

MANCHESTER HOUSE OF PRAYER

OUR ETERNAL OCCUPATION AS A ROYAL GOVERNMENTAL PRIESTHOOD – COREY STARK

I. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD – A GOVERNMENTAL PRIESTHOOD

A. There is no higher governmental authority in creation than the eternal Sovereign seated upon His throne in heaven (Ps. 2:4; Dan. 7:9-10; Rev. 4). He alone establishes governmental authority (Dan. 2:20-21; Rom. 13:1-7), sets the appointed times and seasons (Gen. 1:14; Ps. 104:19), directs the course of history (Ps. 139; Rom. 8:28), gives breath to all the living (Job 12:10; Acts 17:25) and effortlessly sustains the universe (Heb. 1:3).

Rev. 4:2 Behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne... 11 “You are worthy... to receive glory and honor... for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.” (Dan. 7:9-10)

B. The uniqueness of the Kingdom of God is seen in the *central governmental role* of the priestly ministry (1 Pet. 2:9). Our concept of government is based upon executive, legislative and judicial branches that craft, interpret and enforce laws for all people under their authority to obey or be held accountable. However, the Kingdom of God is a *theocracy* in which Yahweh, the KING and Source of all authority, law and justice became a CRIMINAL condemned to death for the lawbreakers, because He desires to administrate His rule through a redeemed *kingdom of priests* who partner with Him in voluntary agreement, as the primary means of establishing His will throughout the nations (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:4, 6; 22:5). *What government employs the criminals that killed it’s executive leader and then advances its’ kingdom through their worship and prayer?*

Rev. 5:8 When He had taken the scroll... the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain [for us], and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us a kingdom of priests to our God; and we shall reign [with You] on the earth. (Dan. 7:18, 22, 27)

C. In the Old Testament the LORD either anointed a king to *reign over people* (1 Sam. 8:9) or a priest to *minister to God* (Ex. 19:6; 28-29). He didn’t allow these two offices to overlap. When king Saul presumed to minister to God as priest he was severely judged by having his authority removed as king (1 Sam. 15). The only exception to this rule was Melchizidek (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 7:1-10) and king David, who was clearly a prophetic foreshadow of the greater son of David to come (Isa. 9:6-7; 16:5; Lk. 1:30-33), who would rule the entire earth, as High Priest forever after the *order of Melchizidek* (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21).

Heb. 7:1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God... 2 being translated “king of righteousness,” and... king of Salem, meaning “king of peace”...

Ps. 110:4 The Lord has sworn... “You [Jesus] are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

D. The order of Melchizidek is an entirely different order than the Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament. It is an unchangeable priesthood (Heb. 7:16, 23-25) from the tribe of Judah (Heb. 7:13-14) that is perfected (Heb. 7:11, 18-19, 28), built upon better promises of a better covenant (Heb. 7:22; 8:6), inaugurated by a once-for-all sacrifice (Heb. 7:26-27) and confirmed by a divine oath (7:20-22, 28). Jesus isn’t just a *King that prays*, but a *Priest who governs* the universe through worship and prayer (Zech. 6:13; Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34).

Zech. 6:13 He shall build the temple... He shall sit and rule on His throne... a priest on His throne...

E. We are of this *royal governmental priesthood* after the order of Melchizidek that administrates the kingdom of God through the ministry of worship and prayer (Heb. 10:19-23; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:4, 6; 22:5).

1 Pet. 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people...

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II. GOVERNMENTAL INTERCESSION IN THE FATHER’S HOUSE OF PRAYER IN HEAVEN

A. Our God is a Father at the very core of His being (Mt. 6:9). As our Father in heaven, He not only desires His children to regularly seek Him in personal devotion (Mt. 6:6), but He desires that His *universal family of affection* (Eph. 3:15) joyfully gather before His throne in corporate agreement (Isa. 56:7-8; Heb. 12:18-24).

Eph. 3:14 I bow my knees to the Father... 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named...

