

# THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY (PART I)

ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL PRAYER MONTH 2018

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# OVERVIEW

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## 1. WHY THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY?

- a) *Why did God create mankind?*
- b) *How did the fall of man affect his purpose?*
- c) *How was God's disaster recovery effected?*

## 2. THE CONCEPTS OF PRIESTHOOD

- a) *What is Priesthood?*
- b) *Who is a priest?*
- c) *Functions of a priest*
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## 3. BIBLICAL HISTORY OF PRIESTHOOD

- a) *Levitical priesthood – The Order of Aaron*
- b) *The priesthood of all believers - The Order of Melchizedek*

# 1.WHY THE PRIESTLY MINISTRY?

# a) Why did God create mankind?

## 1. To Rule as Kings (on the basis of righteousness & justice)

- ▶ **Gen 1:26-28** God said, Let Us [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the [tame] beasts, and over all of the earth, and over everything that creeps upon the earth. [**Psalms 104:30; Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3**]
- ▶ **Vrs.27** So God created man in His own image, in the image and likeness of God He created him; male and female He created them. [**Colossians 3:9-10; James 3:8-9**]
- ▶ **Vrs.28** And God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it [using all its vast resources in the service of God and man]; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the earth.

## 2. To Serve as Priests - work/worship - (Hebrew word – **Abhad** means work with an attitude of service). True worship = Work+Spirit+Attitude.

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A true worshipper is a Spirit filled Worker with an attitude of service – John 4:23-24.

▶ **Gen. 2:5.** ... and there was not a man to **till** the ground.

**Till** - (plough/cultivate/dig – implies application of skill, effort, energy, talent to cause the ground to do whatever you want – this means to exercise mastery or to enslave the ground to serve your purpose – add value to God's creation by adding value to yourself!)

▶ **Vs.7.** Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath or spirit of life, and man became a living being. [1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 15:45-50]

▶ **Vrs.15.** And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to **dress** (tend – be inclined, be liable, lean on, have propensity, predisposition ) it and to **keep** it (to guard it, to protect it, attend to it, be aware, be circumspect).

## b) How did the fall of man affect his purpose? Gen.3

1. Affected the **Kingly mandate** – By disobedience, the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam handed over his authority as “**prince** of the world” to satan, which then becomes the “**prince** of this world”.  
– *Ps.68:31 ...princes shall come out of Egypt...*

**Synonyms for prince:** ruler, noble, emperor, sovereign, lord, leaders, monarch, royal, crowned head etc..

### SCRIPTURAL PROOF:

- ▶ *John 12:31, 14:30*; - "the prince/ruler of this world"
- ▶ *Eph. 2:2*; "the prince of the power of the air", and "the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience to structure the course of this world".
- ▶ *2 Cor. 4:4* "the god of this world" – responsible for blinding people so they don't see the light of the gospel.
- ▶ *Jer.7:18* – sacrifices & drink offerings made to the "queen of the air".

2. Affected the **Priestly mandate** – Because of the disobedience of the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam and results were:
- Separated from God/broken relationship, meaning spiritual death resulting into physical death.
  - The land was cursed, meaning working conditions became very complicated and he became a slave to work.
  - He earned bread with the sweat of His brow, meaning he began working from hands to mouth.
  - Eve's desire became for her husband, & child bearing became painful and .....
- **Vrs. 15** God devices a **disaster recovery plan** because what God had purposed was frustrated – God put enmity between the seed (Christ) of the woman and the serpent. – **Rom.5:12-19**. Jesus became the atoning sacrifice for our sins - **1<sup>st</sup> John 2:1-2**



## c) How was the disaster recovery plan effected?

### - By the Intercession of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, we're redeemed!

*2<sup>nd</sup> Cor.5:21* -This is what salvation is – Jesus procured our salvation and we are now saved by His grace! And His continual intercession guarantees our eternal salvation/inheritance (*Heb.7:25*).

### - Restoration process! The heavens, the earth & entire creation bears witness!

*Rev.5:5* – **The Lion** (King) of the tribe of Judah – **Gen.49:9-10** – Shiloh (the peaceful one, the messiah to whom the throne & the people's obedience belongs!).

*Rev.5:6* – **The Lamb** – speaks of atoning sacrifice – priestly ministry

### - We are partakers by birth!

A Lion gives birth to a lion & a lamb gives birth to a lamb!

