

Leviticus Chapter 8

In the last few lessons, we saw God through Moses, training Aaron and his sons in the way all of the offerings were to be made. At the time this was done, the head of each house operated as the priest of his family. Someone may ask, why the family of Aaron was chosen to be the priestly family? The first born son of each family was God's. God worked out a system where each first born son could be purchased back from God by paying the silver shekel of the temple. When Moses came down the mountain with the 10 Commandments, Moses told them all that were on God's side to come to him.

The tribe of Levi came to Moses. At that moment, God decided the priestly tribe would be the tribe of Levi. From the tribe of Levi, God chose Aaron and his sons to be the first high priest and priests to carry on the work in the tabernacle. In the last few lessons, we have seen the things Aaron and his sons were instructed on. Notice, that they were not instructed on how to make a living, or how to conduct worldly lives. They were taught the works of God. Ministers today being taught for the ministry should be taught more Bible and less finance and psychology. Enough said, now we will get on with the lesson.

Verses 1-36: Aaron and his sons were consecrated before they ministered to the Lord. The consecration of Aaron and his sons had been ordered long before (see notes on Exodus 29:1-28). But is here described with all the ceremonial details as it was done after the tabernacle was completed and the regulations for the various sacrifices enacted.

Leviticus 8:1 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"

The following section or paragraph, relating to the consecration of Aaron and his sons, was delivered, according to Jarchi, seven days before the setting up of the tabernacle. But to me it seems to have been delivered after the setting it up, since it was out of the tabernacle that the Lord said all those things recorded in the preceding chapters. And after he had given out the laws concerning sacrifices. Then he renewed the order for the consecration of Aaron and his sons, that they might offer them.

"Saying": As follows.

If we will notice in all this, Moses was God's earthly agent at this time. In fact, we will see Moses in the next few verses acting in the position of God's ordained high priest, in the ordination of Aaron and his sons. Remember, the training these separated men had, was in the ways of God.

Leviticus 8:2 "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;"

"The garments" (see notes on Exodus 28:1-43).

"The anointing oil": Oil was used for ceremonial anointing (8:12, 30).

“Sin offering” (see notes on 4:1 – 5:13, especially 4:3-12).

God gives Moses specific instructions on exactly what he will need in the ordination services. Moses and Aaron must have everything needed ready for the services. In the gathering of the proper materials for this ordination, I see that before a person is ordained of God to be a minister, much preparation is necessary. A person must carefully weigh the cost before beginning. The call of God is without repentance, so we must be sure before we decide to embark on this road.

Leviticus 8:3 "And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

That is, the heads of the tribes and the elders of the people, as Aben Ezra interprets it. For the whole body of the people, and every individual of them, could not be got together.

"Unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation": Taking this for the whole court itself, as it sometimes is. Though no doubt on this occasion as great a number was convened as well could be admitted into the court, or about it. To be spectators and witnesses of the solemn investiture of Aaron and his sons with the priestly office.

This is not to be done privately. This should be an event for all the congregation to witness. You remember, Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan where many had come to be baptized. The congregation must be aware of who God had ordained to lead them, before they would follow his instructions. It is wonderful to be a leader, but the people have to be willing to follow, before you can lead them.

Leviticus 8:4 "And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

He convened Aaron and his sons, and the heads of the people, at the door of the tabernacle, and came himself. And brought with him the garments, the oil, and sacrifices, even everything necessary for the consecration.

"And the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation": And this was, according to the Targum of Jonathan, on the twenty third day of the month Adar or February. But it rather seems to be later, some time in the beginning of Nisan or March, and before the Passover began (see Num. 9:1).

Notice in all of this, that Moses does exactly as God has instructed him. These are gathered at the entrance, you will note.

Leviticus 8:5 "And Moses said unto the congregation, This [is] the thing which the LORD commanded to be done."

Having convened them, he opened to them the reason of their being called together, which was not done of himself, but by divine direction.

"This is the thing which the Lord commanded to be done": Namely, what follows, concerning the consecration of Aaron and his sons to be priests. And the investiture of them with that office, attended with various rites and ceremonies to be performed, of which they were to be witnesses.

You may remember from the Exodus teaching, that the people feared God greatly, and they had asked Moses to talk to God for them. They were used to hearing from God through Moses. Then it must be Moses to tell them that a new day has dawned, and now they will have new instructions on how to approach holy God. Moses reminds them that this is not instructions from himself, but from the LORD through him.

Leviticus 8:6 "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water."

Presenting their bodies a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), Aaron and his sons were officially anointed and appointed to their priesthood. By comparison, Jesus needed no preliminary sacrifices, as He had no sin.

This washing them with water is very similar to baptism. This is washing the ways of the world off of them. This removing the earth from Aaron and his sons was the first step to being ordained of God to do the work He has called them to do. Notice at the beginning of Jesus ministry, even though He had no sin, the ceremonial washing (baptism), was performed. We Christians must be washed in the blood of the Lamb of God (Jesus), before we can put on our robe of righteousness. Even in becoming a Christian, the heart must be prepared (we must repent of our sins). Then we are baptized (buried with Christ, and rise to new life in Him). Then, we are ready to witness for Him.

