Two Types of Crowns

**By Arlen Chitwood of** [Lamp Broadcast](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

There are two words in the Greek text of the New Testament that are translated “crown” in English versions. The first and most widely used word is *stephanos* (or the verb form, *stephanoo*), referring to a “victor’s crown” or a crown denoting certain types of “worth” or “valor.” The other word is *diadema*, referring to “regal authority,” “kingly power.”

*Stephanos* (or the verb form, *stephanoo*) is the only word used for “crown” in the New Testament outside the book of Revelation. This, for example, is the word used referring to the “*crown of thorns*” placed upon Christ’s head immediately preceding His crucifixion ([Matthew 27:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.29&t=NKJV); [Mark 15:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+15.17&t=NKJV); [John 19:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.2&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.5&t=NKJV)). This is also the word used throughout the Pauline epistles, referring to “*crowns*” awaiting faithful Christians ([1 Corinthians 9:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.25&t=NKJV); [Philippians 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+4.1&t=NKJV); [1 Thessalonians 2:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+2.19&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.5&t=NKJV); [4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+4.8&t=NKJV)). James, Peter, and John also used *stephanos* in this same sense ([James 1:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.12&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 5:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+5.4&t=NKJV); [Revelation 2:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.10&t=NKJV); [3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.11&t=NKJV)). The writer of Hebrews used this word (the verb form, *stephanoo*) referring to positions that will ultimately be occupied by Christ and His co-heirs in “*the world* [inhabited world] *to come*” ([Hebrews 2:5-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.5-9&t=NKJV)). Then John used the word six additional times in the book of Revelation in several different senses ([Revelation 4:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4.4&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4.10&t=NKJV); [6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+6.2&t=NKJV); [9:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+9.7&t=NKJV); [12:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.1&t=NKJV); [14:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.14&t=NKJV)).

*Diadema*, the other word used for “crown” in the New Testament, appears only three times; and all three occurrences are in the latter part of the book of Revelation ([Revelation 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.3&t=NKJV); [13:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.1&t=NKJV); [19:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.12&t=NKJV)). The first two references have to do with power and authority possessed by incumbent earthly rulers immediately preceding and within the kingdom of Antichrist, and the latter reference has to do with power and authority that Christ will possess at the time He returns and takes the kingdom.

The way in which these two words are used in the New Testament relative to the government of the earth must be borne in mind if one is to properly understand the scriptural distinction between the use of *stephanos* and *diadema*. *Diadema* (referring to the monarch’s crown) is used *only* where one has actually *entered into* and is *presently exercising regal power*. *Stephanos* is never used in this respect; it appears in all other occurrences, covering any instance where the word “crown” is used *apart from* the present possession of regal power. The possession of such power at a future date (or a past date) can be in view through the use of *stephanos*. Then, *diadema* is used when one actually comes into possession of this power.

In this respect, overcoming Christians have been promised a *stephanos* (victor’s crown), never a *diadema* (monarch’s crown); *but* the promised *stephanos will become a diadema* at the time overcoming Christians assume positions on the throne with Christ. There can be no such thing as either Christ or His co-heirs wearing a *stephanos* in that day. They can only wear the type crown referred to by the word *diadema*.

To illustrate the matter, note how *stephanos* and *diadema* are used relative to the Antichrist and his kingdom. *Stephanos* is used of the type crown worn by the Antichrist when he is first introduced in the book of Revelation ([Revelation 6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+6.2&t=NKJV)), but later *diadema* is used relative to his exercise of delegated power and authority ([Revelation 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.3&t=NKJV); [13:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.1-2&t=NKJV)).

Antichrist is seen wearing a “*crown*,” as he goes forth “*conquering, and to conquer*” in [Revelation 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+6&t=NKJV). He is crowned and moves after the described fashion in view of ultimately attaining *regal power over the earth*; but, at this time, as shown by both the context and the word *stephanos*, he has not attained such power.

