***Every Tribe, Tongue, People, and Nation  
  
RV99-01***

We are studying the executor of the scroll in Revelation 5:6-10. This is segment number seven. The heavenly throne room of God, which John has entered in a vision, bursts out in joyful worship of the Lord Jesus Christ when He takes the scrolls from the Father's hand. The four living creature angels and the 24 human being elders fall down before the Lamb in adoration. The prayer and the hope of the ages that God's kingdom would be set up over all the earth is about to be fulfilled, and thus the joyful response. The throne room, we are told, resounds with a song that expresses the worthiness of Jesus Christ to open the scroll, and to claim its authorization for ruling over the whole earth.

The worthiness of the Lord Jesus is based upon His death on the cross as the sinless, unblemished Lamb of God for the sins of mankind. This worthiness ensures the certainty of salvation to those who trust in Jesus Christ, because His payment is accepted. Because of His worthiness, the payment will do the job. If Jesus Christ were not worthy, our salvation would be in doubt. If would be a matter of question. That's the significance of Christ being praised as worthy to open this scroll. He is worthy because the salvation that He provided really met the enormous demands of the justice of God against human sin.

The Lamb, Jesus Christ, who is the center of this universal praise, is the same person who was once despised and brutalized by the spiritually blinded, but religiously, arrogantly confident men, who arranged for the civil authorities of the Roman Empire to murder Him. You want to remember that the one whom they are exalting in this way in heaven is the one who, in Matthew 27:27, is described in this way: "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand, and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked him, saying, 'Hail King of the Jews.' And they spat upon Him, and they took the reed and smote Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him."

This is the same person, who was so brutalized by human beings, who is now being exalted in praise and adoration in heaven. Again, it's comforting to remember that the experience of the Lord Jesus is the experience of all of us. We are following in His steps. And as we are contemptuously treated, and as we are brutalized perhaps by the world system, it is good to remember that someday we too are going to be heroes. The Lord Jesus is a hero who is deserving of all praise. Because of Him, we too someday will be heroes deserving of praise and honor.

**Redemption**

The Lord Jesus Christ is specifically praised for His work of redemption of sinners. The word "redemption" means "to purchase" or "to deliver by paying a price." This word describes the work of Jesus Christ on the cross in purchasing mankind from the slave market of sin controlled by Satan, which was a universal provision on the part of the Lord.

We looked at three Greek verbs which describe the nature of redemption that give us the full picture of what Revelation 5:9 means when the elders sing the praises of Christ (His worthiness) because He redeemed to God. He redeemed man to God. The first of these words was "agorazo," which expresses the fact that Jesus Christ has paid the price to secure the release of all mankind which was enslaved in Satan's market. The second word was "exagorazo," which stresses the fact that believing sinners are permanently removed from the slave market of Satan, and thus from his authority. The third word was "lutroo," stressing the fact that believers are removed from the slave market of sin, and furthermore, they are set at liberty from Satan's control of them through the sin nature. They are given freedom.

So, here you have three words that expand the concept of redemption from the fact that a price has been paid; the slave has been taken out of the slave market (away from the former slave master's authority); and, he has been given personal freedom so that he can never be enslaved again. The redemption which is in view here in Revelation 5:9 is probably specifically in reference to the church, which is represented by the elders who are singing the praise of the Lamb. So, the things which are described here in verse 9 and 10 are best viewed as referring to that unique body of believers, the church.

The concept of redemption is furthermore expanded by two nouns that are also worth looking at. The first one looks like this: "lutrosis." We have this used, for example, in Luke 1:68: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people." This word means that a payment has been made in the form of a ransom.

We also have this noun used in Hebrews 9:12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Here's the word "lutrosis." Hebrews 9:12 tells us that Jesus Christ used His blood as the payment for the ransom. It describes the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, paying for the sins of the world. Redemption has to do with paying a price to the divine justice of God to satisfy God's justice in order to secure forgiveness of sins.

In Matthew 20:28, we read, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." So, this word "lutrosis" is a noun for redemption. It describes the paying of a price.

One other word that we want to look at is "apolutrosis." The preposition "apo" added to the front of this word "lutrosis" is intensifying. That means not only a ransom paid, but actually freedom received – release from slavery. It describes the release of mankind from Satan's enslavement through the sin nature. We have this word used to describe this idea of freedom (release from Satan's control) in Romans 3:24: "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And this redemption in Christ Jesus is specifically one that brings freedom from the bondage of the sin nature because all of our sins have been forgiven.

