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| Topic | A Kingdom Of Priests |
| Reference  | Exodus 19: 6 |
| Date | 5 June 2016 |
| Speaker | Dr Greg Wilton |

[**1**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-1.htm) On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.

[**2**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-2.htm) They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain,

[**3**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-3.htm) while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:

[**4**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-4.htm) You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.

[**5**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-5.htm) Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-6.htm) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

I believe I was 13 years old at the time in 1996 the Olympics. These Olympics were special because it was roughly give or take about two hours south of where I was living at the time, living in South Carolina and two hour south of Spartanburg, South Carolina was Atlanta and there was great anticipation particularly for that region in a time that a country gets to host an Olympics, the Olympics becomes even more hyped. In 1996 opening ceremony we were all watching with anticipation about who was going to light the Olympic flame, because the light makes its journey all the way from Greece towards its destination and we were wondering about who was going to light the flame in it. For the most part was kept as a bit of secret, some people might have known and Mohammed Ali came to light the torch. It was quite a phenomenal moment, so he was there and so I just have that picture in that moment in my mind concerning the 96 Olympics of all the people that you could chose to represent the United States at that particular time the committee decided that it would be Mohammed Ali. He was the best of the best in boxing, there were so many controversies surrounding him. They decided to allow Mohammed Ali to represent United States before the global stage in the Olympics.

I am switching subjects off of that but I am baffled and flabbergasted at how we choose representatives to represent us. So I am quite befuddled by the election process in United States right now. It is not about the fact that you have Trump or Clinton, it is about the fact for me that you know when you vote and those of us who are Americans we do contrary to what you might be hearing at least. When you vote, it is not so much about just saying I like this person or I like that person, the vote can be much more deeper than that because in essence it is saying I want Donald Trump to represent America to the world. I want Hillary Clinton to be our spokesperson and representative.

People choose other peoples to represent about their beliefs which they have never met or know personally, as nowadays Muslims choose their scholars to represent them or defend them. Because yes we need to function in a world in which others and we entrust others with the privilege of representing us whether it be church leadership, whether it be somebody who might be able to articulate a little bit better when it comes to the faith but I want to see the importance that the scriptures declare that the people of Israel are a kingdom of priests and how that has ramifications for you and how you are right now a representative of Jesus Christ. People around you are looking at you and some of you want to deny this as much as possible but they are looking at you and they are making judgments about Jesus based upon you. They are making judgments about the Christian faith based upon you. This is in essence why the scriptures beautifully declare only one time and then it is tagged onto it with the New Testament perspective that the people of Israel and we believe that can be applicable to those of us who are in faith in Christ that we are a kingdom of priests.

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/exodus/19-6.htm) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

God delivered Israel out of bondage, out of slavery in Egypt that God meets with Moses in the burning bush incident and he goes and God sets them free. There are even the ten plagues that take place and the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart that is happening and how God is receiving glory and getting the glory in this entire process and now they are rescued and delivered and they are on their way and they cross the Red Sea in a miraculous way and they are now finally getting back to this place where they will in essence establish this unique relationship with God and as a result coming out of Egypt they have three consequences. What are these consequences? The consequences as you read actually with verse 5 and verse 6 is that:

1. They are a treasured possession.
2. A kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Now if we Google priest we will get a catholic version of a priest. I do not want to our modern understanding of priest upon to this text. In fact I want us to also see that the priesthood had not yet been established. So there is really not even a mindset of frame by which even the people of Israel could understand this properly. There are some ways in which they could understand it. They could understand it in a way in which the patriarchs kind of performed already priestly duties that they sacrificed. There are some sacrificial stories that we hear concerning Abraham, concerning Isaac and Jacob about sacrifice, so we know that sacrifice is related to the priesthood and then they also interact with others who are performing the role of priests, all the priests of Egypt and the multiplicity of gods that they have in Egypt and how they are in essence performing as representatives of those gods of Egypt and then the priest of Melchizedek as well that story that we read about in the book of Genesis. Ultimately we cannot really impose what we know now today concerning priests and we have to backup just a little bit in order to understand may be what God is trying to help the people of Israel at this moment in salvation history on how they are to function as a kingdom of priests. This is really everything to do with how Israel will represent themselves with respect to the nations. This is why it is a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. This is a nation in essence that would be set apart in a unique way in comparison with other nations as holy and as priestly Israel will bring the nations to have a knowledge of the true God in light of all the falsehoods that are circulating. So priesthood for the Old Testament at least provides two meanings:

