

JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE (27)

ISRAEL AT MT. SINAI (4)
PRIESTS AND SACRIFICES

A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted diagonally from the bottom-left towards the top-right, located in the lower right quadrant of the slide.

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ Instructions for the priesthood were given to Moses on Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 28-29**)
- ▶ **Exodus 38** records the making of their garments.
- ▶ **Leviticus 8-9** records their consecration and the beginning of their ministry

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

▶ General thoughts

- ▶ Priests and Levites fulfilled, “a variety of essentially religious duties... They were professional men and were supported for their fulltime religious work.” (Baker Encyclopedia)
- ▶ Priests had to be descendants of Aaron and his sons. He had 4 sons (Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar **(Num. 3:10, Ex. 28:1, 29:9, etc.)**)

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **General thoughts**
- ▶ Their work included:
 - ▶ Serving as mediators between God and man
 - ▶ Studying and teaching God's law
 - ▶ Judging certain matters of law
 - ▶ Determining cleanliness (purity) of people (e.g., Leprosy, soars, etc.)

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

▶ General thoughts

- ▶ The Levites assisted the priests in doing their work. Transporting the tabernacle, helping with sacrifices and duties, etc.

Their exact authority and limitations is unclear.

- ▶ **Exodus 19:6**, if Israel obeyed the voice of YHWH, *And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.* These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ He was, in essence, the primary priest. His work included what other priests did PLUS a few extra important responsibilities.
 - ▶ He represented Israel and the priesthood
 - ▶ He offered the annual sacrifice for sins in the Holy of Holies.

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ His clothing was special and ornate. **Exodus 28 & 39**
 - inner layer was linen trousers (undergarments) – **28:42-43**
They covered from waist to thighs to “cover their nakedness”
 - Modesty **WAS** important!

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THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ Special and ornate clothing.
- ▶ Tunic – a second layer – made of linen with a sash. Artistically woven – **Ex. 28:39, 39:27**
- ▶ Robe – blue with an opening at the head woven. Its hem had pomegranates (balls) and bells – **Ex. 28:31-35, 39:22-26**

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THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ Special and ornate clothing.
- ▶ An Ephod outside (not shown) – made of gold, blue, purple & scarlet & fine linen – likely 2 pieces and attached at the shoulders. On each shoulder strap was an onyx stone with the names of 6 tribes etched – **Ex. 28:6-14, 39:2-7**

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THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ Special and ornate clothing.
- ▶ A sash held the ensemble together.
- ▶ A breastplate (~9x9 in) had 12 stones with the names of the 12 tribes etched. Held with gold chains. The fold created a pocket that held the Urim and the Thummim –
Ex. 28:15-30, 39:8-21

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THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The High Priest.**
- ▶ Special and ornate clothing.
- ▶ On the head, a turban. With a gold band with the words, “HOLINESS TO THE LORD” engraved

Ex. 28:36-40, 39:27-31

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THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

▶ The Priests.

- ▶ Their garments were modest
Same or similar trousers.

They too would wear tunics with sashes and hats but not as ornate (**Ex. 28:40-43**).

They were described as made “for glory and beauty” (**Ex. 28:40**)

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The Priests.**
- ▶ The priests had various restrictions
 - They could not marry a divorced woman or a prostitute (**Lev. 21:7**).
 - If they had bodily defects, they were excluded from service (**Lev. 21:16-23**)
- ▶ **Deuteronomy 33:8-10** describes some of their duties (Moses' farewell blessing to tribe of Levi)

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **The Priesthood consecrated**
- ▶ **Exodus 29:1-37** – their consecration would involve the sacrifice of a young bull and 2 rams. Dressed in their garments they were anointed with oil. They put their hands on the heads of the animals that were sacrificed. Some of the blood was sprinkled around the altar. Some was put on their right ear, thumb and big toe.
- ▶ The consecration took 7 days.
- ▶ **Leviticus 8** records the consecration & **Lev. 9** the beginning of their service.

THE SACRIFICES

- ▶ **General information**
- ▶ Sacrifices were always an important part of worship to God. The first recorded act of worship – **Genesis 4:1-5ff (cf. Heb. 11:4)**
- ▶ During patriarchal age we see sacrifices – burnt offerings (**Gen. 22:8**), calling on the name of the LORD (**Gen. 12:8**), associated with covenants, etc.
- ▶ Specific details are not given, BUT that changed at with Israel (Egypt & at Mt. Sinai).