Then, in [Revelation 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12&t=NKJV) he is once again seen wearing a “crown” (all seven heads are crowned at this point in the book. Antichrist will be the seventh head [seventh ruler] in a succession of rulers), and in [Revelation 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13&t=NKJV) those ruling with him (the ten horns) are also crowned. As shown by both the context and the word *diadema*, the matter is entirely different at this point in the book. Antichrist has now attained *regal power over the earth*, and he has subordinate rulers exercising power with him. Thus, *diadema*, not *stephanos*, is used in these passages.

The use of *stephanos* relative to crowns in connection with Israel in [Revelation 12:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.1&t=NKJV) illustrates the same truth. Israel today is not occupying the position for which the nation was called into existence — “*a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*” ([Exodus 19:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+19.6&t=NKJV)). Israel is to one day rule upon the earth at the head of the nations, and the nations are to be blessed through Israel; but Israel will not occupy this position until after the time of [Revelation 12:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.1&t=NKJV). Thus, *stephanos* is the only word that could be used relative to crowns in connection with Israel at this point in time. The use of *diadema* in connection with Israel in this respect awaits events of the coming age.

Then note the type crowns on Christ’s head — past and future — in [Matthew 27:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.29&t=NKJV); [Revelation 14:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.14&t=NKJV); [19:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.12&t=NKJV). [Matthew 27:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.29&t=NKJV) refers to that past time when Christ was arrayed as a mock King. The word used for “crown” in this verse is *stephanos*. *Diadema* could not be used in this instance, for this word would show Christ actually exercising regal power and authority, wearing “*a crown of thorns*.” And this, of course, was something that He did not do at this time, particularly wearing “*a crown of thorns*.” Rather, the opposite was shown by the “*crown* [*stephanos*] *of thorns*” — *shame and humiliation, relative to the government of the earth*.

Then, in [Revelation 14:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.14&t=NKJV), Christ is seen once again wearing a *stephanos* (though not “*a crown of thorns*” this time). And, again, there is no display of regal power, though that future time when he would wear a *diadema* is anticipated by both the time (near the end of the Tribulation) and His actions (anticipating His treading the winepress at the time of His return (*cf*. [Isaiah 63:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+63.1-6&t=NKJV); [Joel 3:9-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.9-16&t=NKJV); [Zechariah 14:1-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+14.1-9&t=NKJV); [Revelation 19:11-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.11-21&t=NKJV)). This is the last time in Scripture that the word *stephanos* is used relative to a crown resting upon Christ’s head.

But, when that time arrives — anticipated by Christ seen with a *stephanos* on his head and a sharp sickle in His hand in [Revelation 14:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+14.14&t=NKJV) — Christ will come forth wearing “*many crowns* [‘*diadems*’]” ([Revelation 19:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.12&t=NKJV)). He can come forth in this manner at that time, for the Father will not only have delivered the kingdom into His hands but He will now have a consort queen and be ready to ascend the throne (*cf*. [Daniel 7:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+7.13-14&t=NKJV); [Revelation 19:7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.7-9&t=NKJV)); and because of this, when He comes forth, the announcement can be sounded for all to hear: “*King of kings and Lord of lords*.”

Christ, at that time, will have *entered into* His long-awaited *regal position*; and the first order of business will be the putting down of the Beast, the kings of the earth, and Satan and his angels ([Revelation 19:17-20:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.17-20.3&t=NKJV)). They cannot be allowed to reign beyond the point Christ assumes regal power. Their crowns (*diadems*) *must, at this time*, be taken and given to others — those to whom they will *then* rightfully belong.

An understanding of the distinction between *stephanos* and *diadema* will also reveal certain things about the twenty-four elders that could not otherwise be known. They each cast a *stephanos* before the throne, not a *diadema*. This shows that they were *not then* occupying regal positions, though crowned and seated on thrones.