1. It means belonging to God in a particular way. That is what it means to be a priest, a kingdom of priests. Belonging to God in a particular, private, personal way. There is this unique relationship, a covenant of sorts where it is not just loosely this and may be that, it is a direct connection, one to another. It is the same way in which a symbolic of wedding ring is. It is the same way in which there is a unique devotion and when it means that I am married to my wife there is devotion to her and to her alone regardless of the rest of the field, regardless of what else is around. She is my woman; she is my rib in the spirit of Eve. That is what it means in essence to be a kingdom of priests. Now this is also important because some of us are translating that as, ‘okay to belong to God in a particular way means to separate myself’. In a way it does mean that but there has to be a reason by which we have become separate and particularly belong to God, not just so we can go around in our lives as some of us are prone to do, separate and say ‘this is us and that you and the two will never mix’. The reason that God has declared the people of Israel to be a kingdom of priests is that they may serve God in his purposes and so that is why you see this wonderful interplay and I hope you are feeling it in your life too. I hope you are seeing it in your life that this is what you have, you have a particular devotion to the lord, a unique relationship with Him but the cause of that unique relationship with him is not just so that you can be separate to everybody else, it is so that you can serve God’s purposes and God’s purposes is that he would be a blessing to the whole world. Because in the other sense of this it is kind of like the first.
2. The second is being used by God for a particular purpose, a special purpose. The purpose of God, a priest does not all of a sudden create in their own minds and say, ‘okay I am going to create the purposes by which I am designed, the priests exist to have this unique relationship with God so that you may be used for his purposes’ that is the spirit of Genesis 12 and the patriarch Abraham. Genesis chapter 12

[**1**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/12-1.htm) Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.

[**2**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/12-2.htm) And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

[**3**](http://biblehub.com/genesis/12-3.htm) I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So this is an essence how we say a kingdom of priests at least from the Old Testament perspective, however Israel is commanded to be a kingdom of priests and it is met primarily with failure. In Exodus Jews just experienced the mighty hand of God delivering them from Pharaoh out of Egypt with signs and wonders and miracles and they are receiving this special covenant with the Lord and they immediately stumble.

The failure that is the golden calf, they were waiting for Moses, told Aaron to make an image for them, an idol so we can worship that and that’s what take place and it is not a good picture. This is really important from an Old Testament perspective, being a kingdom of priests only means belonging to God and being used by God then Israel becomes a laughing stock to the nations because of their obvious failure to do so. So remember what I said about a kingdom of priests especially from the Old Testament perspective, belonging to God and being used by God for a special purpose. If that is all it was about you and I are pathetic.

So we want to represent God so well but we all fail in representing God. We are failing with the overall perception of how you are actually representing our church. This is really important for us to see as it drives us to Jesus. If all the kingdom of priest meant was good behavior and good works then we are the laughing stock of Malaysia. People should ridicule us and make fun of us but that is not where a kingdom of priest ends. This is why a kingdom of priest and this is where we are going to start to close right here this is why kingdom of priests needs to be seen from a New Testament perspective.

How do we see this?

1. Christ is the fulfillment of God’s intention for Israel. When I read Genesis 12 and I am reading about Abraham, Abram becoming Abraham I am seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of that statement and when I am reading the three consequences right there in Exodus 19 in verse 5 and verse 6 that we are treasured possession that we are a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, I ultimately see its fulfillment in Christ. He is the treasured possession. He is the kingdom of priest and enables us to do likewise and he is that holy nation because we are not holy but Jesus is holy and he imputes his righteousness upon those who believe and follow him and because He is holy we therefore are holy that is why we follow Jesus.
2. The church in Christ is the kingdom of priests for the sake of the nations. The church is the true final Israel called to proclaim the excellences of God who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. There is a parallel of being called out of slavery in Exodus and coming now to the Mount of God. Now there is this parallel that we see that wonderful passage in 1-Peter 2:

[**9**](http://biblehub.com/1_peter/2-9.htm) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

[**10**](http://biblehub.com/1_peter/2-10.htm) Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

So all of us who are in Christ have a challenge today that is reflective of scripture both in the Old and in the New, be kingdom of priests. We may not say that is not for you, you and I have been called to be a kingdom of priests and when we are a kingdom of priests we proclaim the excellences of Him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. God saved us because He loves us and He saved us for others.

It does point to good behavior and good works but we point to Jesus in all of our lives that is what we do. This task is impossible but Christ in you can fulfill it, Christ in you who is the hope of glory he can fulfill it. That is why it is so important to have a relationship with Jesus. We must trust upon Jesus and be saved, repent of your sin and turn to God, give your life to him, because when you do that Jesus is your representative and you may properly function as a kingdom of priests.