Ephesians 1:7 also uses this particular word: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. Ephesians 1:7 stresses the fact that we receive freedom from the control of the sin nature through the blood of Christ, which has brought us forgiveness of sins, and all of that by His grace.

The means for securing redemption from the slave market of sin is faith in Jesus Christ. That's a very important point to understand. This is the point where most religious groups go astray. They might even grasp that redemption is necessary, and they go through various motions in order to secure that redemption – motions which do not receive it. It is important to understand that the mechanics (the means of securing redemption) is faith in Christ as Savior. Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved."

This is the problem when you put people through a ritualistic system, especially a young person. The youngster is reared with the idea that if he performs certain rituals, and if he engages in certain liturgical procedures in a worship service (and this is how he grows up), he connects in his mind that this is how he secures redemption. He doesn't realize that that is a works system – trying to do something, or trying to be something, so that God will accept you. It is very important to understand that what the elders are praising Jesus Christ for is a redemption which is received as a gift – or you don't receive it at all.

Thus, 1 Peter 1:18-19, says, "Forasmuch as you know, that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain manner of life, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. There's no material thing or any human act which can secure this redemption.

**A Kinsman Redeemer**

The act of redemption, we've already seen, requires a kinsman redeemer – a kinsman redeemer in four respects. You cannot have redemption without a kinship redeemer. The redeemer, first of all, must be a kinsman. He must be of human relationship. Jesus Christ, who is God, therefore became humanity. Hebrews 2:14-15 tell us about how He became a human being in order to fulfill the prerequisite of being a human being (humanly related) to be a kinsman redeemer. Secondly, the Redeemer has to be able to pay the price of redemption. Jesus Christ was spiritually alive because he was sinless. Therefore, he was able to pay the penalty of spiritual and physical death for mankind. 1 Peter 1:18-19 describe that. He had the resources with which to pay for our sins. So, a redeemer has to, first of all, be a human being in order to pay for our sins. Secondly, he has to have the means with which to pay what is required. In this case, it was spiritual and physical death.

Third, the redeemer must be personally free from the problem causing the enslavement of the one who is to be redeemed. Since the Lord Jesus had no sin nature and was sinless, He was qualified. One sinner cannot save another sinner. One slave cannot redeem another slave. Hebrews 4:15 and 1 Peter 2:22 tell us about this requisite. A redeemer himself must be free from the thing for which redemption must be paid. And number four is that the redeemer must be willing to pay the price of redemption. Jesus Christ had to be willing to die to pay the price of spiritual and physical death. Matthew 16:21 and John 10:17:18 describe the fact that He was willing to pay the price.

So, the act of redemption requires a qualified redeemer – a kinsman redeemer. He has to be a human being; he has to be able to pay the price of redemption; he has to be personally free of the problem that is to be paid for; and, he must be willing to pay the price.

So, the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world as a human being for the explicit purpose of giving His life as a ransom for many. That's what Mark 10:45 declares to us: "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

This redemption, which is provided by Jesus Christ, is the basis for a believing sinner's justification. It is the redemption that enables us to be justified. Romans 3:24 says, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." In the Roman Catholic system, people are taught that they must earn the right to be justified. They, by their works, will gain the merit to qualify them to receive justification. But the Word of God says that the basis of our justification is the redemption which Jesus Christ has already provided. There's nothing more to be added to it.

The redemption that Jesus Christ has provided, and for which He is praised, is a twofold application. It has, first of all, a present application in terms of the fact that our sins have been forgiven. Redemption brings about forgiveness of sins. Therefore, Ephesians 1:7 says, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace."

But there is a future application to redemption, which is very important for us to remember. That is a resurrected body free of sickness and of decay. So, Romans 8:23 says, "And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption; that is, the redemption of our body." Sometime in the future, our bodies are also going to be redeemed. In the present, we have the effects of redemption through the forgiveness of sins; and, in the future, we have the effects of redemption through the resurrection of the body.

Job understood this in Job 19:25-26: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the last day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, I shall see God." That's a tremendous statement when you realize that this is probably the first book of the Bible that was written – the oldest expression of theology to be found anywhere in an authoritative way in the Word of God. Job understood that redemption meant that, in the future, his body would be resurrected.