At one time they would have occupied such positions (wearing *diadems*, seated on thrones); but with the disarray in the governmental structure of the earth, resulting from Satan’s rebellion, they ceased exercising regal power (for, not participating in his rebellion, they no longer retained active positions in his rule). Their crowns could then be referred to only through the use of the word *stephanos*; and these crowns would, of necessity, have to be retained until the time of [Revelation 4:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4.10&t=NKJV).

God’s system of government (an incumbent remaining in office *until* replaced by his successor) would necessitate the twenty-four elders retaining their crowns *until* their successors were on the scene and ready to ascend the throne. And at this point in the book, for the first time in man’s history, the one who is to rule with the second Man, the last Adam — Christ’s bride — will have been made known and shown forth. This will have occurred at events surrounding the judgment seat ([Revelation 1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+1-3&t=NKJV)); and these elders can now cast their crowns before God’s throne ([Revelation 4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4&t=NKJV)), for their successors will be on the scene and ready to ascend the throne with Christ.

(For a discussion of the twenty-four elders in the preceding respect, refer to the author’s books, in this site, [Judgment Seat of Christ BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-one.php#Judgment%20Seat%20of%20Christ%20BOOK), Chapter 12, and [Search for the Bride BOOK](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-four.php#Search%20for%20the%20Bride%20BOOK), Chapter 13.)

The Death of the High Priest

*Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not sufficient testimony against a person for the death penalty.*

*Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death.*

*And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the high priest* [the high priest ([Numbers 35:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.25&t=NKJV))].

*So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.* ([Numbers 35:30-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.30-33&t=NKJV))

Numbers chapter thirty-five relates the account of God instructing the children of Israel to set aside six cities to be “*cities for refuge*.” And within this account one will find central truths surrounding that future time — which is seen in [Hebrews 5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5&t=NKJV) — when the present high priestly ministry of Christ, *after the order of Aaron*, is concluded and Christ comes forth from the heavenly sanctuary as the great King-Priest, *after the order of Melchizedek.*

Three of the cities of refuge were to be on the east side of Jordan, and the three remaining were to be on the west side of Jordan ([Numbers 35:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.14&t=NKJV)). The three cities on the east side of Jordan were selected by Moses, prior to his death and the subsequent entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan ([Deuteronomy 4:41-43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+4.41-43&t=NKJV)); and the three cities on the west side of Jordan were selected by the children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua, following their entrance into the land ([Joshua 20:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joshua+20.1-7&t=NKJV)).

These cities were set aside to provide *a sanctuary* for any man who killed another man through an unpremeditated act. The divine decree given to Noah and his sons following the Flood required the death of the slayer at the hands of man:

*Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man*. ([Genesis 9:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.6&t=NKJV)).

And God’s injunction concerning capital punishment for a capital crime was later reiterated to Moses and is part of the Mosaic Economy as well ([Exodus 20:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+20.13&t=NKJV); [21:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+21.12&t=NKJV)).

The command concerning capital punishment for a capital crime was thus given to Noah and his sons over eight hundred years before it was delivered to the children of Israel under Moses. Consequently, man not being under the Mosaic Economy today has *nothing* to do with the validity or non-validity of capital punishment for a capital crime, for not only does the biblical origin of this injunction *precede* the giving of the law through Moses but the command given to Noah and his sons (approx. 2,300 B.C.) *has never been repealed*.

Although capital punishment for a capital offense has never been repealed, provision was later made for a man who killed another man unintentionally. This was the divinely established purpose for setting aside the six cities of refuge (*cf*. [Exodus 21:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+21.12-13&t=NKJV)). These cities were to be located at places where at least one city would be easily accessible to any Israelite living in the land of Canaan. And should one Israelite kill another Israelite through accidental means — unintentionally — he could flee to the nearest city of refuge and be provided a sanctuary from the near kinsman of the person who had been slain.

