

## Lesson 2      13<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

### The Holy Priests of Israel

#### **Lesson Scope:** [Leviticus 8-10](#)

*References in brackets refer to the lesson scope unless otherwise noted*

#### **Lesson Focus**

Was a sacrifice all that was needed to find acceptance with God? Could every man be his own priest? Were all the people holy, as Korah later claimed when he sought the priesthood? In fact, was any man holy enough to be priest?

The patriarchs had offered their sacrifices and served as priests for their families. Yet Abraham recognized the greater priesthood of Melchizedek. Job, who lived in patriarchal times, served his family as a priest. Yet in trial, he felt estranged from God and cried out for a mediator. "For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us that might lay his hand upon us both" (Job 9:32-33).

Aaron and his sons typified a Priest yet to come, who would accomplish infinitely more than any earthly priest.

Sinful man cannot approach God except through a mediator. Under the Levitical system, God provided access to Himself through the priests.

This is an inspiring lesson, showing the superiority and eternal blessing of the priesthood of Christ. The work of Aaron was a type—but he was still a sinful man offering animal sacrifices. His work was never finished. Sometimes the continual intercession of the Old Testament is wrongly transposed to Christ. The work of Christ as it relates to the provision and basis of reconciliation and propitiation is finished. God is satisfied! Christ is not pleading with God to give man another chance or to forgive additional sins. God's goodwill and favor is toward men.

Christ's present work of intercession continues because our need continues. New believers are saved and saints come to Him in their distresses. Melchizedek, as a type of Christ, met battle-weary Abraham with bread and wine—no sacrifice was offered. Christ ministers to our needs in the same way, but God is satisfied. The grounds for His favor will never be laid again

**Lesson Aim:** To teach the spiritual significance of the priestly office.

**Theme Verse 1 John 2:1.** My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

## Lesson Text

### Consecrated for Service

**Leviticus 8:1-12** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; <sup>3</sup> And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. <sup>4</sup> And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. <sup>5</sup> And Moses said unto the congregation, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded to be done. <sup>6</sup> And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. <sup>7</sup> And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound *it* unto him therewith. <sup>8</sup> And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummin. <sup>9</sup> And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, *even* upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses. <sup>10</sup> And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* therein, and sanctified them. <sup>11</sup> And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them. <sup>12</sup> And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.

### Sanctified for Mediation

**Leviticus 9:5** And they brought *that* which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD.

**Leviticus 9:8-9** Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which *was* for himself. <sup>9</sup> And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put *it* up-

on the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar:

**Leviticus 9:15-16** And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which *was* the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first. <sup>16</sup> And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner.

**Leviticus 9:22-24** And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. <sup>23</sup> And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. <sup>24</sup> And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

### **Commissioned for Teaching**

**Leviticus 10:8-11** And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, <sup>9</sup> Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations: <sup>10</sup> And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; <sup>11</sup> And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

## **Questions for Study**

### **Consecrated for Service**

1. Why is a mediator needed?
2. Summarize the meaning of Aaron's garments.
3. What did the anointing oil signify?

### **Sanctified for Mediation**

4. What preparation did Aaron need before he could serve as high priest?
5. What preparation did Christ endure to become our Mediator?
6. Why was death, shown by the shed blood, needed to atone for sin?
7. On what conditions will the fire of God fall? What are the results?

### **Commissioned for Teaching**

8. How does a godly life reinforce the message of a teacher?
9. What is our commission for teaching?

## **Analyzing the Passage**

Aaron, the high priest, is a type of Christ. In the New Testament, as a kingdom of priests, we represent God to men and help men to find God. The holy garments for the priests and the high priest are significant. The holy crown (8:9) pointed to Christ, who would be a Priest upon His throne (Zechariah 6:9-13). Its inscription "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" signified that Aaron's work bore the iniquity of the people and consequently their gifts and offerings could be accepted as holy to a holy God (Exodus 28:38).

The ephod included two onyx stones, one on each shoulder, bearing the names of Jacob's twelve sons in order of age. The breastplate had twelve jewels set in gold, inscribed with the twelve tribes of Israel. These items indicated the weight of responsibility the high priest carried and the nearness of the people to his heart.

The breastplate contained the Urim and Thummin, which were used to determine God's will and direction. This gave a prophetic aspect to the high priest's office.

The colors of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet in the ephod and breastplate symbolized divinity and royalty. All of these foreshadowed the Son of God as Prophet, Priest, and King. His sacrifice is the only all-sufficient, eternal mediation between God and man.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **Consecrated for Service**

1. God directed the consecrating of the priests (8:1-4). "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest" (Hebrews 5:4-5). Jesus is the Good Shepherd of the sheep—"to him the porter [God] openeth" (John 10:3) because He laid down His life for the sheep.

2. The priests needed personal cleansing and priestly garments (8:6-9). We also need the washing of regeneration by the Word. (See Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:26.) We live in a filthy world. If we will be God's servants, His Word must penetrate our thinking so that pride, dishonesty, impurity, carnality, and selfishness are rooted out. Then we serve Him clothed with the garments of salvation.

3. The anointing oil sanctified the high priest for his work (8:10-12).

The anointing was a type of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit for His work. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18). The Holy Spirit produces divine love in our lives (Galatians 5:22), which sanctifies and consecrates our whole being to divine service. Divine love by the Holy Spirit enables communication between God and man, and between man and man.