So, it doesn't really matter what happens to the body. In time, it's all going to be brought together because of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That's one thing that these people were praising God for in heaven. The elders were singing praise because that is our normal, natural way of functioning with a human body. These elders at this time were playing their "kitharas" in their spirit and souls, but they didn't have their bodies, which is interesting. You can still sing and you can still make music even without your body. But I'm sure that these fellows were thinking, "Just think of how we will be able to play once we get all of our human fingers back to work these ten strings. We'll be able to really do something." But in any case, they were rejoicing for the fact that they were going to, again, be complete human beings in spirit, soul, and body.

So, the full effects of our redemption will be in the future. That point, of course, is the rapture. Ephesians 4:30 says, "And don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption." Our future is sealed until that point in time when our bodies are redeemed.

Furthermore, the redemption of mankind was secured at the cost of the great personal humiliation of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is something that is very hard for us to enter into – the humiliating treatment which He received for our redemption. But it was done so that we could exchange our humiliation for His righteousness. 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For you have made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Then Philippians 2:6-8 says, "Who being in the form of God did not think it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." I'm sure you recognize that that verse explains the doctrine of the kenosis – that the Lord Jesus Christ paid the price of removing the pleasure of His glory, and shielding it, and taking on the role of a human being and a servant.

Finally, we should point out that the Old Testament sacrifices portrayed the redemption of Jesus Christ. That was the whole point of all of those sacrifices. Hebrews 9:15-28 (you may pursue that at your leisure) is a description of how the sacrificial system in the earthly tabernacle was entirely a picture system to portray what Jesus Christ was going to do. That passage tells us that the sacrificial Lamb of the temple was an unblemished male presented as a burnt offering. Jesus Christ was free from the blemish of sin. Hebrews 7:26 declares that: "For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." This is describing Christ as free of all sins. The altar of sacrifice, with its fire in the temple, symbolized Jesus Christ under divine judgment, and suffering in payment for sin. Isaiah 56:4-10 describe that, as well as 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Then God the Father provided His Own Lamb in Jesus Christ, just as he did for Abraham. In Genesis 22:8, Isaac said, "Where's the lamb coming from?" And Abraham said, "God will provide His Lamb." That's what Jesus Christ is. He is God's provision of the Lamb.

So, that's the background of that simple little expression in the word "redeem." It connotes the price paid to remove us from Satan's control and from subjection to the sin nature. Without that redemption, which could only have been provided from outside of ourselves, there is no way to eternal life. So, anybody who tries to come into heaven on any other way except this provision, which could only been provided in this way, is doomed to failure. There's no other way. And it's no wonder that these elders are standing there in heaven praising the Lord Jesus Christ for this redemption. Without it, there was no other way for us.

So, coming back to Revelation 5:9, we read again, "And they sang a new song, saying, 'You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open (to break) its seals, for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God.'" The word "us" there – "has redeemed us to God" – is not in some of the important manuscripts. We need to perhaps understand a word like "men" ("You have redeemed men to God", or "people to God") in order to smooth out the translation. "You have purchased people to God by Your blood." The "us" may be legitimate, and it may refer to the 24 elders who are doing the singing (who are speaking in terms of themselves) personally at this point. That's one of those places in the Greek Bible where manuscripts are on both sides, and it is tough to decide exactly whether the elders are speaking about themselves specifically, or whether they are speaking about mankind in general. In any case, the idea would be the same. This is specifically to God. It is *the* God. Those who are redeemed belong to God the Father.

Then we have explained the means of this redemption. It says, "By." This is the Greek preposition "en," which is the indicating the instrument of redemption. We are redeemed "By Your" (referring to Jesus Christ) "hima" – His blood. This word here refers to the actual blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It refers to that which His humanity had in His veins, and which was shed to an enormous degree in the process of the crucifixion, from the punishment to the nailing on the cross itself. This shedding of blood led to the physical death of Jesus Christ in payment for the sins of mankind. We may translate this as: "And has purchased unto God, by means of Your blood, men." There is no hesitancy in God's throne room to sing hymns extolling the blood of Jesus Christ as the price of our salvation.

I've already told some of you the incident of the little church that I used to attend as a teenager in the city of Chicago. I was reared in a denominational, liturgical, structured system, and I learned the catechism, and I went through the answers. Then as a teenager, I began getting some information from a little church on the west side of Chicago (a little Baptist church). I had joined the Boy Scouts, and began learning how to play a baritone horn in the band.