It fell to the lot of the near kinsman to fulfill God’s injunction concerning capital punishment for a capital crime. The near kinsman was to confront the slayer and, in turn, slay him. God’s requirement in the matter was *blood for blood* ([Numbers 35:16-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.16-21&t=NKJV); *cf*. [Deuteronomy 19:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+19.21&t=NKJV)).

God’s previous instructions to Noah and his sons remained *unchanged* within the framework of God’s instructions to Moses. Something though was added to these instructions within the Mosaic Economy. Provision was made for the person guilty of accidental, unpremeditated murder. And once the Israelite guilty of such an act had taken advantage of that provision — once the slayer had fled to and was inside the walls of one of the six designated cities of refuge — the near kinsman, as long as the slayer remained in this place, couldn’t touch him.

Any individual though who fled to one of the cities of refuge must, at a later time, be returned to the area where the slaying occurred and stand before a judicial court; and, should the testimony at this court prove to be negative, at least two witnesses were required to testify against the man in this manner.

If the slayer was found to be guilty of willful murder, he would no longer be granted sanctuary in a city of refuge. Rather, he would be turned over to the near kinsman to be slain; and the near kinsman, slaying the man, would not be guilty of blood himself.

But if the slayer, on the other hand, was found to be guilty only of involuntary manslaughter, he would be returned to the safety of the city of refuge to which he had previously fled ([Numbers 35:22-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.22-28&t=NKJV)).

Then there was the matter of a *ransom*. This ransom constituted a payment for the life of the one found to have committed involuntary manslaughter. No ransom though was provided for the life of a person found guilty of willful manslaughter. Rather, he was to forfeit his own life (*blood for blood*), apart from a ransom.

But though the ransom was a provision for the one having committed involuntary manslaughter, there was a stipulation: *The ransom could not be used until the death of the high priest* ([Numbers 35:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.28&t=NKJV), [32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.32&t=NKJV)).

Once the high priest in the camp of Israel had died and the ransom had been used, the individual who had previously been found guilty only of involuntary manslaughter was then *free* to leave the particular city of refuge where he had been provided a sanctuary and *return to the land of his possession*. And once this had occurred, *the near kinsman no longer had any claim on that individual.*

ISRAEL, THE SLAYER

In the Old Testament (in the type) it was *individual Israelites* who found themselves guilty of manslaughter (willful or involuntary) and, consequently, in a position where they would either be slain or be granted protection in a city of refuge. Today (in the antitype) it is *the entire nation of Israel* that finds itself guilty of manslaughter and in a position to either be slain or be granted protection.

The nation of Israel is guilty of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The paschal lamb was given to Israel, and *only Israel* could slay this lamb ([Exodus 12:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.1ff&t=NKJV)). Jesus was the Paschal Lamb ([1 Corinthians 5:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+5.7&t=NKJV)), to whom all the sacrificial lambs in the Old Testament pointed; and *only Israel* could have slain Jesus, which is exactly what, according to Scripture, occurred ([Acts 2:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.23&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.36&t=NKJV); [3:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.12-15&t=NKJV)).

Israel today is *unclean* through contact with the dead body of God’s Son, with cleansing to be provided *on the seventh day* — the seventh 1,000-year period, the Messianic Era ([Numbers 19:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+19.11-12&t=NKJV)). But how is Israel’s act, as the slayer, to be reckoned? Was it *a premeditated act*? Or was it *an unpremeditated act*?

If it was a premeditated act, the nation would have to be cut off. No ransom could be provided (it would have to be *blood for blood*; the nation would have to pay with its own life); nor, if *a premeditated act,* could the nation *ever* be allowed to return to the land of her possession (which would mean, in the final analysis, that God’s promises to Abraham, beginning with [Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV), could *never* be realized).

However, if Jesus was delivered into Israel’s hands after a manner that would allow the nation’s act of crucifying her Messiah to be looked upon as *unpremeditated murder* — *i.e.*, allow the nation’s act to be looked upon as having been done through *ignorance* — then Israel could be granted protection and a ransom could be provided. And beyond that, the ransom could one day be used by the nation, at which time Israel would be free to return to the land of her possession (allowing God’s promises to Abraham, beginning with [Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV), to be fulfilled).

