

## Priests

Premise of Leviticus is ...

- God is holy, they want to enter his space.
- But we can't because of our sinful and rebellious spirit.

So, through the book of Leviticus he sets up Sacred Space ...

- Where they can meet with him in the appropriate way.

He sets up Sacred Times ...

1. To help them remember he is the Focal point of the Circle of Life. (Speech Bubble)
2. The Gift of the Torah. (Speech Bubble)

How would all of this be facilitated?

- That is where we get to the next movement ...
- That is all about Sacred Representatives called Priests. (Speech Bubble)

So, why did they need Priests?

- Weren't they all supposed to be Priests?

Remember earlier on in our story ...

- When they were at the foot of Sinai, God said to them ...

Exodus 19:5–6<sup>5</sup> ... if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession.

Although the whole earth is mine,<sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests (highlight in yellow) and a holy nation.'

If you obey me ... (highlight the "if you obey me" above in blue.

- ...

But they didn't obey him.

- Because as God was giving Moses the "10 commandments" on Sinai.
- They worshipped the golden calf down stairs.

So, we have a problem.

- These are the people who are supposed to be Priests (Speech Bubble)
- And do the "Priestly work" of being a light to the nations.

They are supposed to be the people ...

- Who will expand the garden and bear God's image into it.

And now they cannot even enter the presence of God ...

- Without being consumed by God's Splendor.

So, what to do?

- The book of Leviticus.
- Choose out of the group a smaller group (Levites)

Dan aparte speech bubbles met ...

- Whom God would Set Apart as Sacred People.
- Who will Facilitate the Sacred Space and Sacred Time?

- While at the same time be advanced signpost ...
- Of what "the image" is supposed to be like.

1. How is this going to work?
2. And what are they going to do?

How it is going to work? They would have to be **ORDAINED** - Lev. 8

### Step 1 – Ritual Cleansing (Lev. 8:5-6)

Leviticus 8:6 <sup>6</sup> Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward and washed them with water.

- From there the Priests had to wash themselves every time they went on duty.
- Later on in 2<sup>nd</sup> temple times ...
- Mikvah - Purification baths outside of temple.



- Qumran and purification.

## Step 2 – Set them apart through their Dress Code (Lev. 8:7-9)

### Priestly outfit



### Why the special clothing?

- Draws attention to the office or function of the person (SB)
- As opposed to his individual personality. (SB)
- High ranking military officer.
- It emphasizes his role and responsibility rather than his name. (Speech bubble)

A uniform enables the rest of society to immediately identify figures of authority ...

- And to pay them appropriate respect.

In general, the more prestigious the office, the more splendid the uniform.

- His glorious clothing symbolized the significance of his office.

The **breast plate** was the most striking piece of the high priest's outfit.

- It was made of gold and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn. (Bubble)
- Four rows of precious stones.
- Each engraved with the name of a tribe.



Why?

- He was going to **Represent them before God (SB)** as Jesus later would ...
- On their behalf.

In other words, he would **Go into God's presence as Israel. (speech bubble from Israel)**

He had to wear a **turban** and on it, God instructed them to ...

**Exodus 28:36<sup>36</sup> "Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO YHWH."**

Why?

Their "purpose" was to be **HOLY TO YHWH** – **Inscribed on golden plate**

- To be Distinct, Set-apart and consecrated for **YHWH's service. (SB)**

**Exodus 28:38<sup>38</sup> ... It will be on Aaron's forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to YHWH.**

And their whole attire represented ...

- The splendor, majesty and sanctity of the office.

### **Step 3 – Anointing with Oil (Lev. 8:10–12)**

**Lev. 8:10–12<sup>10</sup> Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and everything in it, and so consecrated [qōdaš] them.**

**Qōdaš – Set it apart as holy**

- Take it out of the realm of the "common" ...
- Bring it into the realm of the Holy.

**<sup>11</sup> He sprinkled some of the oil on the altar seven times, anointing the altar and all its utensils and the basin with its stand, to consecrate [qōdaš] them.**

<sup>12</sup> He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to consecrate **him**.

This anointment "sanctified" the high priest ...

- By removing him from the realm of the "common" ...
- And empowering him to operate in the realm of the sacred ...
- Namely, to handle the sacred things.

#### Step 4 – Purification Offering

If God was to be present at the sacrifices offered by the priests ...

- His sanctuary had to be purged from sin's pollution ...
- Specifically of those pollutions introduced by the priests themselves.
- To this end, the first sacrifice was a purification offering on behalf of Aaron ...
- And his sons: they **lay their hands on the bull** (v. 14) (Gebruik vorige slides)

#### Step 5 – Anointing with Blood

Leviticus 8:23–24 <sup>23</sup> Moses slaughtered the ram and took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right **ear**, on the **thumb** of his right hand and on the **big toe** of his right foot.

<sup>24</sup> Moses also brought Aaron's sons forward and put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet. Then he splashed blood against the sides of the altar.

Why should these points of his body be singled out for purification?

- It is an example of a part standing for the whole:

The Priest must have ...

1. Consecrated **ears** ever to listen to God's holy voice.
2. Consecrated **hands** at all times to do holy deeds.
3. Consecrated **feet** to walk evermore in holy ways.

613 commandments = Halakhah = To "walk" in the way of Torah.

#### Step 6 – Consecration by Blood

Leviticus 8:30 <sup>30</sup> Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the **blood** from the altar and sprinkled them on Aaron and his garments and on his sons and their garments. So, he **consecrated** **him** Aaron and his garments and his sons and their garments.

Set Aaron and his sons and their garments apart as Holy.

