

Study Notes - the Priesthood

by Walter Beuttler

The sermon explores the significance of the priesthood, its derivation, and its typology, highlighting the importance of consecration, anointing, and fellowship with God.

Scripture: Exodus 29:1, Leviticus 8:8, Psalm 133:2, Isaiah 9:6, John 6:32, John 6:53, Acts 8:18, Revelation 3:18

Topics: "Priesthood Of God", "Holy Ordination"

Description

Walter Beuttler delves into the significance of the priesthood, tracing its origins from the patriarchs to the appointment of Aaron and his sons as the first high priests. He emphasizes the importance of the priesthood in facilitating the Israelites' access to God and highlights how the priesthood of believers is typified by the sons of Aaron. Beuttler also explores the consecration process of the priests, detailing the steps of stripping, washing, clothing, and anointing, symbolizing purification, regeneration, and empowerment for service with the Holy Ghost.

Transcript

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Meaning of the term "priest"

The term "priest" is derived from a word meaning "elder." He was the one appointed to perform the sacrificial functions for the children of Israel.

2. Derivation of priesthood

The priesthood began with the patriarchs when the heads of families acted as priests, e. g., Gen. 8:20-22 and Job 1:5. The priesthood of the tabernacle was first chosen from the line of Aaron, the brother of Moses, who became the first high priest. Aaron's sons became the first priests, Ex. 28:1.

3. Importance of the priesthood

The tabernacle would have been useless without the priesthood, for the Israelites could only enter the Holy Place in the person of their representatives, the priests. These engaged in divine service for them. In like manner, they could only enter the Holy of Holies once a year on the day of atonement through their representative high priest.

4. Typology of the priesthood

The sons of Aaron typify the priesthood of believers, Rev. 1:6. Aaron is a type of Christ as our great High Priest in his substitutionary, propitiatory, and intercessory work.

B. CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS, Ex. 29:1-25

The priests could not perform the function of their office until they were consecrated in accordance with the instructions given by God to Moses. This consecration consisted of the following steps:

1. They were stripped

After being brought to the tabernacle for the act of consecration, they had to be stripped of their own clothing, which is a type of the garments of the flesh, Zech. 3:3-4; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:8-9.

2. They were washed (29:4)

After all of their own garments had been removed they were washed with water, which is a type of regeneration, Ezek. 36:25; John 3:5-6; Tit. 3:5.

3. They were clothed (29:8-9)

After their cleansing they were clothed in priestly garments which typify the garments of the believer-priests, Rev. 3:4; 16:15; Col. 3:12-14.

4. They were consecrated (29:10-25)

Sacrifices were offered for their consecration, consisting of the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the ram of consecration. They also had to wave the wave offering before the Lord. The blood of the ram consecration had to be sprinkled upon:

(1) The tip of their right ear (29:20)

This is a type of consecrated hearing. In a negative sense the priest's ears must be closed to man's ideas, and in the positive sense they must be open to God, Psa. 40:6-8; Isa. 50:4-5.

(2) The thumb of the right hand (29:20)

This is a type of consecrated activity in service for God. This service is to be performed solely unto God, Eph. 6:5-6; Gal. 1:10.

(3) The great toe of the right foot (29:20)

This is a type of the consecrated walk of the believer-priest who must be upright before men and God, and not as the priests Hophni and Phinehas, 1 Sam. 2:12-17, 34-35.

(4) The garments of the priests (29:21)

This is a type of the consecration of the office of the priests, which should be used only for the glory of God, Titus 1:7, and never for selfish purposes as in 1 Sam. 2:36; 8:1-3.

5. They were anointed, Ex. 30:22-33

(1) Composition of the anointing oil

The composition of the anointing oil, as to ingredients and proportion, was specified by God and consisted of olive oil mingled with four spices to make it a fragrant compound, namely:

a. Pure myrrh, 500 shekels (30:23)

This spice was bitter to the taste but had a fragrant odor. It speaks of the suffering and resultant fragrance of an anointed life.

b. Sweet cinnamon, 250 shekels (30:23)

Although its flowers have a disagreeable odor, it improves the flavor of bitter substances. This speaks of those joys and blessings which help one to endure the bitter things.

c. Sweet calamus, 250 shekels (30:23)

This aromatic reed scents the air while growing. When cut down, dried and powdered, it was used as an ingredient in the richest perfumes. Typologically it speaks of the fragrance of Christ's life in the anointed believer.

d. Cassia, 500 shekels (30:24)

This plant has purple flowers and lives at a very high altitude. It was being used as incense and to scent garments. This speaks of the dignity of Christ's royal character manifested in the believer as kings unto God, Rev. 1:6.

