

COMPARISON OF PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

INTRODUCTION: In this lesson, we shall study the relationship of the Creator with those who were members of the nation of Israel while the Law of Moses was in effect. We shall, also, consider the relationship between the Almighty and those who are members of spiritual Israel today. Christians have a special relationship with God for they are His children! A knowledge of who we are before God should help us refrain from sinning.

I. PHYSICAL ISRAEL, WHICH WAS THE JEWISH NATION, WAS A CHOSEN RACE (Deut. 7:6-11)

- A. They were "*a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth*" (vs. 6)
- B. God chose them because He loved them and because of the promises He made to their fathers (vs. 8)
- C. They were chosen to "*love Him and keep His commandments*" (vs. 9; Deut. 10:12-15)
- D. God chose them to praise Him for the blessings He gave them and worship Him only (Isa.43:20,21; Psa.95:5,6; 96:7-9; 99:5,9)
- E. They were chosen to be the race through which the Messiah would come (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:16)

II. THE LORD MADE THEM A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS (Ex. 19:5,6)

- A. Aaron and his descendants were made priests (Ex. 28:41; 29:9)
- B. They were of the tribe of Levi (Ex. 2:1; cp. 7:1)

III. PHYSICAL ISRAEL WAS "A HOLY PEOPLE TO THE LORD" (Deut. 26:16-19; Ex. 19:6)

- A. The Lord said, "*You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*" (Lev. 11:45; 20:7,8)
- B. The Israelites were sanctified, set apart, to "*obey His voice*" (Deut.26:16-18)
- C. They were not to "*add to the word...nor take anything from it...*" (Deut. 4:2)
- D. They were dedicated to be God's special people with the blood of animals (Ex. 24:4-8; Heb. 9:18-20)

IV. THE LORD GOD SET THEM "HIGH ABOVE ALL NATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Deut. 26:19; 28:1)

- A. What a wonderful relationship with the Holy One was promised to them!
- B. They promised, "*All that the Lord has spoken we will do.*" (Ex. 19:7,8; 24:7; Deut. 16:17)
- C. Sadly, they miserably failed to keep their promises! (Deut. 9:23,24; Isa. 1:2-4; 43:22-24; 63:7-10)

V. SPIRITUAL ISRAEL IS COMPOSED OF THOSE IN CHRIST (Gal. 3:7,26-29; Rom. 2:28,29)

VI. CHRISTIANS ARE "AN ELECT RACE" (I Pet. 2:9)

- A. We are "God's elect" (Col. 3:12-14)
- B. Our election to salvation is not unconditional, as the Calvinistic doctrine falsely teaches, but conditional (Matt. 7:21; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9,10)
- C. God "*chose us in Him*" (Eph. 1:3,4)
 - 1. "*Him*" has reference to Christ (Eph. 1:3-6)
 - 2. In Christ "*...we have redemption through His blood...*" (Eph. 1:7; Matt. 26:28)
- D. God chooses us based upon our choice to be in Christ
 - 1. God has predestined, or chosen, the place of salvation – His Son
 - 2. We choose if we will obey His conditions of salvation which places us in Christ
 - 3. We are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27)
- E. Man has a free will (Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 26:28; II Cor. 5:11; Rev. 22:17)
- F. Do you think of yourself as a part of a chosen race?

VII. CHRISTIANS ARE A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS (I Pet. 2:5,9)

- A. Christ is our High Priest (Heb. 4:14)
- B. Unlike physical Israel, we offer up "*spiritual sacrifices*" (I Pet. 2:5, Heb. 13:15)
- C. We offer our "*bodies a living sacrifice*" (Rom. 12:1)
- D. Do you think of yourself as a priest of God?

VIII. CHRISTIANS ARE "A HOLY NATION" (I Pet. 2:9)

- A. We are sanctified, set apart, by the blood of Christ (I Cor. 1:2; I Thess. 4:7; Heb. 10:10)
- B. God demands that Christians be "holy in all manner of living" (I Pet.1:15,16)
 - 1. Are you holy in: thought; words; dress; what you see and hear; motive; actions; etc.?
(Matt. 15:18-20) (Give examples)
 - 2. Are you worldly or holy? (Jn. 17:16,17; I Jn. 2:15-17)
- C. Do you act like you are a member of a holy nation?

IX. CHRISTIANS ARE "A PEOPLE FOR GOD'S OWN POSSESSION" (I Pet. 2:9)

- A. We are "*the people of God*" (I Pet. 2:10)
- B. By God's grace, He made us "*His own special people*" (I Pet. 2:9 NKJV)
- C. We are God's "*inheritance*" (Eph. 1:11,18; I Cor. 15:24)
- D. Jesus died that He might "*purify for Himself His own special people*" (Titus 2:14)
- E. If you are a Christian, do you realize that you are a child of the Most High God?

CONCLUSION: This is the most blessed relationship that one could ever enjoy! Are you a part of the "*elect race*"; "*royal priesthood*"; "*holy nation*"; and, "*His own special people*"? Don't you want to be a member of God's own family? You are not a member of spiritual Israel unless you have been baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins. (Acts 22:16) We are "*born again*" when we are baptized into God's spiritual family. (Jn. 3:3-5) If you are a Christian, does your life reflect the nature of God? Remember who you are!

~ Don Hastings ~