The biblical testimony concerning the manner in which the nation’s act must be viewed was given by Jesus Himself at Golgotha; and the same testimony was later provided by Peter, following the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

Note the words of Jesus:

. . . *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do .* . . . ([Luke 23:34a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+23.34a&t=NKJV))

Then note the words of Peter:

*Men of Israel . . .*

*But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,*

*and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses . . .*

*Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.* ([Acts 3:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.12&t=NKJV), [14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.14-15&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.17&t=NKJV) [12a])

Thus, Jesus was delivered into the hands of Israel (*cf*. [Exodus 21:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+21.13&t=NKJV); [Acts 2:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.23&t=NKJV)) after a manner that not only allowed the Jewish people to act after the described fashion but also prevented them from acting after any other fashion as well. Consequently, Israel is to be granted protection, a ransom will be provided, and the Jewish people will be free to one day avail themselves of this ransom and return to the land of their possession, *though only after the antitype of the death of the high priest* — at which time all of God’s promises to Abraham, beginning with [Genesis 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+12.1-3&t=NKJV), will be fulfilled.

THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE RANSOM

In the camp of Israel there was only one high priest at any one time. At the time of the high priest’s death, he was succeeded by another from the Aaronic line; and the high priestly ministry in the Aaronic line continued in this manner, after this fashion.

Aaron ministered in the sanctuary in the earthly tabernacle, with blood, on behalf of the people. Jesus, on the other hand, is presently ministering in the heavenly sanctuary, with blood, on behalf of the people — a ministry patterned after the order of Aaron. And, as evident from Hebrews chapter five, along with other related Scripture, Christ’s present ministry after the order of Aaron *will not* continue indefinitely.

There is coming a day when Christ’s present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary will end. And the termination of this ministry, along with certain events that will occur relative to Israel in that day, which was typified by the death of the high priest in the camp of Israel and events that occurred relative to the slayer when the high priest died.

And these events, as they pertain to the slayer, have to do with two things in the antitype: (1) *Israel’s cleansing from defilement through contact with the dead body of the nation’s Messiah*, and (2) *a restoration of the Jewish people to the land of their possession.*

The word *ransom* ([Numbers 35:31-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.31-32&t=NKJV) [translated “satisfaction” in the KJV]) is from a cognate form of the word for “atonement” in the Hebrew text. The underlying thought behind “atonement” is *to cover*; and that is the same thought expressed by the “*ransom*” in this chapter. This ransom provided *a covering* — a covering from view, a putting away, a blotting out — of the previous capital act (an unpremeditated act). And once the ransom had been used, which could be only *after* the death of the high priest, the whole matter was *put away*. The person was then free to return to the land of his possession; and the near kinsman of the one slain could no longer have any claim on him whatsoever, for the matter had been *put away* and could never be brought up again.

(In the type, this ransom was connected with some aspect of the person and work of the high priest, or of other priests. For example, this ransom could not be used *until the high priest had died*. Then, this ransom had to do with *a covering* [with *atonement*] from defilement wrought through contact with a dead body. And such a work in [Numbers 19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+19&t=NKJV), where cleansing from this type defilement is dealt with, was performed by a priest.

The high priestly ministry of Aaron and his successors in the camp of Israel, whether in this or in other areas of defilement, was a work on behalf of *the saved,* not the unsaved. Their work was for those who had already appropriated the blood of slain paschal lambs, pointing to Christ and His shed blood at Calvary [the slain Paschal Lamb]. This succession of high priests ministered in this manner, on the basis of shed blood, typifying Christ’s present ministry in the sanctuary after this same fashion [a ministry for *the saved*, on the basis of shed blood].