(2) Use of the anointing oil The anointing took place after the blood was applied and speaks of the empowering for service with the Holy Ghost. There were, however, three prohibitions:

a. It was not to be poured on man's flesh (30:32)

The anointing oil was to be poured on Aaron's HEAD after the mitre had been placed upon him. From there it ran down over his garments, Psa. 133:2.

b. No imitation was to be made (30:32)

Its use for mere personal enjoyment was forbidden. God called the anointing oil "holy" and said "it shall be holy unto you." Its misuse would be irreverence.

c. It was not to be put upon a stranger (30:33)

The anointing oil was only for God's people. Thus the Holy Spirit is given only to God's children, Acts 8:18-21.

C. GARMENTS OF PRIESTHOOD, Ex. 28:1-43; 29:5-7; 39:1-31

1. Garments of the priests

(1) Linen breeches (28:42-43; 39:28)

The first piece of clothing must cover man's nakedness with linen, type of the righteousness of Christ, Rev. 3:18.

(2) Linen coats (28:40; 39:27)

These were woven and speaks of the perfection of the believer-priest's righteousness in Christ, 1 Cor. 1:30.

(3) Linen girdles (28:40; 39:29)

The girdle held the garments in place and speaks of righteousness in God's service.

(4) Linen bonnets (28:40; 39:28)

This headdress completes the garments of the priests and shows him to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ from head to foot.

2. Garments of the high priests

(1) The robe of the ephod (28:31-35; 39:22-26)

On top of the linen breeches and coat, the high priest wore the "robe of the ephod." On the bottom were pomegranates and golden bells alternately arranged. The pomegranates speak of fruitfulness, the golden bells of divine testimony. In Christ the fruit of his life and the testimony of his words were always balanced.

(2) The ephod (28:6-14; 39:2-7)

This was the garment worn on top of the blue robe and hung upon the priest's shoulders. On each of the two shoulder pieces there was an onyx stone, each engraved with six names of the twelve tribes. Thus the high priest bore the people on his shoulders before God. The shoulder speaks of strength and responsibility, Isa. 9 :6 Therefore this is a type of Christ bearing his people before God in his strength and on his own responsibility.

(3) The breastplate (28:15-29; 39:8-21)

The breastplate was four-square. On it were twelve precious stones, each engraved with a name of the twelve tribes of Israel. This typifies Christ as bearing his people not only upon his shoulders, but also upon his heart, the seat of the affections.

(4) The Urim and Thummim (28:30)

Urim and Thummim means "light and perfections." They were worn in, or attached to, the breastplate of the high priest, Lev. 8:8. It appears that they have been used for the ascertainment of the will of God, 1 Sam. 28:6.

(5) The girdle (28:4, 39; 29:5; 39:29)

The girdle of the high priest differed from that of the priest in that it was embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet needlework.

It typifies Christ as a servant in righteousness in the heavenly, royal, and sacrificial character of that service.

(6) The mitre (28:36-39; 29:6; 39:28)

This headdress had engraved "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" and speaks of Christ standing before God in holiness as our great High Priest.

D. FOOD OF THE PRIESTS, Ex. 29:31-33; Lev. 8:31-32

Aaron and his sons were to eat flesh of the ram of consecration and of the bread of consecration. They were to be strengthened for God's service by feeding on "those things wherewith the atonement was made." As applied to the believer-priest, this speaks of:

1. Fellowship and communion

Especially in oriental custom, eating and drinking was synonymous with fellowship, Gen. 26:27-30; Exodus 24:11. This points to the Lord's supper and to our fellowship with God.

2. Christ as our sustenance

As the priests were to eat the flesh and the bread, so we are to be sustained by eating Christ as our flesh, John 6:53-57, and our bread, John 6:32-35.

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