

The Way Of Our Lord Is Being Restored

Reality 27. The Older Testament Is Your Starting Point For Your True Identity in Christ

Your identity must be according to how our Lord Jesus identifies you

In Reality 26 we emphasized biblical trust in your relationship with Father God and Lord Jesus. Not only does our heavenly Father command (and deserve!) *emunah* trust from His children toward Him. It's also the kind of obedient trust which was put into action by a number of our spiritual ancestors in the Older Testament even in the face of seemingly impossible situations. In other words, their **biblical identity** was found in what they accomplished in their trusting obedience to God.

When you think about such men of God like Abraham, Moses, Joshua or David, you probably recall right away their acts of trusting obedience as they carried out God's will. This kind of trust came by the grace God extended to them in choosing them for His purposes. Even today we can identify them as God's own through their obedient trust. And we whom God has chosen by grace today to trust have also been called to an **identity as Christ's own** for lifelong enactment of love-impelled obedience:

“For you have been delivered by grace through trusting, and even this is not your accomplishment but God's gift. You were not delivered by your own actions; therefore no one should boast. For we are of God's making, created in union with the Messiah Jesus for a life of good actions already prepared by God that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10,CJB).

In this Reality we're going to focus on a new facet of your identity in our Lord Jesus, the everlasting High Priest in the order of Melchizedek, identifies the genuinely born again as His royal priesthood (see 1Peter 2:9). You are a *royal* priest because you serve the King of kings. When you come to grips with the centrality of this divine **identity**, your loving service to our Lord day by day will be strengthened. And, your decision to live as a royal priest of our Lord Jesus helps you understand why the Holy Spirit apportions various spiritual gifts to fulfill divine purposes. (More on this next time.) Our Lord Jesus is the High Priest of His beloved, and His personal Headship of you as one of His royal priests is an identity that's grounded in intimate love.

But know this: For centuries anti-Semitic theology and Nicolaitan clergy systems have thwarted Christians from embracing and fulfilling their royal priesthood as the Holy Spirit would empower them to. The good news: This thwarting is coming to an end!!!

The High Priest is served by the royal priesthood of the genuinely born again

In the Older Testament the High Priest played a key role in the Israelites' Levitical religious system. He intervened and mediated between God and His people. Acting as their representative before God, he offered sacrifices on behalf of the people to reconcile them to God, because *“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins”* (Hebrews 9:22). The High Priest was assisted by other priests who were assigned various duties in the Levitical priesthood. And when our Lord Jesus offered Himself on the cross once and for all and rose again, He became our everlasting High Priest:

“Having therefore a great High Priest Who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but a High Priest Who in every respect having been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us

then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Our Lord Jesus is our everlasting High Priest, not of the Levitical priesthood, but instead in the order of Melchizedek. His eternal Priesthood once and for all **ended the Levitical priesthood and the laws pertaining to it**.

"If perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should arise in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? . . . And it is far more evident if another Priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, one Who has become a priest not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning his ancestry, but according to the power of an indestructible life" (Hebrews 7:11,15,16).

Both Testaments address this Melchizedek Priesthood: *"The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, 'You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek'"* (Psalm 110:4, repeated in Hebrews 7:21). The Levitical priesthood was still functioning when David wrote this prophetic Psalm. But God foresaw the time when the Levitical priesthood would be replaced by the Melchizedek priesthood of Jesus and served by the royal priesthood of all the genuinely born again.

A lot is written about the Melchizedek Priesthood of Jesus in the Book of Hebrews, more than we'll be discussing in this Reality. So if you'd like a more comprehensive understanding of the Melchizedek Priesthood, please read: TODAY! What Would Jesus Be Doing If He Were You?, [**Insight 5. Jesus Christ, Lord, High Priest, and ONLY Head of His Body**](#); and/or, Discussing How To Restore The Early Church: [**A Hebraic Perspective: A Priesthood Change: From Levitical To Melchizedek's**](#)

A new High Priest, Jesus, necessitated a new priesthood to assist Him. Peter clearly understood this priestly role as he announces to us who love and serve Jesus as Lord, *"But you [the genuinely born again] are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the praises of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Peter 2:9). In the eyes of our Lord Jesus and the hosts of heaven, you are a royal priest for Him Who is High Priest, King of kings and Lord of lords. It's vital that you understand yourself in this **identity of royal service**.*

YOU HAVE DIVINE PURPOSES TO FULFILL!

