

# 1 PETER CERTAINTY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

## Study 4 2:4-10

What makes someone become a government minister? Why would they chose that? How should they conduct themselves?

What is said about Christians and Jesus in verses 4-10?

	Stones	Build/building	Priestly (See Ex 19:1-6)
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5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

What does it mean to become the people of God? (verses 9-10)

<i>Before</i>	<i>Now</i>

What picture is being painted (or built) of who a Christian is?

What picture is being painted of those who reject Jesus? (See also Mark 11:27-12:12 Acts 4:1-22)

What do you think it means to be a priest? What picture do you get of priesthood from Exodus 19:1-6? How has Jesus changed who is in the priesthood?

How do Peter and his fellow believers model their priesthood in Acts 4 (see also Acts 4:23-31)? What do you think priesthood looks like today?

Who have we been called to be?

How does this idea of priesthood help you think of yourself in Christ and what you are called to do?

What does it mean for us to be a priesthood together?

Ask God to help us in our calling to be his holy people.

In 1 Peter 2:4-10 Peter explains how a new significant and eternal community has been made through Jesus. Peter explains how a new era in salvation history has brought people into a sure relationship with God. He draws on ideas from Israel's past to describe what happened amongst the churches he is writing to. These themes include

- The formation of Israel (Exodus 19) – treasured possession, kingdom of priests
- The promises to restore and build up the nation of Israel in times of stress and suffering (Psalm 118) and national sin (Isaiah 28) – Here Peter plays on the ideas of temple and kingdom

In Christ, The nation of Israel has now faded as the place of focus. Through Jesus, those who believe in him are being built into God's nation. It is the fulfilment of God's promises in the Old Testament. Through Jesus God's people and blessing have gone global.

There are some similarities between the people of God and Israel. Peter draws on the covenant with Yahweh and Israel at Mount Sinai (Ex 19:1-6) where the nation of Israel begins after being called out of slavery in Egypt. The covenant is conditional - if they obey Yahweh, they will be a kingdom of priests and his treasured possession. Israel were to be a beacon to the world - a light to the gentiles - to let those around them know who Yahweh is and how to receive his blessings. Yet it is only through Jesus that that is possible.

Through Jesus, believers are called out of darkness into his light. They are given the status of royal priesthood and holy nation with a purpose of declaring God's excellencies.

Jesus (Mark 12:1-12) uses Psalm 118 to show how Israel – particularly its spiritual leaders – failed to recognise God's plans and even God himself making it impossible for Israel to fulfil its brief. Peter is quoted in Acts using Psalm 118 to explain opposition to Jesus and his followers. Peter and the other believers show what it means to be a priesthood amongst opposition (Acts 4:1-31).

Peter describes the new nation being built for God through Jesus in this passage. (A good parallel can be found in Ephesians 2:11-22. While it uses the national language it leaves out the priesthood language.)

It would be good explore what it means to be a priesthood. It is a corporate idea in Exodus 19. The passage has a mix of individual and corporate ideas. Individually it refers more to Jesus than an individual believer. The phrase 'the priesthood of all believers' is an important one. Each one of us is a representative of God to each other and to the world. Yet, we are also a kingdom of priests but we are not an earthly nation-state. So what does that mean for us individually and together for our status and how we express it?