Suddenly, one day, sitting up in my room, I was overwhelmed and struck by the issue of my personal relationship to Jesus Christ, and coming into salvation. I was just there all by myself. I didn't fully realize, until I looked back later, what the transaction was that I was going through between myself and God at that point, on the basis of information that I had finally gathered. This was information which I had not gathered from all the ceremonies, and all the liturgies, and all the catechisms, and all the systems.

The thing that was interesting was that that little church, which became the avenue of truth for me, only existed because many years (as much as a quarter of a century) earlier, there was a young man who now was quite an older man in that little church ministry. He was a man who was then deacon. In his younger days, he used to belong to a very large church in the city of Chicago. He sang in the choir. One Sunday morning, they had their first service with a brand new pastor. This pastor that they had called was a graduate of the Theological School at the University of Chicago. Of course, it was a Baptist-oriented school, because it was founded by John D. Rockefeller, the Baptist. But of course, it was thoroughly liberal.

The pastor announced the closing hymn, in the course of which he said, "We will now sing this hymn, but we will not sing the last verse, because it refers to our salvation by the shedding of the blood of Christ. We understand now that that is not the way God deals with us. That is a paganistic older viewpoint, and it does not express the truth." He said, "We won't sing it that verse." Well, the congregation sang that hymn and skipped that verse.

They were about to be dismissed when this young man stood up in the choir and said, "I'd like to ask our new pastor a question before we're dismissed. I'd like to ask him what he meant by the fact that we didn't sing the last verse because it praised the blood of Christ which we don't believe in anymore." So, he explained it. And that young man said, "Well, if that's what this church really believes in now, and that's not what the Word of God teaches, then I'm removing my church membership now." And he walked out of that choir, and several young adults walked out with him. They went to the west side of Chicago, and they began that little church upon that principle – that the blood of Jesus Christ was the key to eternal life. And while that large church in the city of Chicago was ashamed to sing about the blood of Christ, there was one man who knew that in heaven, they were not ashamed to be praising the blood of Jesus Christ.

As the result of that act, I came to salvation, as well as scores (and perhaps hundreds and thousands) of others. Who knows the ripple from that man who few know, but who stood up that one day and set in motion a chain reaction which is exploding through Berean tapes and other agencies to this day. The blood of Christ is important.

So, don't be bowled over by liberal thinking, and don't be sidetracked by portrayals and images that supposedly are honoring the person of Jesus Christ, but which dilute the fact that the issue is that He did die. He died spiritually, and it took the shedding of His physical blood to take His life to pay for our sins.

So, the praise here is that: "You have redeemed men to God the Father by means of Your blood." The extent of this salvation is then described. He says, "It's out of." That is this Greek preposition "ek:" "Out of every." The word "every" is "pas." This word refers to "every variety of a class of things." He is going to name several classes of human beings in an attempt, in a literary way, to convey the fact that no one is excluded from salvation. "Pas" plus means that everybody is in the confines of God's provision. But it also indicates something more. For these classes that he is going to mention, there is nothing outside of this divine provision. All of these classes are limited to salvation by that means alone.

**Every Tribe, Tongue, People, and Nation**

First of all, it says, "Every kindred." The Greek word looks like this: "phule." This refers to "a clan" or "a tribe of people" on earth. So, every tribal group of human beings is included. Furthermore: "Every tongue." This is the word "glossa." Here it refers to a spoken language of mankind, so that every language group is included in this provision of redemption. The confusion of languages at Babel is what caused the division of the human race. So, "tongues" is a way of including every division of the human race. Furthermore, every "laos" – every people. This refers to a group of human beings who are of the same race, so every racial group is included in this redemption provision. Finally, every "ethnos" referring to "nations." Every national entity (every nationality) is included, in all of their various geographical locations, in this salvation.

So, you have a fourfold enumeration (tribe, tongue, people, and nation) to symbolically indicate that all of the inhabitants of the earth are included. Redemption applies to representatives of every grouping of people on the earth. Notice what it says: "That by Your blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, You have redeemed."