The role of your royal priesthood is rooted in the Older Testament: *"For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 2:7). The role of the priest was one of intervention in the lives of the people of Israel. This role of intervention is given to each royal priest of our High Priest Jesus and is crucial in ensuring that the Kingdom of our Lord is being expanded. It's in the vital role of intervening that Jesus sends His own forth:*

- *"Calling the Twelve to Him, He sent them out two by two" (Mark 6:7).*
- *"After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two" (Luke 10:1).*
- *"All authority in heaven and on earth was given to Me. GOING therefore, DISCIPLE ALL THE NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE all things that I COMMANDED you; and behold, I am WITH YOU all the days until the completion of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20).*

As His royal priest you are His intervener, His personal ambassador of His love who bears His burden—the salvation of mankind. (See John 3:16-18.) Our Lord commands His own, “Going [wherever you are], and disciple.” By this command He means for you to intervene, leading others to Him and teaching them His ways so that by grace they might become a new creation and serve Him as His royal priests. This is how He intends for His Kingdom to be expanded.

You've been robbed of a vital role in your loving service in and to our Lord Jesus by not being taught the Older Testament backdrop behind being royal priests! How tragic that anti-Semitic theology has confined the intent of Matthew 28:18-20 to professional trained missionaries rather than to all the royal priests of King Jesus to make disciples as they go about their lives. If you're genuinely born again please don't allow yourself to be identified as a *non-intervener*.

Our Lord's Headship as High Priest and your royal priesthood is your true identity in Him!

✦ **To recap what we've shared:** As a royal priest who is serving our High Priest, you reproduce your (*emunah*) trust by being a living example. How? By your godly and obedient way of life you enact because you love your Lord, and by your instruction in intervening in the life of others to put God's Word into action. You do this because you love them as our Lord Jesus does. In these ways you reproduce the work of Christ in you that's being done by His grace through His Spirit (see Philippians 3:17; 2Timothy 3:10).

In carrying out our role as royal priests, the genuinely born again need our Lord's heartfelt burden for the lost He so greatly loves. And living as a royal priest is a far more dynamic **identity of trust** than passively calling yourself “Christian” or clinging to a denominational allegiance. Our Lord tells His own that wherever we are in our daily lives and whomever we encounter, we are to intervene in their lives as His loving ambassadors as the indwelling Spirit directs us (see Acts 8:4-12). An unbelieving world living in spiritual darkness depends on every royal priest under our High Priest to do this!

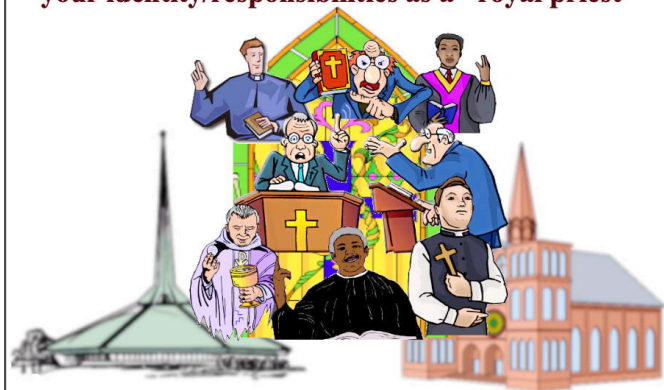
“All this is from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God” (2Corinthians 5:18-20).

Don't allow the resuscitated Levitical priesthood to rob you of being a royal priest!

The genuinely born again are beloved royal priests serving King Jesus as your High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. This divine relationship exists in total opposition to the **resuscitated Levitical priesthood** which is the basis for the Nicolaitan*** clergy system in both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. In order for the Nicolaitan clergy system to stay entrenched, their ecclesiastical decision makers downplay or ignore the Melchizedek Priesthood of Jesus and the royal priesthood of all who belong to Him.

***Nicolaitan means “to conquer the people.” The first part of the word refers to *nikos*, to conquer

Anti-Semitic theology & Nicolaitan dominance contrived the “laity” identity to obliterate your identity/responsibilities as a “royal priest”



or have victory over. The middle of the word is derived from *laos*, which means “the people”. The commonly used term “laity” is derived from it. So the Nicolaitan system eliminates the royal priesthood of the genuinely born again. They are relegated to being passive spectators, “laity” dominated by clergy who lord their position over them. We're warned about Nicolaitanism in Revelation 2:6,15,16. For a more complete understanding of the widespread injurious effect that Nicolaitanism has had on Christianity, please read [*Chapter 2, Evil Nicolaitanism Subjugates Our Father's Children*](#) in our free online book, *Pastoring By Elders*.

We strongly encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit to instill in you the **identity of being a royal priest of our Lord Jesus**, and then empower you to live as His royal ambassador. In our next Reality we'll discuss how you can walk in this spiritually empowered privilege and responsibility. Please don't let your divine identity as a royal priest be devalued to the role of a spectator “layperson”. In your innermost being, identify yourself as divine royalty in Christ with the priestly office of representing the High Priest to the world in His love, forgiveness and compassion.