### Step 7 – Stay for Seven Days

Leviticus 8:36<sup>35</sup> You must stay at the entrance to the tent of meeting day and night for seven days and do what the Lord requires, **so you will not die;** (highlight in geel op click) **for that is what I have been commanded.”**

#### Big picture view of the Structure of Chapter 8

8:1-3 God's **COMMANDS** to Moses

- v.2 – Take Aaron, clothes, oil etc.
- v.3 – Assemble the congregation.

8:4-30 Moses's **OBEDIENCE**

- v.4-5 – Congregation Assembled.
- v.6-9 – Aaron's clothes put on.
- v.10-13 – Aaron anointed.
- v.14-17 – Purification Offering.
- v.18-21 – Burnt Offering.
- v.22-30 – Peace Offering.

8:31-35 Moses **COMMANDS** to Aaron.

8:36 Aaron's **OBEDIENCE.**

Chapter 9 – Their Priestly ministry begins.

**Chapter 9** follows the same structure as Chapter 8

9:1-4 → Moses' **COMMANDS** to Aaron and the congregation.

9:5-6 → The Congregation **OBEYS.**

9:7 → Moses' **COMMANDS** to Aaron.

9:8-11 → Aaron **OBEYS** by offering his purification offering.

9:12-21 → Aaron **OBEYS** by offering other sacrifices

After making the prescribed offerings it says ...

Leviticus 9:22–23 <sup>22</sup> Then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them. And having sacrificed the purification offering, the burnt offering and the fellowship offering, he stepped down.

<sup>23</sup> Moses and Aaron then went into the tent of meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people; and the glory of **YHWH** appeared to all the people.

Highlight “the glory of YHWH appeared”

<sup>24</sup> Fire came out from the presence of **YHWH** and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar.

And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy <sup>[?]</sup> and fell facedown.

So we have the Ordination – Chapter 8

- The Priestly ministry begins – Chapter 9

Four things happen.

1. Moses and Aaron are able to enter the tent.

- Remember **Lev. 1:1 – from the Tent**

2. The Glory of YHWH appeared to all people without consuming them.

- **Picture**

3. Fire came out of his presence and consumed the offerings.

- **Picture**

4. They shouted and fell face down.

- **Picture**

These elaborate garments, splendour, ceremonies and sacrifices were a means to an end.

#### **PURPOSE**

1. It helped to put them in a state of mind that was prepared for God’s coming.

2. It helped them to appreciate the majestic holiness of God.

But most importantly ...

3. It opened the door for the appearance of the glory of YHWH.
  - That would transform them as they live in his presence.

Presence → Worship → Fellowship → Transformation → Image

### JOB DESCRIPTION

#### 1. Teaching Role.

- Teaching Israel, the way of holiness.
- What is pure, what isn't pure – Ritually and morally.
- How did the commands work?
- What to do when you sinned unintentionally?
- What to do when you sinned intentionally.

#### 2. Guardians of the "presence."

- Were people that entered the tabernacle pure?
- Were the animals blameless.
- Was the Tabernacle consistently purified from its contamination.

#### 3. Facilitators of Atonement and fellowship with God.

- Facilitating the Sacrificial system.

#### 4. They were to be "HOLY TO THE LORD."

- Sign posts of God's purposes & the world to come.

So, we have this, God commands and they obey pattern (Lev. 8 & 9)

- We have the appearance of the presence (Lev 9)
- What happens next? (Lev. 10)

Leviticus 10:1–2 <sup>1</sup> Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before YHWH, contrary to his command.



Highlight eers “unauthorised fire” end dan “contrary to his command.”

The regular pattern of the narrative of the preceding chapters ...

- Of a command followed by its fulfilment ...
- Is disrupted in this chapter.
- By Nadab and Abihu’s presumption in offering fire ...
- That was “not commanded” (vv. 1–2)

The whole narrative from 8:1 ...

- Has led us to expect God’s ministers to obey the law promptly and exactly.
- Suddenly we meet Aaron’s sons doing something that had not been commanded.

Leviticus 10: 2 <sup>2</sup> So fire came out from the presence of YHWH and consumed them, and they died before YHWH.

Moses response ...

Leviticus 10:3 <sup>3</sup> Moses then said to Aaron, “This is what YHWH spoke of when he said: “ ‘Among those who approach me I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.’ ” Aaron remained silent.

**“I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.” – highlight above**

How can the “priests” teach the people to be holy ...

- When they are not holy themselves.

“If we reflect how holy a thing God’s worship is, the enormity of the punishment will by no means offend us.” John Calvin

If someone touches a live electrical wire and shocks themselves to death ...

- You don’t say, shame that was a bit extreme and unfair.
- No, you say, shame, how stupid.

What do we learn from this?

- The Priests themselves were morally flawed ...
- And therefore, had to offer sacrifices ...
- First for themselves and then for everybody else.
- Something more and someone greater was needed.

Jesus was that something more ...

- He is the ultimate priest king ...
- Who was fully obedient to God and God's purposes.

### What was his Purpose?

- Bring God's rule and reign to earth as it is in heaven.
- By breaking us free [deliver us save us] from the power [and hold] of sin ...
- So that our humanity could be restored ...
- And that as the Messianic community ...
- We can expand the Garden and bear his image into it.

The Apostle Peter makes this clear when he says ...

1 Peter 2:9–10<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession ...

High light as grys bo met twee clicks.

Everything that Israel was supposed to be, but failed to be.

- We are able to be, in and through Jesus.

So, what is our purpose as the "chosen people", royal priesthood ...

- Holy nation and special possession?

that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

That we may fill our homes, neighbourhoods and workplace with the praises of God.