

A Kingdom of Priests
A Blessing to the Nations
by
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The story of Israel's priesthood to the nations begins with the Covenant that God made with Abraham and explained to his son Isaac:

To Abraham:

Genesis 17:4-5 and 18

As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations... In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

To Isaac:

Genesis 26:3-5

Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.

Later, at Mt. Sinai, God makes clear his plan, that his earlier promise to Abraham will be fulfilled through Israel serving God as a "kingdom of priests:"

Exodus 19:5-6

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. 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.'

Then, years later, Yeshua conveyed essentially the same message, to His Jewish disciples, as Moses had earlier spoken to the Israelites when He said:

Matthew 28:18-20

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore¹ and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; (see also Mark 16:14-20, Luke 24:44-47, Acts 1:4-8).

We are not at Mt. Sinai with Moses, or with Yeshua and His early disciples, so God made sure that their words were preserved to be communicated to us through the Bible. Have no doubt though, that though their words were spoken to others long gone, they are as relevant for us today as ever they were.

Now I will come to the point of why I am writing this since I am pretty sure you are already aware of these Scriptures. It is because my awareness has recently been heightened that we, the Jewish People, including those of us who confess Yeshua, are not adequately fulfilling our responsibility to be priests to the Gentile Nations of the world as God has commanded us. There are some of us who are, Asher Intrater, Ron Canter and Dan Juster to name three, but most of us are not – probably because we feel overwhelmed by our other consuming task which is to minister Yeshua to our Jewish people who do not know Him. To illustrate what I mean, consider Ohev Yisrael's "Vision Statement:" *"Providing a congregational home for Jewish believers in Yeshua, and for believing Gentiles called to serve Messiah within the Messianic Community."* It is a fine statement in what it says, but it says nothing about what I believe is our equal priestly responsibility to represent our Jewish People (in the Name of Yeshua) to the Nations.

The particulars of how we begin doing it are not as important as just beginning, because God will honor our efforts and guide us as we go along. It is important that we develop a conviction that proclaiming God to the Gentiles, teaching them His Word, and helping them fulfill their God-given calling – albeit different from ours – is a Jewish thing to do and is not an option.

Psalm 96 was crafted before Yeshua, but it is a priestly exhortation that we can easily adopt as our own; it reads:

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Give to the LORD glory and strength. Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth. Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously." Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.

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