Some zealous missionary types have taken this verse and said, "You see, this is why we must get out and be missionaries, because this verse tells us that in heaven, God is going to have people from every kindred, tongue, people, tribe, group, nation, and the whole bit. There are some places in the world where there isn't a single person who has been born again in a certain tribe, or in a certain language group. How is Jesus Christ going to be able to return if these people don't get the gospel so that we can get somebody saved in that tribe; somebody saved in that language group; somebody saved in that particular national entity; and, somebody saved in that particular racial group?"

Well, of course, the falsity of that idea, that Jesus Christ cannot come because there are some tribes that haven't had somebody saved to them, is answered by the fact that every infant that has died has been covered by the grace of God, and has been placed in the family of God. So, every infant that has died in all of these various categories (and many have) are already covered. So, the truth is that at this very moment, there are people who are in the body of Christ, who are in the church, who have been saved through the redemption provided by Jesus Christ from every one of these categories. So, the Lord Jesus Christ can indeed come immediately. This provision has already been fulfilled. The reference is particularly applicable to the church as the body of Christ here, which is made up of Jews and gentiles worldwide.

The point is that anybody who is not a member of the body of Christ, the universal church, will spend eternity in the lake of fire. Entrance into the body of Christ is upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ. There is no other religious system in the world, apart from Christianity, that has any merit whatsoever. None of them can guide a person to eternal life. You want to be bold to make that statement. You want to understand that if a person is not part of the church (and I mean the universal church – the body of Christ), he is headed for the lake of fire. I don't care what great nation he comes from. I don't care what great denomination he comes from. I don't care what great racial group he comes from, or what great language group he comes from. If he is not a member of the body of Christ, his religious system is taking him into the lake of fire.

**The First Amendment**

Do not get the idea (again) that our First Amendment was a provision to equalize all religious viewpoints. Again, those who wrote the amendment explained what they meant. They meant that they were not going to permit our country to establish a church where people could be taxed to support it. And secondly, it meant that the government would not in any way be able to prevent Christianity from being expressed in a variety of ways. They meant Christianity. They did not mean for Islam to be expressed in a variety of ways, or Shintoism, or Buddhism, or anything else in the world. What they meant was Christian denominations, and that's what they meant by free exercise of religion. They explained the word "religion." They said that: "By religion, we mean the denominations of Christianity, and we don't want one denomination being permitted to be dominant over all the other denominations so that the rest of them cannot exercise their viewpoint. The Methodists are going to be protected from the Baptists; the Baptists from the Methodists; and, so on down the line. Everybody within the Christian group will be free to exercise his conscience before God. That's what they were protecting. They were not saying that every religious viewpoint is equally valid.

This passage is telling us very clearly that there is a redemption that the Lord Jesus Christ has provided, and we have seen that, at great personal expense, the price was paid. Until you have this redemption (until you entered the benefits of it), there is no hope for you. Only Christianity will take you into eternal life – nothing else. All of the religious systems of the world have no value with God.

It's easy to forget that. When you listen to some Islam praising God, and talking about God's power, and thanking God, and exalting God, you say, "Boy, it's kind of hard to say that this fellow is headed for hell." Well, that's exactly where he's going. The redemption applies only to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior. So, when the Muslim gets up and says, "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet," you know that he has doomed himself to the lake of fire.

Furthermore, let's put it into the category of groups who view themselves as Christian. Those which seek to enter the body of Christ, the church, by some good works system or some ritual system, have no merit with God. Those who claim to be Christian, and who generally are referred to as Christian, have no merit with God. The Roman Catholic "salvation by sacramental works system" is nothing with God. It is zero. It has no merit with God. It has no connection with God. God calls it a harlot church, and it's going to be destroyed by Him.

So, don't be deceived, again, that here is a religious system with sincere people who are denying redemption which has been provided complete by Jesus Christ on the basis of His blood, and which can only be received as a gift of grace. If that system is in any way compromised, then you stepped out of the way that God will deal with you. You can go ahead and kid yourself about your dead relatives, and your departed friends, and their religious enthusiasm, and their religious zeal. But if they were counting on something other than a redemption that Christ has provided, at great personal cost to Himself, and which they have accepted, they're doomed. And they may have had the grandest, biggest funeral in all the world. It's all show, and it's all meaningless. They're in the agony of Hades at this point. All adherents who may call themselves Christians, but who seek a redemption on the basis of some personal merit or action, do not have a chance.