***Isa. 56:7 Even them [Gentile nations] I will bring... and make them joyful in My house of prayer... for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.*” (Ps. 27:4; 28:2)**

B. Specifically, the Father has ordained that His house (i.e. family) rule in partnership with Jesus at His right hand in the heavens (Mk. 16:19; Eph. 1:20-23; 2:6, 18; Heb. 1:3; 4:14-16; 8:1-2; 10:12; 12:2; Rev. 1:6; 3:21).

Eph. 1:17 the Father of glory... 20 raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power... and every name that is named, not only in this age but in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things...

Eph. 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy... 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ... 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus...

C. The glorious reality of our position is this: although we are *physically on the earth*, we are concurrently seated with Christ *in heavenly places* by the power of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:4-6). Due to our faith in Jesus and by His blood we have become the righteousness of God in Christ (Rom. 3:21-26; 2 Cor. 5:21) and been given the indwelling Spirit by whom we are one with Jesus (Jn. 14:16-18; 1 Cor. 6:17). Christ *in us* and *us in Him* forever (Jn. 14:20; 17:20-23; Col. 1:27). Therefore, even as we *died* with Him, were *buried* with Him, and were *raised* with Him (Rom. 6:1-11), we have also *ascended* with Him and now have access through the veil to come boldly before the throne of grace in the heavenly temple (Ps. 11:4; Heb. 4:14-16; 8:1-2; 9:11-12; Rev. 3:12; 11:19; 14:17; 15:5; 16:17)! Therefore, we need not shout our prayers upwards, as if fighting through demonic interference, but can merely turn to the left and speak to our Father in heaven (Mt. 6:9-13).

Heb. 8:1 We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Heb. 4:14 Seeing that we have a great High Priest who passed through the heavens... 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

D. Although our prayers may feel like they are offered in weakness, once joined with the mysterious incense upon the golden altar before God’s throne they are answered in power (Rev. 8:3-5). If the prayers of the saints are incense (Rev. 5:8), whose prayers are represented by the addition of “much incense” (Rev. 8:3)? Both the intercession of Jesus (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25) and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26; Rev. 22:17), along with the prayers of all the saints in heaven and earth (Rev. 6:9-11), burn upon the golden altar, causing their perfumed smoke to ascend before the Father’s throne, as one sweet-smelling and perfect offering of intercession.

Rev. 8:3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth.

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III. RELEASING GOD’S GOVERNMENTAL POWER THROUGH THE SIMPLICITY OF AGREEMENT

A. The primary way God releases His governmental power is through the *simplicity of agreement* with His will (1 Jn. 5:14-15). As we release *faith-filled words of agreement* to God in either prayer (Rev. 5:8; 8:3-6), praise (Ps. 149:6-9) or proclamation (Mt. 16:19), He responds by releasing His power in the earthly realm.

1 Jn. 5:14 If we ask anything according to His will... 15 we know we have the petitions we have asked...

B. Agreement with God’s heart, will and ways is foundational to the priestly ministry (Rev. 5:8-10).

1. *Worship* is essentially agreement with *who God is* (You are holy, worthy, beautiful, etc.). By declaring who God is in worship we release the light of His truth that transforms us into His image (2 Cor. 3:18) and brings a greater level of freedom to our inner man by dispelling the lies of darkness (Jn. 8:32).

2. *Prophetic music* (i.e. Spirit-led) is essentially agreement with *what God feels* and not only allows us to experience His emotions, but helps us express our hearts back to Him. The lightnings, thunderings and voices [lit. musical tones] that emanate from God’s being express His thoughts and emotions (Rev. 4:5).

3. *Intercession* is essentially agreement with *what God does* (Pour out Your Spirit, Your kingdom come, etc.). The Holy Spirit moves in power to establish the Father’s will as we agree with Him in intercession.

C. Our authority in prayer is founded upon the *simplicity of agreement* with His will *not* our volume, hype, talent, eloquence or multitude of words. This is God’s brilliant strategy to include all the saints in partnership.

