

THEOCRACY

As a result of the superior victory over the coalition army of the Midianites, the men of Israel demanded Gideon to become their ruler – “rule over us (mashal/ kal impv).” (8:22)

We will study our lesson text by the following two homiletical points.

- 8:22 - Request for a new ruler of the theocracy – Gideon
- 8:23 – Reminder of the sovereign ruler of the theocracy – God.

This lesson will study six aspects of the theocracy government of the priest-nation of Israel.

1. Theocracy is not a biblical word but it is a biblical concept (Ps.66: 7) “He rules forever by His power.”

Theocracy consists of two Greek words: theos (God) and kratia (rule). Therefore, theocracy means God rules. This word was coined by the Jewish historian, Josephus, to describe Israel’s government instituted at Mt. Sinai (Ex.19:1-6; 1 Sam.8:6-8).

“Our lawgiver had an eye to none of these, that is, these different forms of governments such as monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, and others of which Josephus had been speaking, but as one might say, using a strained expression, he set forth the national polity as a theocracy, referring the rule and might to God.” (ISBE, vol.5, pg.2965)

“First of all then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.” (1 Tim.2:1-2)

- What form of government was adopted for USA?
- How many representatives do we have in USA congress and senate?
- How many USA congressmen and senators represent Alabama?
- What are the names of the USA Alabama congressman and senator?
- What is the name of the present republican governor of Alabama?

What form of government was Israel subject to when Jesus Christ began his ministry? Do you know why?

2. The constitution of the theocracy of the priest-nation of Israel consisted of three codes. It is contained in the torah section of the Old Testament of the Bible.

“The notion of theocracy is that the constitution of Israel was so arranged that all the organs of government were without any independent power and had simply to announce to execute the will of God as declared by priests and prophets or reduced to writing as a code of law.” (ISBE, vol.5, pg.2965)

Codex I – moral law known as the Ten Commandments (Ex.20). It was kept in the Ark of the Covenant under the mercy seat (Deut.4: 13-14; 9:9-11; Ex.25: 17-22; Heb.9: 4-5; Rev.11: 19/ where is this Ark today?).

Codex II – social law that regulated six area of the life within the priest-nation (Matt.23: 34-40; Rom.13: 8-10; James 2:8-13).

- Covenant relationships (Ex.20:12-21)
- Monotheistic worship (Ex.20:1-11, 22-26)
- Servant Rights (Ex.21:1-11)
- Criminal and civil justice (Ex.21:12-22:15)

- Social justice (Ex.22:16-23:9)
- Seasons and festivals (Ex.23:10-19)

Codex III – sacrificial law known as Shadow Christology (Ex.20: 22-26; 23:31-30:38; Rom.10: 4; 1 Cor.5: 7; 10:1-13; Col.2: 17 Heb.5-10).

3. National stability of Israel's theocracy depended on divine appointment of rulers and the people's spiritual obedience to the word of God (Deut.4: 1-14) Shema; (Deut 4:15-31) Covenant.

Such a theocracy (God ruled) government was unique to Israel as a priest-nation (Deut.4: 34-40; 5:32-33; 6:3-9) Shema.

This was the central issue with the people's selection of Saul as their first king (1 Sam.8: 8; 13:11-14).

4. Rulers were chosen by God to govern the priest-nation under the theocracy.

- Moses and Joshua with ruling elders - Deut.34:9-12; Josh.24:1, 14-16, 19-22, 31
- Judges – Judges 2:6-23
- Monarchy – Judges 21:25; 1 Sam.8:4-20

5. The theocracy of the priest-nation of Israel ceased with the curse of Coniah in preparation of the First Coming of Jesus Christ and the Church age (Jer.22: 24-30).

Jehoiachin (Coniah) was the last of the genealogy of Judah's Davidic kings until Christ (2 Kings 24:8-9; Jer.22:24).

“Paul. A bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh.” (Rom.1:1-3).

Magi came to Jerusalem searching for the one born King of the Jews (Matt.2: 1-12; Matt.1: 1, 17; Heb.9: 28; Rom.6: 14; 7:6).

6. Theocracy government will return in the Millennium under the rulership of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ (Rev.17: 14; 19:15-16; 20:1-6).

Isaiah 9:6-7 gives four throne titles to Jesus Christ as ruler of the Millennium: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. **“There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.” (9:7)**

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.” (Luke 1:31-33)