

**Revelation**  
**A Wednesday Night Bible Study**

Lesson #72  
3/05/2008

**Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 8**  
**19:21-20:10**

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**God's Holiness and the Nation of Israel**

**God's holiness, as prophetically presented through His relationship with the nation of Israel, will be expressed more fully in the Millennial Kingdom.**

Thus, the holiness of God, His most basic attribute, which is expressed in a limited way through His relationship with the earthly nation of Israel, is more fully expressed in **His Theocracy in His Millennial Kingdom**. God's earthly **Millennial Kingdom** then provides us a picture of **God's Theocratic rule in heaven**. As such, by studying how God used Israel to exhibit His holy character on this earth, we get a glimpse, not only of the **Millennial Kingdom**, but also of what heaven is like.

God's laws and commandments were *"pure"* (Psalm 119:140). They were distinguished from all other earthly laws, i.e., holy. *As such, they were designed to enable Israel to reflect the holiness of God in an unholy world*. Even so, God designed the nation of Israel with specific structure and practices that enabled Israel to portray His heavenly holiness on earth.

When God was organizing Abraham's descendants into a nation, He set the stage for what He wanted to accomplish by telling them: *"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be A PECULIAR TREASURE unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, and A HOLY NATION. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel"* (Exodus 19:5-6).

The phrases *"peculiar treasure," "kingdom of priests,"* and *"holy nation"* with which God described the new nation of Israel prophetically suggest aspects of the Millennial Kingdom. God is holy, i.e., He is uniquely different from and set apart in His nature from anything that is earthly or common to others, though only in heaven can His holiness be expressed without limitation. Every aspect of heaven is characterized by His holiness. Because of God's holiness, heaven is so different from anything on this earth that we have great difficulty trying to comprehend what it is like. The Theocratic Rule of Christ in the Millennial Kingdom is a presentation of God's holiness and a picture of heaven's holy characteristics on earth. To help us understand His holiness, God structured the nation of Israel as a prophetic pattern of the Millennial Kingdom, thus also giving us a glimpse of heaven.

The first phrase, *"peculiar treasure"* emphasizes this. The basic meaning of *"peculiar treasure"* is **"personal property,"** suggesting that God brought the nation of Israel into existence to be His **"personal property"** for the purpose of displaying Who He is, i.e., the holiness of His person, to the world.

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God used this phrase only to describe the uniqueness of Israel in relationship to Him. The four other times God used this phrase He emphasized just how special Israel was to Him: ***“For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth”*** (Deuteronomy 14:2); ***“And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments”*** (Deuteronomy 26:18); ***“For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure”*** (Psalm 135:4); and the last reference has a special connection to the last days; ***“And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him”*** (Malachi 3:17). In this last reference, ***“my jewels”*** is from the same Hebrew word as ***“peculiar treasure.”***

As God selected and organized Israel into a unique nation as His ***“peculiar treasure,”*** He specified their purpose for existing as: ***“And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation ...”*** (Exodus 19:6). Then, when God called Moses up on Mt. Sinai, He provided detailed instructions about how Israel was to function so that they could exhibit His holiness. In reading God's detailed instructions for how Israel was to do this, we discover 308 places in Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy where God explained how Israel's priests represented His holy nature. God was very detailed and specific, even describing the clothing the priests were to wear, how they were to cleanse or sanctify themselves before approaching Him, the food they could eat, and the sacrifices they were to offer in addition to many other things. Most of the book of Leviticus is devoted to describing the functions of the priests and how they were to conduct themselves, distinguishing and separating themselves from, not only the ethnic groups around them, but even from the other Israelites. They were to be holy before the Lord in all matters. **The role of the priests can be summed up in a simple statement — they were to represent the holiness of God.** Everything they did was related to God's holiness.

God brought forth both Moses and his brother Aaron from parents who were both descendants of Levi in preparation for His plans for the priesthood eighty years before He designated the family of Levi to be His priests. (Exodus 2:1-2). In Numbers 1:47-54, God spelled out the duties of the priestly duties of the tribe of Levi: ***“But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.... and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony”*** (Num. 1:50, 53).

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At first, the Levites pleased God by their obedience to Moses while many of the Israelites worshipped the golden calf at Mt. Sinai. *“And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, ... that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day”* (Exodus 32:28-29).

The failure of most of Levi's family to present God's holiness is described in numerous passages such as: 2 Kings 23:5,8,9; 2 Chronicles 29:34; 36:14; Jeremiah 2:8; 5:31; 6:13; 23:11. The failure was so pervasive that God narrowed the family to only one man whom He allowed to represent Him — Zadok:

*“And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity. And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein. It shall be for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of Zadok; which have kept my charge, which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites went astray” (Ezekiel 44:10-14,18).*

Even though the Levites as a whole had been unfaithful to God, their unfaithfulness did not nullify His plans. The service of the priests was still a vital part of God's presentation of His holiness. Though the unfaithful distorted the view of God's holiness to a world in need of understanding the holy nature of God, God still has a plan in His Millennial Kingdom. One of the primary purposes of the Millennial Kingdom, lived under the perfect **Theocracy of Christ's rule**, will be to perfectly exhibit God's holiness on earth. **In heaven, there will be no priests, but in the earthly Millennial Kingdom, there will still be a need for priests to present God's holiness for two reasons: 1) Though no sin will be tolerated in the Millennial Kingdom, the subjects of the Kingdom retain their sin-natures and will need the service of the priests, and 2) God will at last present His holiness on this earth in a way that glorifies Him.**

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