Thus, that being dealt with in [Numbers 35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35&t=NKJV) — portending a priestly work — has to do with *the cleansing of saved individuals from defilement* [defilement wrought through contact with a dead body], not with issues surrounding the death of the firstborn [issues surrounding eternal salvation].

And the Jewish people, for two reasons, find themselves in a position today where they cannot avail themselves of this cleansing [cleansing from contact with the dead body of their Messiah]: (1) The Jewish people today are in *an unsaved state*; and (2) the Jewish people, even if they were in a saved state today, could not presently avail themselves of the ransom [cleansing] because of *the nature of Christ’s present priestly ministry.*

Cleansing from all defilement during the present dispensation is brought to pass through only *one means* — through Christ’s present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat. Though Christ is not of the Levitical line, His present ministry is patterned after the order of Aaron’s ministry; and, because Christ is not of the Levitical line, if God were dealing with Israel on a national basis today, He could not deal with the Jewish people in relation to Christ’s present ministry in the sanctuary [else He would violate that which He Himself established].

The Jewish people, if they were being dealt with in relation to the priesthood today, would have to be dealt with in relation to that set forth concerning the priesthood in the Mosaic Economy [as will be done during the coming Tribulation, when God completes His national dealings with Israel during Man’s Day]. The priest, within the Mosaic Economy, had to be of *the Levitical line*. And Christ is not of this line. Christ is from the tribe of Judah.

Thus, dealing with the Jewish people in relation to Christ’s high priestly ministry today would be *completely out of the question*. They could not go to Christ and receive cleansing, for the Mosaic Economy does not recognize a priestly ministry of the nature that Christ is presently exercising [a non-Levitical ministry patterned after the order of Aaron, a Levite]. And any priesthood that the Jewish people themselves could enact today, from the Levitical line, would be completely non-efficacious.

However, note that Christ [though from the tribe of Judah] *can conduct* a ministry patterned after the order of Aaron for Christians during the present dispensation, *for Christians are not under the Mosaic Economy*. Christians form *the one new man*, which is neither Jew nor Gentile [*cf*. [Galatians 3:26-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26-29&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 2:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.12-15&t=NKJV)]. Thus, for Christians, Christ’s lineage *has nothing to do with the matter one way or the other*.

But, before the Jewish people can enter into the picture as matters pertain to the priesthood and the ransom, seen in [Numbers 35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35&t=NKJV), Christ must *first* terminate His present ministry in the sanctuary and come forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. And, as well, a new covenant [which will replace the old covenant] will be made with Israel at this time [[Jeremiah 31:31-34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+31.31-34&t=NKJV)].

In the preceding respect, from the vantage point of the antitype, it is an easy matter to see why the high priest in the camp of Israel had to die before the slayer could avail himself of the ransom and return to the land of his possession. God had simply established and brought matters to pass after this fashion in the history of Israel in order to form a type, with a view to the antitype. Christ’s high priestly ministry in the sanctuary has to terminate *first*. *Only then* can the slayer [Israel] avail herself of the ransom and return to the land of her possession.)

Thus, the ransom for Israel’s capital offense has already been paid. Jesus paid this ransom at Calvary, shedding His own blood — blood that is presently on the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary. However, although the ransom (providing atonement) for Israel’s sin has already been paid, the nation cannot avail herself of this ransom or return to the land of her possession *until the antitype of the death of the high priest is fulfilled*.

Israel though must *first* experience her national Passover in fulfillment of [Exodus 12:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.7&t=NKJV) and [Leviticus 23:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23.5&t=NKJV) — by applying the blood that was shed 2,000 years ago. And this can occur *only* at the termination of Israel’s present blindness ([Romans 11:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.25&t=NKJV)). Israel, as the two disciples on the Emmaus road in [Luke 24:13ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.13ff&t=NKJV), *must continue in a blinded condition* until the resurrected Christ, by His personal presence at His second coming, opens the Old Testament Scriptures to the Jewish people’s understanding in this respect (*cf*. [Luke 24:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.16&t=NKJV), [25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.25-27&t=NKJV), [31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+24.31&t=NKJV)).