Mt. 6:9 Our Father in heaven... 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

1. Creation was *initiated* through agreement (Gen. 1). Jesus spoke to create light (Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16).

Gen. 1:2 The Spirit of God was hovering... 3 Then [Jesus] said, “Let there be light” and there was light.

2. Redemption is *progressing* through agreement (Ps. 2:7-8; Jn. 17). Jesus is an intercessor forever (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). God is setting intercessors to agree with His plans (Isa. 62:1, 6-7; Joel 2:12-17, 28-32).

Ps. 2:7 “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son... 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.

3. Restoration will *culminate* through agreement (Isa. 42:10-16; Lk. 18:7-8). His restoration plan is released through corporate agreement (Ps. 149:6-9; Rev. 5:8-10; 8:3-6; 15:1-8). Jesus doesn’t return in a vacuum, but in response to the global unified agreement of His covenant people (1 Pet. 3:12; Rev. 22:17).

Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!”

D. Since all Scripture is given by God’s inspiration, a prayer in the bible ensures agreement with His will (2 Tim. 3:16). Biblical prayers are like co-signing a check on earth that God has already endorsed in heaven!

E. Some trust the sovereignty of God in a non-biblical way by trusting God to do the role He entrusted to us. God *will not* do our part and we *cannot* do His part. If we do not agree with Him in intercession, then some of the sovereignly ordained blessing that He joyfully longs to give us is withheld (Isa. 30:18-19; Jas. 4:2-3).

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IV. A BIBLICAL PARADIGM FOR ANSWERED PRAYER – FIVE STAGES

A. *Stage One – Verbalize your specific requests to the Father:* Many times we think about what we need, but neglect to pray. For this reason we miss out on God’s best for our lives (Jas. 4:2). God may graciously answer our vague thoughts at times, but we don’t find this precedent anywhere in Scripture. In fact, Scripture teaches quite the opposite (Hos. 14:2; Dan. 10:12; Mt. 20:32). A foundational law of the kingdom is the Spirit moves in power *in response* to God’s people speaking *faith-filled words of agreement* with His will (1 Jn. 5:14-15).

Dan. 10:12 He said, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.”

Phil. 4:6 In everything by prayer... with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God...

B. *Stage Two – Receive your requests in the spirit realm:* Whenever we pray according to God’s will, we know He hears and approves of the request, so we receive it in the spirit realm with confidence. Our prayers are answered twice: first in the spirit when God approves and later, when we experience it in the natural.

1 Jn. 5:14 This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **15** And if He hears us... we know we have the petitions that we have asked of Him. (Mt. 6:10)

C. *Stage Three – Believe that you receive what you ask for:* Jesus spoke of the necessity of first believing that we receive the things we ask for in the spirit realm, as the condition for receiving them in the natural (Mk. 11:24). When we request something in God’s will we must believe that we have the “title deed” to our answer and that in due time it will be manifest in the natural. *Principle: everything in God’s will for our lives is yes!*

Mk. 11:24 Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them [in the spirit], and you will have them [in the natural].

Eph. 1:3 The Father... has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...

2 Pet. 1:3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...

Phil. 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

D. *Stage Four – Remind God of His Word:* How do our requests move from heaven to earth? Through faith and perseverance in prayer! This is essential and where many believers give up. We are to consistently *remind God* of what He has promised us in His Word and *thank Him* for what He has already given us in the spirit realm with the certainty of it being manifest in the natural (Isa. 43:26). Biblical promises are the “key” to unlock what we already possess in the spirit. The Father is moved by our perseverance (Lk. 11:8-9; 18:1-8).

Isa. 62:6 You who remind the Lord... **7** give Him no rest until He establishes [His promise]... (NASB)

Lk. 11:8 Because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs... **9** ask [and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find]... **10** For everyone who asks receives...

E. *Stage Five – Receive your requests in the natural realm:* All requests in agreement with God’s will are answered. They come in His way and in His timing, which many times is progressive. The reward of our prayer life isn’t just found in the answer, but in our *intimate partnership* with Jesus throughout the process!