still these 12 nations of Israel vacillate. Yet, during their upcoming time of trouble, they will remember their God and cry out—this time sincerely, pledging their eternal allegiance to never turn away from God again.

“In those days, **at that time**, the **people of Israel** and the **people of Judah TOGETHER** will go in **tears to seek the Yahuah, their God**. They will ask the way of Zion and turn their faces toward it.

They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in an **everlasting covenant** that will not be forgotten” (Jeremiah 50:4-5).

**Together the two houses at the same time will turn to God.** And—God will hear their cry during their captivity. A second exodus is part of the great plan of salvation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century nations of Israel.

Both houses of Israel will be in captivity at the same time and God will rescue them. “The **people of Israel** are oppressed, and the **people of Judah** as well. **All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go.** Yet **the Redeemer is strong; Yahuah Almighty is his name.** He will vigorously defend their cause so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon” (Jeremiah 50:33-34).

**In the end times, God will have compassion and choose the people of Israel AGAIN.**

“For **the LORD will have compassion on Jacob** and will **again choose Israel**, and will set them in their own land, and sojourners will join them and will attach themselves to the house of Jacob” (Isaiah 14:1).

Fortunately, the stiff-necked and stubborn people of Israel will be chosen AGAIN by God. For He is a compassionate God. He uses the name “Jacob” in Isaiah 14 to identify stiff-necked, rebellious people but uses the name “Israel” for the ones He will choose AGAIN for they are the **OVERCOMERS. God will ONLY choose the OVERCOMERS.**

**There will be overcomers from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. “For ALL of Israel will be saved”** (Romans 11:26). Notice again, God uses the name “Israel” in Romans 11 because only the **OVERCOMERS** will be saved.

The story of the making of a holy kingdom of royal priests in Exodus ends with the building of God’s tabernacle in the desert, but it is not finished. It is continued by Apostle John in Revelation.

### **THE 12 GATES OF THE NEW JERUSALEM: THE 12 TRIBES WILL PROVIDE ENTRY INTO GOD’S NEW CAPITAL CITY.**

Again, still in the future, but being built today at this very moment in time is the New Jerusalem that comprises of 12 gates. Each gate has the name of one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Entry into this radiant city will be through any one of the 12 gates.

“Come I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb... the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.... It had a great, high wall with **twelve gates**, and with twelve angels at the gates. **On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel**” (Revelation 21:9b, 10, 12).

## THE 12 FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM: THE 12 APOSTLES WILL BE THE FUNDAMENTAL STRENGTH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM.

The structure of this city is designed by God to be everlasting. Its fundamental strength is reinforced by the teachings and conviction of the 12 apostles.

“The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were **the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb**” (Revelation 21:14).

## THE BLAMELESS 144,000: 12,000 TIMES 12 WILL BE THE SAINTS WHO WILL FORM THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM.

This NEW headquarters of God will comprise of the saints. “Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His [Christ’s] kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him [Christ].” This is the end of the matter (Daniel 7:27-28a).

There have been some fierce invisible battles fought in heaven for rulership of the kingdom not witnessed nor fully understood by mankind. And still on the near horizon, waits the worst battle to be fought on earth—a time like no other. The verdict of this final battle is known. Daniel 7 reveals God’s judgment. Sovereignty will be awarded to Christ and the saints.

The 144,000 of Revelation are the saints in the end times. “Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him **144,000** who had **his name** and **his Father’s name written on their foreheads**... No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless” (Revelation 14:1,5). One hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed from ALL of the tribes of Israel:

Of the tribe of **Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin** twelve thousand were sealed (Revelation 7:5-8).

Why 12? Why 12 tribes, 12 gates, 12 foundations and a central group of 12,000 times 12? It symbolizes God’s power and authority in bringing about a perfect, eternally righteous ruling kingdom of God-fearing, God-serving body of royal priests. Our Creator’s plan of salvation for all of mankind **begins with the 12 tribes—God’s first-born nation**.

“Then you [Moses] shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, **ISRAEL IS MY FIRSTBORN SON** and I told you to **let My son go so that he may worship Me**. But you have refused to let him go, so I will kill your firstborn son!’” (Exodus 4:22)

Israel—the Overcomers—is God’s firstborn son who will under Christ’s leadership bring the people of the nations to God. There will be second, third, fourth... born sons. God just hasn’t finished building the construct of multi-layered 12s that can handle the entry of all the nations in the world. However, it is nearly finished—get ready.

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