In that day, Israel’s eyes will be *opened*; and a nation will be “*born at once*” ([Isaiah 66:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+66.8&t=NKJV)). The entire nation will experience *the birth from above at the same time* [when the Jewish people look upon the One whom “they have pierced” ([Zechariah 12:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Zechariah+12.10&t=NKJV))]). And this will occur *only after* Christ terminates His present ministry, departs the heavenly sanctuary, and comes forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. *Then cleansing can occur, allowing the ransom seen in Numbers chapter thirty-five to be used.*

It will be in that day — not before — that Israel *will experience her national Passover, be able to avail herself of the ransom, and be free to return to the land of her possession*. As long as Christ occupies His present position in the heavenly sanctuary, Israel *cannot* avail herself of the paid ransom and return to this land. Israel *must* remain in her present condition — blinded — throughout the present dispensation; and, according to related Scripture, Israel will not be removed from this condition until a few years beyond the present dispensation, at the end of Man’s Day, at the end of the Tribulation.

(Insofar as Christians are concerned, Christ’s present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary will terminate when the Church is removed from the earth into the heavens, at the end of the present dispensation. However, Christ’s ministry in the sanctuary will apparently continue for others through the Tribulation, else the saved among the earth-dwellers would have no High Priest.

Christ though will not come forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, appearing to Israel after this fashion, until the end of Man’s Day, the end of the Tribulation. And it will be only at this time that events surrounding the antitype of the death of the high priest in Numbers chapter thirty-five can occur.)

Also, the Jewish people one day availing themselves of the ransom in [Numbers 35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35&t=NKJV) would correspond with the fulfillment of events set forth in the second of the seven feasts of the Lord in [Leviticus 23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23&t=NKJV) — the feast of Unleavened Bread, which immediately followed the Passover.

“Leaven” points to that which is *vile, corrupt* (*cf*. [Matthew 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.33&t=NKJV); [16:1-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.1-12&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 5:6-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+5.6-8&t=NKJV)); and the fulfillment of this festival in the type had to do with *a cleansing of the house, a removing of all leaven from the house immediately following the Passover* (*cf*. [Exodus 12:8-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.8-20&t=NKJV); [Leviticus 23:6-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23.6-8&t=NKJV)).

And in the antitype, it is the same. The fulfillment of this festival will immediately follow the fulfillment of the Passover. It will occur immediately following Israel applying the blood of the slain Paschal Lamb, blood shed 2,000 years prior to this time. And because Israel had previously shed this blood, the entire house of Israel will be found in an *unclean* condition in that day, *an uncleanness that will have to be dealt with.*

Israel, in that day, will be found in this *unclean* condition through the nation’s prior contact with the dead body of their Messiah. The house, resultantly, will be found *completely leavened*. *And the leaven will have to be removed; it will have to be put out, done away with.*

And this is where the account of the slayer availing himself of the ransom in [Numbers 35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35&t=NKJV), following the death of the high priest, is seen being fulfilled in the antitype (along with the fulfillment of that seen in [Numbers 19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+19&t=NKJV)). *Israel in that day will be cleansed of this defilement and the house will no longer be leavened.*

Accordingly, *only in that coming day*, only following cleansing from Israel’s present defilement wrought through prior contact with the dead body of the nation’s Messiah, will the Jewish people be free to return to the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and *only then* can the Jewish people realize their calling in this land, with God’s promised blessings flowing out through Israel to the Gentile nations of the earth after the fashion that God intended when He called this nation into existence.