Both our Kingship & Priesthood is by birth! – we must therefore be born again to function as priests! (*Jon.3:3-7*)

### - Our Reign as kings and priests!

*Rev.5:9-10* - We (believers in Jesus Christ) are restored to God's original purpose – To rule with **kingly authority** and reign with the **priestly anointing**.



## 2.THE CONCEPTS OF PRIESTHOOD

## a) What is Priesthood?

- ▶ Priesthood is an ancient institution that has existed as long as humanity has existed. It exists in every belief system or society. It is the office, position and the collection of priests. E.g Baal, Ashera poles (*Judges 2:10-13, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 18:19, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 10, priest of midian - Ex. 2:16*).
- ▶ It constitutes priests; i.e, in every belief system (good or evil), there are priests.

## b) Who is a priest?

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- ▶ Priests are human contact points between nature and deities (Adam, **intermediaries/mediators** Noah, Abraham, Jesus - *1<sup>st</sup>Tim.2:5*)
- ▶ Spiritual **administrators** – implement the policies/will of a deity. Jesus submitted to the Father's will – *Math.26:36-39*.
- ▶ Spiritual **legislators** – make spiritual laws that govern their jurisdiction (*Deut.17:18, Heb.7:12 – Heb.6:18-20*).  
Ordinances that oppose us – *Col.2:14*
- ▶ Priests are the **custodians of culture**. Culture is from cult – belief system. What you believe, you do and practice as a way of life – tradition.

Why do priests exist? (*Ps.115:16*)

NB: The kingdom with the greatest and most effective priesthood will always prevail and rule.

## c) Functions of a priest

- ▶ A priest **builds altars** to a deity and ministers to a deity from that altar, whether built for YHWH or satan.
- ▶ He offers **sacrifices**, burns **incense**, makes **covenants**, makes **decrees** and **proclamations** from that altar. *1<sup>st</sup> Kings 13:1-8, Exo.22:20*
- ▶ E.g.s of Godly priests - Job, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. offered sacrifices and hence they were priests of Jehovah God. Ahab, Jeroboam etc. offered sacrifices to other gods and so were priests of those gods that they served. *Num.23:1 & 29*
- ▶ We are NT priests & altars at the same time – *1<sup>st</sup> Pet.2:5, Heb.10:1---*

## d) The attributes of a priest

- ▶ **Heb. 5:1-4** For every high priest is chosen from among men and appointed to act on behalf of men in things relating to God, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins....

### A priest:

- ▶ **Compassionate** (*Mark 6:34*). Have feelings for people, be concerned, be considerate, be kind! (*Heb.4:15*).
- ▶ **Teaches** the people. (*2Chr. 15:3; Mal.2:7* – Contrast Eli's Sons *1<sup>st</sup>Sam.2:12*)

- ▶ **Subject to weakness**, not superhuman (e.g. Moses, David, etc.)
- ▶ **Bears the sins** of the people and makes atonement.
- ▶ **Bears the authority** of God over the people.
- ▶ **Makes intercession:**
  - ▶ -Jesus - *Heb 7:25, Rom.8:34,*
  - ▶ -The Holy Spirit - *Rom.8:26-27,*
  - ▶ -Moses - *Exo.32:10,32.*
  - ▶ -God seeks an intercessor - *Isa.59:16, Ezek.22:30-31*

# 3. BIBLICAL HISTORY OF PRIESTHOOD

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**a) *The Order of Aaron – Levitical Priesthood***

**b) *The Order of Melchizedek – Priesthood of all believers.***

# a) The Order of Aaron – Levitical priesthood

## 1. Nation Chosen, but rejected God:

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*Exodus 19:1-6, 7-9, 10-15 - God's ultimate desire was for the nation of Israel to be a kingdom of priests, Ex. 19:5-11.*

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- ▶ *Vrs. 6* - A kingdom of priests and a holy nation
- ▶ *Vrs. 7, 8* - Moses was functioning as an intermediary (priest), but God wanted the whole nation of priests so He could dwell among them.

**NB:** The LORD was re-organizing and preparing them for the future. Slaves being made into a nation – incredible undertaking!