**A Kingdom**

Then we come to Revelation 5:10. Verse 10 is a very tough verse to explain, because it pops enormous words with enormous connotations to them. We come right off the bat to one of the most thrilling words that perhaps we have found in the book of the Revelation yet. Verse 10 says, "And has made us unto our God a kingdom of priests." We need a little correction of the translation. The word "and" is the Greek conjunction "kai," introducing honors of God which He has bestowed upon the redeemed. The elders here are now speaking objectively of the church. In verse 9, they may have meant "redeemed *us* to God," speaking about themselves personally, but now they're going to be speaking about the church objectively: "And has made *them* onto our God a kingdom of priests."

The word "has made" is the Greek word "poieo." This word means "to construct" or "to produce something." The idea here is to constitute Christians as something. It is aorist tense. At the point of the redemption established by Jesus Christ, Christians were constituted in certain relationships. It is active. Jesus Christ established this for them. It's indicative – a statement of fact. "Us" here is wrong in the translation. It is the Greek word "autos." This is the third person masculine; that is, it should be "them:" "And He has redeemed *them* to God. It is referring here to the body of Christ, the universal church. It is "*the* God:" "You have redeemed them to God the Father."

**Royal Power**

"You have constituted them unto God the Father a kingdom." Here is a tremendous word: "basileia." This word denotes "royal power" which is exercised in some dominion. All believers in the church age are joined by the Holy Spirit to form a spiritual kingdom of God, and are constituted thereby a royal family. I think immediately you can see the depth of potential of this word. You are a spiritual kingdom. You are not part of Israel's Old Testament Messianic kingdom. You'll have a relationship to that, but you believers are a kingdom. The word "kingdom" means "exercising royal authority." You are nobility. You are royalty. The Bible makes that very clear, and the implications of that are enormous.

Have you ever stopped and thought to yourself: if we are a kingdom; if we are aristocrats; and, if we are the royalty of God, what does that mean concerning our personal lifestyle and our personal conduct? What does that mean concerning the education of our children? What does that mean concerning how we rear our children in our homes? Did you ever stop and think how Prince Charles was reared? How was his mother before him reared? From the moment they were born? Have you ever stopped to think what all of them have to learn in order to conduct themselves as royalty, and to conduct themselves as aristocrats?

Historically, aristocrats are looked upon with certain contempt, but that's because they become corrupt aristocrats. Aristocrats are the people who make the world go round. It is the nobility who have the capacity; who have the training; who have the intellect; who have the discipline; who have the devotion; and, who have the courage in order to make things happen, and to bring the world into line with God's divine viewpoint and blessing. It is the nobility, historically, who brought great blessing to humanity.

However, the problem was with their heirs, and how those heirs were treated. The heirs came along and they were slobs. They acted like dogs instead of acting like nobility. Somehow the training had been missed. Somehow the vision had been missed on the part of their heirs. The result then was a nobility which brought corruption to those over whom they had authority.

But let's establish, first of all, that this word "basileia," declaring you and I to be part of a spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the body of Christ in the church age is clearly declared in the Word of God. Romans 14:17 says, "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." It is the believer who is indwelt by God the Holy Spirit who has the capacity to develop righteousness; who has the ability to enjoy peace; and, who knows how to experience real happiness (joy).

Colossians 1:13: "Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Yes, you are part of a kingdom.

You are not part of the Messianic Kingdom of the Jews, but you are a kingdom. 1 Corinthians 4:24: "For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." You are part of a kingdom that has at its disposal enormous power. 1 Peter 2:9 says, "But you are a chosen generation: a royal priesthood." The priesthood of God is another category. We are priests who possess royalty.

Then in Revelation 1:6, we read, "And has made us a kingdom of priests unto God and His father," and so on.

So, this church age royalty is a distinct kingdom from anything else in the Word of God. It is a royalty that functions under certain principles, and under certain guidelines. There are certain things which are fitting for this royalty, and certain things which are not fitting for this royalty. We begin with establishing that fact – that one of the things for which Jesus Christ was praised was that, wonder of wonders, He had taken those of us who are believers in the church age – not in the dispensation of the Law, and not in any other dispensation, but in the church age only. God established a kingdom – people who possess royalty.

Next time, we're going to delve into this: the implications of this for us personally; the implications of this in our treatment of one another; the implications of this in Christian education; the implications of this in our family training; and, the implications of this in our social conduct, just all the way down the line. I trust that it will have an ennobling effect upon us.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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