

Elder Vernon Johnson  
Animals

The Lions in the King's House

In the scriptures, lions are frequently used as a figure of kings and kingdoms.

There are some scriptures that describe the king's house that was built by King Solomon as he and the children of Israel built both the temple and the king's house according to the pattern that God had given them. These scriptures are listed as follows:

1. 1 Ki. 7:36 "For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about."

2. 1 Ki. 10:19 "The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays."

3. 1 Ki. 10:20 "And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom."

4. 2 Chr. 9:18 "And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on each side of the sitting place, and two lions standing by the stays:"

5. 2 Chr. 9:19 "And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom."

References 2-5 above describe to us the lions in the throne room. We note that there were two lions, one on either side of the king's throne. Then there were six steps leading up to the throne and each step had a lion on either side, which made a total of twelve lions on the steps leading up to the throne.

Often times in the scriptures when we are given figurative language it has a double application. Obviously, the kingdom of Israel had a king and twelve princes. When God made a covenant in Exodus chapters 19 and 20 with the children of Israel establishing the nation of Israel, he appointed them a prince for each of the twelve tribes. At first God, himself, was the king of Israel, until they asked a king like unto the nations about them and God gave them King Saul. The twelve princes had legislative, executive, and judicial authority in the kingdom of Israel.

The pattern for the Old Testament kingdom of Israel is very similar to the pattern for the New Testament kingdom of God. In the New Testament, Christ came as the king of the kingdom. He appointed twelve apostles. Matt. 19:28 “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Like the Old Testament princes, the twelve apostles were given authority by the king to sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The apostles were made foundation stones in the building of the Lord’s church. The apostles through their work and testimony have laid the foundation of the Lord’s house and we are built upon it. As the church, we are judged according to that which the apostles laid down for us through the leadership of the Holy Ghost.

The reference to two lions standing beside the throne of the king, speaks to us about the two kingdoms—the one in the Old Testament and the one in the New Testament. The twelve lions on the six steps speak to us about the twelve princes in the Old Testament and the twelve apostles in the New Testament.

Reference 1 above describes to us the ledges in the buildings of the temple. There are numerous lions engraved in the ledges. This speaks to us about the children of Israel in the Old Testament and God’s covenant people in the New Testament. Likewise, the cherubims are used in the scriptures to indicate witnesses. The palm trees speak to us about fruitfulness. These are descriptions of God’s covenant people. We read in Rev. 1:5, 6 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” According to this passage of scripture, the same ones that Christ redeemed have also been made kings and priests unto God. The lions on the ledges point to the fact that God has made his covenant people kings. God’s people, like the cherubims are referred to as witnesses in Heb. 12:1 “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us...” Moreover in Col. 1:9 we are encouraged to be fruitful: Col. 1:9 “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;”