Leviticus 8:7 "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."

To the laver which was in the court of the tabernacle.

"And washed them with water": To show that they should be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord, and offer the sacrifices of the people. All that are in public office in the house of God ought to have both clean hands and a pure heart. To hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, and to be of a pure and holy conversation. And indeed, all that are made kings and priests to God, as all the saints are, they are washed from their sins in the blood of Jesus (Rev. 1:5).

At the baptism of Jesus, we saw the Dove descend upon Him. Jesus already was full of the Spirit of God within His flesh before baptism, but now He was clothed with the Spirit, as well. God the Father confirmed Jesus' ordination when the voice came from heaven and said

Matthew 3:17 "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This coat, put on the priest, was his robe of authority from God. It also was his covering. This robe was of fine white linen, which symbolizes righteousness. This is the same type of white linen that the Christians will wear in heaven (washed in the blood of the Lamb). The girdle was a sash made to hold this robe tight to the body of the priest. The ephod was like a vest that went over the robe. The vest had two onyx stones at the shoulders with the twelve tribes of Israel engraved on them. The priest carried the people on his shoulders. Underneath the onyx stones was a pocket of Gold which held the stones. Gold symbolizes God. This shows me that this tribe was on the high priest's shoulder, but God was there also to undergird and strengthen the high priest for this great task.

This ephod, or vest, was held together with golden chains. So much gold here tells me that the strength of the high priest was in God. On this ephod was the breast plate a span wide and a span long which held 12 stones which represented the 12 tribes of Israel. This tells me that all 12 tribes were not just on the shoulders of the high priest, but on his heart, as well. These stones were also, mounted in Gold. We Christians must be set in Jesus also. The Israelites must be stayed on God (this is what the mounted in gold shows), for the priest to help them. There was a pouch on this ephod between the vest and the heart of the high priest. God would speak through the Urim and the Thummim to the people.

I believe God spoke to the people through the heart of the high priest. I also believe for a minister to be effective in bringing the message of God to the people, God must press into the heart of the minister and speak through the heart of the minister. Even Jesus said He spoke the words of the Father.

John 14:10 "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

I believe in the garment of the high priest; God is showing us that first you must be called to be a minister of God's Word. The next step is to study the Bible and prepare yourself to handle God's Word correctly. The washing shows the putting off of the world and everything of it. Then the ordination begins. God gives the minister the white linen garment of righteousness. A minister must be separated from the world and must live a separated life. They also must be righteous in God's sight. They must be willing to take the whole congregation on their shoulders with the help of God. They must keep the congregation on their heart. The minister must draw strength from God to hold this congregation together. The minister must decide from the beginning, that the message must be God's message that God has placed on the heart of the minister. No ministry based on any other system can ever work. This is God's plan, not man's. One of the most important things in the ministry is to be endowed with power from on High through the baptism (dedication), in the Holy Spirit of God. The power of the minister and his message is when God speaks to the people through them.

Luke 12:11-12 "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and [unto] magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:" "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

I will say one more time, that to minister is a call of God, not a vocation.

Leviticus Chapter 8 Questions

1. Who was the priest of the family, before God established the Levitical priesthood?
2. How could a family buy back their first born son from God?
3. It is not in today's lesson, but what does silver symbolize?
4. Why did God choose the tribe of Levi to be the family who ministered in the sanctuary?
5. Who was chosen out of the family of Levi to be the high priest?
6. Who were to assist him in the sanctuary?
7. What type of instruction had Aaron and his sons received?
8. What lesson can ministers of our day receive from this?
9. What position was Moses filling before Aaron was ordained?
10. What was to be taken to the sanctuary with Aaron and his sons?
11. What lesson can we modern day ministers receive from Moses and Aaron preparing to bring the needed things to the sanctuary?
12. Where was the congregation to be gathered for the ordination?
13. Why was it necessary for the congregation to see this ordination?
14. It is wonderful to be a leader, but the people must be willing to _____ before you can lead them.
15. Why did Moses tell the people, this is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done?
16. Why had the people asked Moses to speak to God for them?
17. What was the first thing Moses did to Aaron and his sons?
18. What can we relate this washing to?
19. Why was Jesus baptized?
20. What is the very first thing a person must do to come to God?
21. What does water baptism for a Christian symbolize?
22. What was the order Moses dressed him?

23. What did the Dove descending on Jesus at His baptism, symbolize?
24. What at Jesus' baptism showed that Jesus was ordained of the Father to minister?
25. What was the coat that was put on the priest symbolic of?
26. What was the priest's robe made of?
27. What does white linen mean?
28. What was the ephod similar to?
29. What was on the shoulder of the ephod?
30. What did this symbolize?
31. What does gold symbolize?
32. How was the ephod held together?
33. The strength of the high priest was in whom?
34. What was on the breastplate?
35. What was the shape of the breastplate?
36. What spiritual meaning can we see in the stones of the 12 tribes being on the breastplate?
37. What did the mounting of the stones in gold mean?
38. God spoke to the people through the _____.
39. What was the pocket called that went behind the breastplate?
40. A minister of God must be _____, it cannot be a _____ with him.
41. What is one of the most important requirements in ministering?