### **Sanctified for Mediation**

4. The high priest offered a sin offering for himself and then one for the people (9:8-9, 15). For mediation to be accepted with God, two things are necessary. First, God must accept the person of the mediator. Aaron needed first to offer for himself so that he could be accepted with God. Secondly, the mediator must present to God an acceptable basis for mediation. Animal sacrifices could not wash away the guilt of sin from the conscience, yet God accepted them as an act of faith in the coming Redeemer.

5. The shedding of blood, requiring death, provided atonement for sin (9:8-9, 15). The curse on Adam was death, but God graciously allowed him life by a sacrifice. Throughout the Old Testament, worshipers continued to substitute animals that they might live. Then God sent His Son to suffer the curse (death) for all and thereby revoke the sentence of death from the human race. (See Romans 5:6-19; Galatians 3:10-13.)

6. Effective intercession brings blessing from God (9:22-23). Jesus, when He had finished all the Father's work of redemption, blessed His disciples before He left them (Luke 24:50). The church continues to be blessed through the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20-21).

7. The fire of God falls when men obey God's covenant (9:24). When we yield ourselves to God as a living sacrifice, the fire of God (the Holy Spirit) burns in our hearts and lives. When the fire of God falls, men fall too—on their faces. The fire of God produces meekness, humility, dependence on God, and seeking after God.

### **Commissioned for Teaching**

8. God required the priests to live sober, self-controlled, and holy lives (10:8-10). In the New Testament, drunkenness symbolizes infatuation with anything that undermines our commitment to Christ. (See I Thessalonians 5:5-8.) This includes business involvements. Are we aware of

the spiritual casualty rates often surrounding large businesses? What about the insurance they may require? Or the communication links that expose us to a multitude of temptations?

This drunkenness also includes intellectual and educational pursuits. How much "knowledge" among us is being gained by listening to CDs from persons we would not fellowship with?

Are we so in bondage to the world's moral depravity that we must wear their jeans, boots, jackets, and sweaters?

9. God called the priests to teach Israel all His statutes (10:11). We, as a New Testament kingdom of priests, are also given a teaching commission. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

### **Important Teachings**

1. God directed the consecrating of the priests (8:1-4).
2. The priests needed personal cleansing and priestly garments (8:6-9).
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3. The anointing oil sanctified the high priest for his work (8:10-12).
4. The high priest offered a sin offering for himself and then one for the people (9:8-9, 15).
5. The shedding of blood, requiring death, provided atonement for sin (9:8-9, 15).
6. Effective intercession brings blessing from God (9:22-23).
7. The fire of God falls when men obey God's covenant (9:24).
8. God required the priests to live sober, self-controlled, and holy lives (10:8-10).
9. God called the priests to teach Israel all His statutes (10:11).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. Why is a mediator needed?

A mediator is needed to bridge the gap between men and God, which was created by sin. Mediation is needed to help man understand and find God and also to minister the message of God to men.

2. Summarize the meaning of Aaron's garments.

The holy crown, the Urim and Thummin, and the colors combined in his garments pointed to a time when the Mediator would be Prophet, Priest, and King. The names of Jacob's sons, carried on his shoulders, spoke of the weight of their sins and their needs, which he presented to God. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel in the breastplate reminded the children of Israel that their needs were close to his heart.

3. What did the anointing oil signify?

The anointing oil signified consecration by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit produces divine love among brethren, enabling them to serve God effectively. Psalm 133 describes the anointing oil as touching his whole being. No area of our life should cause a stumbling block for others.

4. What preparation did Aaron need before he could serve as high priest? Aaron needed to wash with water, dress in holy garments, and receive anointing with oil. Then he needed to offer a sin offering for himself.

5. What preparation did Christ endure to become our Mediator?

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:5-8). "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Hebrews 5:7-8).

6. Why was death, shown by the shed blood, needed to atone for sin?

Because of the Fall, every man is under the sentence of death. While we should not carry the concept of substitution too far, death was required to substitute for the sinner. The Israelites showed this principle as they placed their hands on the head of the sacrificial animal. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9).

7. On what conditions will the fire of God fall? What are the results?

The fire of God will fall when men follow God's commands with loyal, voluntary, and unswerving obedience.

When the fire of God falls, all that man has done, all that man has sacrificed, and all that man has offered to God are consumed so that nothing remains of human effort and only the power of God reigns in his life to accomplish only the will of God.

8. How does a godly life reinforce the message of a teacher?

The Bible has a message. It is not the message of a scholar, a philosopher, a hero, or a politician. It is a message carried by men who live it from the heart. Paul did not win the world of his day by logic. He won the world by the truth of the Gospel, backed by a godly life. A holy people are a powerful testimony to the truth of Scripture.

9. What is our commission for teaching?

We are to teach our children, our grandchildren, and our neighbors. In short, we are to be living epistles, known and read of all men.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

Aaron was a man. Christ is the Son of God. Aaron died, and his intercession ended. Christ intercedes by the power of an endless life. Because Aaron was sinful, he needed to sacrifice for himself. Christ is sinless. Aaron needed to bring a sacrifice. Christ is both High Priest and Sacrifice. Aaron's work was never finished. But Christ, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God.

### **Research Guide**

The Bible is its own commentary. Study the Book of Hebrews. Study John 17 to understand Christ's own declaration of His finished work. John 17 also explains how Christ's finished work makes us completed (perfect) persons.