## 2. God's response was access restriction – once a year (Exod.30:10, Lev.16:34, Heb.9:7)

### ▶ WHY?

### ▶ Exodus 20:18-21

- ▶ Note: *verse 19*: God wants a nation of priests but the people have a different view altogether – they were terrified and drew back!

The reverential fear of God must draw us closer to Him and not away from Him. May God reveal Himself to us so that we may revere Him and walk in His ways!

## 3. Choice of 70 elders to approach - Exodus 24:1-11

- ▶ God came to a people, yet were terrified, but now He calls the people to Himself and restricts how far they can approach God – only the 70 elders drew closer to the mt. with Moses, Aron, Nadab & Abihu.
- ▶ Note: God came to the people, but they rejected God, and now God selected a few of them to approach Him.

## 4. Aaron and family Chosen.

- ▶ Nu.17:1-13 – The process of choosing a priest
- ▶ Nu.18:1-7, God singles out Aaron and his family for the priesthood.
- ▶ Note: Then we have the Levitical Priesthood – the Priesthood according to **the order of Aaron.**

## 5. God Chooses the tribe of Levi:

- ▶ The tribe of Levi chosen to serve in the Tabernacle, with different families serving different responsibilities - **Nu.3:5-9,11-15, 30-32**
- ▶ Their role was to support the work in the Tent of Testimony, i.e., assisting the high priest Aaron & family.

## Numbers 16:1-7, 9-10, 8-20

Grumbling among the sons of Levi, specifically Korah (*caretaker of the ark, table of showbread, lamp stand & altar – Num.3:30-32*) conspired with Dathan & Abiram to cause rebellion.

- ▶ **Vs. 23 - 40** - God deals with the rebellion – the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them alive & fire consumed those who had offered sacrifices to God!
- ▶ **Vs.41 – 50** – The congregation grumbles & complains, saying Moses had killed God's people. God sent plagues and fourteen thousand were destroyed. Moses intervenes & makes atonement – some people survived the plague.
- ▶ NB: The Levitical priesthood therefore didn't serve God's purposes rather provoked God to anger.

## b) The Order of Melchizedek - The priesthood of all believers in Jesus, The Christ- (Priest unto El Elyon, "The Most High God") - *Gen.14:18*

- ▶ Melchizedek: "king of righteousness".
- ▶ King of Salem – *Ps.76:2*: "King of peace".  
*Heb.7:1-17* – without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God – Perpetual/forever.
- ▶ *Ps.110:4* – Jesus, priest after the order of Melchizedek. (*Heb.5:6,10*)
- ▶ *John 8:56-58 & Exod.3:14* – Melchizedek, a pre-incarnation of Christ.



## ▶ The Universal Priesthood of Believers

1<sup>st</sup> Pet.2:1-9, Rev.5:9-10

- ▶ A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, offering spiritual sacrifices, implying that a spiritual altar exists, which altar you are – made of living stones to become a dwelling for God - Temple!
- ▶ Kingly authority to reign and Priestly anointing to serve God and we'll rule on the earth.
- ▶ Our access to God is granted!– *John 19:32-35;*  
*Heb.6:19-20*
  - *Rom.5:2* – Access by faith into Christ.
  - *Eph.2:18* – Access by one Spirit.
  - *Eph.3:12* – Access in confidence.

# Conclusion

- ▶ What Israel denied God to accomplish, He has fully done it through Jesus Christ (*John 1:11-13*) – *Rev.5:9-10*.
- ▶ Now we are the kingdom of priests, called to establish God's Kingdom by His authority as kings and His Anointing as priests. This Priesthood is for all believers in Jesus Christ. Every believer is therefore a king & priest and Jesus Christ is The King of kings and our High priest – *Heb.3:1-7; Heb.4:14-16*.

# Discussion:

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- a) How did Israel hinder God from accomplishing His desire of having a nation of priests and how did God accomplish it in the Order of Melchizedek?
- b) Since we are the kingdom of priests, called to establish God's Kingdom by His authority and His Anointing. How do you plan to participate?

# Assignment:

- a) What do these scriptures mean to you regarding our access to God? *Heb.6:19-20*
  - *Rom.5:2* – Access by faith into Christ.
  - *Eph.2:18* – Access by one Spirit.
  - *Eph.3:12* – Access in confidence.

*THANK YOU!*