THE SACRIFICES

- ▶ **General information**
- ▶ An important part of Israel's worship.
- ▶ **Numbers 28-29** records various sacrifices
 - twice daily (**28:3-8**)
 - Sabbath – weekly (**28:9-10**)
 - monthly – (**28:11-15**)
 - various feasts – (**28:16-29:40**)
 - annually – day of atonement – (**29:7-11**)

▶ **General information**

▶ Under LOM, priests offered the sacrifices

▶ Different sacrifices came with different instructions.

- IF the sacrifice was communal (a group) – the priests or leaders would lay their hand on the animal's head

- IF an individual, he would lay his hand on its head.. IT also had to be of HIS stock.

- ▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**
- ▶ Each sacrifice was for a different purpose, required different types of animals and different parts being sacrificed.
- ▶ The burnt offering (**Lev. 1, 6:8-13**)
Most ancient and thorough. A voluntary offering. MOST of the animal was completely burned (except the hide).
A declaration of total dedication to God.

- ▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**
- ▶ The grain offering (**Lev. 2, 6:14-23**)
The only bloodless sacrifice. Usually accompanied other sacrifices.
Involve burning a portion of unleavened cakes with the rest given to the priests.
Often accompanied by a drink offering (**Num. 15**)

THE SACRIFICES

- ▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**
- ▶ The peace offering (**Lev. 3, 7:11-21**)
Intended to declare that all was well between God and the one offering the gift.
It was a thanksgiving offering
(also called a “fellowship offering”)
The animal could be a bull, cow, sheep or goat

THE SACRIFICES

▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**

▶ The sin offering (**Lev. 4, 6:24-30**)

Offered for the one who sinned “unintentionally”.

WHO sinned determined the sacrifice – a priest (a bull), the whole congregation (a bull), leaders (a young bull) or an individual (a female goat or lamb).

The “party” involved would lay their hands on the head of the animal and kill it!

NOTE: There was no specific sacrifice for intentional sins. This depended on God’s grace!

- ▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**
- ▶ The trespass offering (Lev. 5:1-6:7, 7:1-10)
A special guilt offering. 3 examples given.
 - 1) A person hears something and doesn't report it.
 - 2) A person touches an unclean thing.
 - 3) He swears and doesn't keep his promise.- Required confession, restitution and an offering. This was about righting a wrong.

- ▶ **The 5 Sacrifices – Leviticus 1-7**

- ▶ Other observations (7:22- 27)

They were not to eat the blood or the fat of the sacrifice.

Priests had various responsibilities in carrying out each of these sacrifices- clothing, washings, disposing of ashes, portions they could eat, etc. (**Lev. 6:8-7:21**)

THE PRIESTHOOD & SACRIFICE - LESSONS

▶ The term “priest” is **NEVER** used in the NT of a minister in the church.

▶ **Matthew 23:6-11**

We need to be careful how we use titles. Is our language clear and biblical?

“Pastor” is never used for the preacher

“Clergy/laity” not found in NT

“Reverend” – a title not found in NT!

THE PRIESTHOOD & SACRIFICE - LESSONS

- ▶ **We are the priesthood of God and individually priests**
- ▶ **1 Peter 2:5, 9, cf. Revelation 1:6, 5:10**
 - We approach God directly – **Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2:18** – through Jesus Christ our High Priest
 - We offer spiritual sacrifices
 - We proclaim His marvelous light – **1 Peter 2:9, 12**
 - We worship God!

THE PRIESTHOOD & SACRIFICE - LESSONS

- ▶ **We offer to God sacrifices**
- ▶ **Romans 12:1-2** - a living sacrifice
- ▶ **Hebrews 13:15-16** – the fruit of our lips
Doing good for others


THE PRIESTHOOD & SACRIFICE - LESSONS

- ▶ **Jesus is our High Priest**
- ▶ **Hebrews 4:14-16** – declared. Developed thought much of the rest of Hebrews.

THE PRIESTHOOD & SACRIFICE - LESSONS

- ▶ **Let us respect God's pattern!**
- ▶ **Cf. Exodus 25:9, 40** – Moses expected to follow the pattern he was given on the mountain.
Colossians 3:17 – EVERYTHING we do needs to respect His pattern for us!

As His “Priesthood”,
What are you willing
to offer Him?

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Let us pray