(Knowledge of the preceding facts will reveal not only truths surrounding Christ’s present and future ministries but also truths surrounding Israel’s present and future status as a nation in the Middle East. Christ is *still ministering* in the heavenly sanctuary, with the antitype of the death of the high priest yet to occur; and Israel *still remains in unbelief.*

Consequently, Israel — being *unable* to presently avail herself of the paid ransom — will not only *continue in unbelief*, but the nation *cannot return to the land of her possession* during the present day and time as well.

To equate the present restoration of a remnant of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob to the land of Israel with the fulfillment of any of the Old Testament prophecies dealing with Israel’s restoration to this land [such as the vision of the valley of dry bones in [Ezekiel 37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+37&t=NKJV)] is to ignore the fact that Israel is the slayer. *And this is an established biblical fact that cannot be ignored.*

The present restoration of a remnant to the land can have *nothing whatsoever* to do with the fulfillment of any of the numerous Old Testament prophecies surrounding Israel’s restoration. The fulfillment (after any fashion) of such promises today, from a biblical standpoint, is *impossible*, for Christ is *still ministering* after the order of Aaron in the heavenly sanctuary.

Thus, the ransom that Christ paid to effect Israel’s cleansing *cannot* presently be used; *nor can* Israel return to the land of her possession today. These things are reserved for *the seventh day*, which lies just ahead.

However, a remnant must be present in the land immediately preceding the end of Man’s Day for certain prophecies surrounding Israel and the nations to be fulfilled, though the existence of this remnant has nothing to do with the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies surrounding Israel’s restoration. Thus, the existence of the nation of Israel in the land today [consisting of almost 5,000,000 Jews] is neither the beginning of nor a partial fulfillment of any Old Testament prophecy surrounding Israel’s restoration to the land. Rather, this remnant in the land is the result of a Zionistic work among the Jews during about the past century, and this remnant constitutes the existence of an end-time Israeli nation that must be present in the land in order to bring about the fulfillment of numerous Old Testament prophecies surrounding Israel and the nations immediately preceding Christ’s return.

In this respect, the remnant in the land today constitutes the nation that will shortly make the seven-year covenant with Antichrist. And this remnant will, in turn, later be uprooted from the land [something that will *never occur* after the Jewish people have been re-gathered in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (*cf*. [Isaiah 2:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+2.1-4&t=NKJV); [Jeremiah 32:37-44](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jeremiah+32.37-44&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 37:19-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+37.19-28&t=NKJV); [39:25-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+39.25-29&t=NKJV); [Joel 2:27-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+2.27-32&t=NKJV))].

In the middle of the Tribulation, when Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel, the nation of Israel, as we know it today, will be uprooted from their land; and the Jews dwelling in the land at that time, who do not escape to a place that God has specially prepared for them in the mountainous terrain of the land [[Matthew 24:16-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.16-20&t=NKJV); [Revelation 12:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.6&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.14&t=NKJV)] will either be slain or be sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world [*cf*. [Joel 3:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.6&t=NKJV); [Luke 21:20-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+21.20-24&t=NKJV); [Revelation 11:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+11.2&t=NKJV)].

During the last half of the Tribulation there will be no Jewish nation in the Middle East. Rather, Jerusalem, the capital of Jewry, will be “*trodden down of the Gentiles*” until the full end of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy, which marks the end of “*the times of the Gentiles*” [*cf*. [Daniel 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+9.24-27&t=NKJV); [Luke 21:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+21.24&t=NKJV); [Revelation 11:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+11.2&t=NKJV)].

During this time, the entire world — particularly the center of Antichrist’s kingdom in the Middle East [including the land of Israel as we know it today] — will become like Nazi Germany during the final six years of the Third Reich [1939-1945]. And when the Holocaust of that coming day reaches its darkest hour, Messiah will return, and He Himself will effect the prophesied re-gathering of the nation [[Matthew 24:15-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.15-31&t=NKJV); [Luke 21:20-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+21.20-27&t=NKJV)].

*Christ must first complete His present ministry in the sanctuary and return to earth. Only then can Israel avail herself of the ransom and return to the land of her possession*.)