

OFFICES OF JESUS: HIGH PRIEST - HANDOUT

I. INTRODUCTION

There are 3 offices in the Old Testament. These 3 offices were the leaders of Israel and had a huge responsibility with specific guidelines. Tonight, we will start looking at Jesus as the Priest, our High Priest.

Outline: (A) Aaron, (B) The High Priest, (C) Priests, (D) Jesus, Our High Priest, (E) All Christians are Priests

II. JESUS AS HIGH PRIEST

God created the *office of the Priest through the Levites* to maintain fellowship with a holy God and sinful people. The Priests *offered sacrifices and gifts* on behalf of the people for forgiveness, atonement (covering for sin) and convey the Lord's blessings, salvation and mercy.

Numbers 16:4-5. Biblically, a Priest was:

- 1) Chosen by God to be His own,
- 2) To be holy,
- 3) Allowed to come near to the Lord's place of dwelling, whether it was the Tabernacle or Temple.

First was his condition: chosen by God; *second* was his qualification: must be *holy* or *set apart* for the Lord's work; *third* was his function: go to God on behalf of the people. *Exodus 29*.

A. Aaron

1. Levite

Exodus 4. The book of *Leviticus* and additional passages explain the High Priest's and Priest's responsibilities to God and the people. Aaron became the first official High Priest of the Lord.

2. Made High Priest

Exodus 29 and *40:9-16* [*Leviticus 8:1-13* also gives details]. Aaron was the *first Priest called by God* and the father of the rest of the High Priests after him.

The High Priest and Priests were the *people's spokesperson to God*.

The High Priests and Priests were the "go between" and *went to God on behalf of the people*. The Priests *had their back to the people and their face towards God*. The High Priest and Priests were the only WAY to go to God, because they primarily offered the sacrifices necessary to come into God's presence.

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B. The High Priest

1. Character and Conduct – *Leviticus 21*.
2. Consecration – *Exodus 29, Leviticus 8*.
3. Calling and Services Rendered – *Leviticus 4, 16, 2 Chronicles 19:11*.
4. Clothing – *Exodus 28*.

Anointed with oil: *Exodus 29:7*. Also referenced are: *Ex. 29:6, 39:30, Lev. 8:9* and *2 Sam. 1:10, 2 Kings 11:12*.

The Tabernacle was a portable worship tent with 3 areas: 1) Courtyard, 2) Holy Place, 3) Most Holy Place. This is where the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

C. Priests

1. Descendants of Levi

Exodus 6:16-19.

2. Descendants of Aaron

Hebrews 9:22 - And according to the Law almost all things are purified with blood (water, incense and fire were used to purify too: *Ex. 19:10, Lev. 15:5, Num 16:46-47*), and without shedding of blood there is no remission (forgiveness).

Priests lit incense, cleaned the lamp stand (Menorah), made sure sacrifices were carried out correctly, acted as judges for Israel (*Deut. 17:8-13*) and taught the Law (*Lev. 10:11, Mal. 2:7*) and what was holy and unholy or clean and unclean (*Lev. 10:10*).

Priests began serving in the Tabernacle at age 25 (*Num. 8:24*) but were *not to carry the implements of the Tabernacle, nor begin offering sacrifices until their commencement or inauguration* at age 30 (*Num. 4*). They retired at age 50 (*Num. 8:25*).

The High Priest and Priests were to be holy, set apart to God and could not have any physical blemish and were to obey specific stipulations given by God – *Lev. 21*.

D. Jesus, Our High Priest

1. John 14:6 – The Way

1 Timothy 2:5-6 – For *there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus* (better translated “*Christ Jesus, Himself a man*”), who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. – A *Mediator* intervenes between 2 parties to fix a problem and/or ratify (approve, endorse or confirm) a *covenant*.

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Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians. The *focus* is on the *Levitical Priesthood* and shows the New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant. Some Jews wanted to place themselves *back under the Law* (Old Covenant) and this was written to warn them not to do this as it would be an expression of unbelief, and bring judgment.

2. Hebrews 2:10-18, 3:1-6 – Our High Priest

Hebrews 2:10-18. Psalm 22:22 is quoted in *verse 12*. *Verse 13* quotes *Is. 8:17-18* stating Christ took upon flesh and can identify with humanity. Jesus was fully God and fully human (*1 Person with 2 natures*) and was *perfect and holy*.

Hebrews 3:1-6. Jesus (as a Son) is above Moses (a servant) and encourages believers to hold fast their faith.

3. Hebrews (2:18), 4:14-16 – Sympathetic to Our Weaknesses

Jesus our great High Priest passed through the 3 heavens: 1) Atmospheric (sky), 2) Stellar (space) and 3) God's heaven, represented by the *3 areas of the Tabernacle*: 1) Court, 2) Holy Place, 3) Most Holy Place.

4. Hebrews 5:1-11, 6:20, 7:1-22 – Called by God as High Priest like Melchizedek

Hebrews 5:1-11. Vs. 1-4 speaks of the offerings and gifts given. *5-6* quotes *Ps. 2:7* and *110:4* respectively, stating Jesus' calling as the Son of God and High Priest were from the Father. *7-11* shows Jesus as High Priest is sympathetic (prayers and supplications), learning obedience through suffering.

Melchizedek was the *King-Priest of Salem* [Jerusalem]: *Genesis 14:17-20. Psalm 110:1-4*. Written around 1000 BC by David. *Hebrews 5:10 and 6:20*, written over 1000 years later explain *Ps. 110*, especially *verse 4*.

Hebrews 7:1-22 – The writer *compares 2 Priesthoods*, the Melchizedek Priesthood and Levitical Priesthood and says that Melchizedek in one way was better than the Levitical Priesthood. Jesus is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek and executes His role after the pattern of the High Priest Aaron.

5. Hebrews 7:23-28, 8:1-6, 9:11-15 – Eternal, Unchanging and Better Priesthood Because He was Sinless

Hebrews 7:23-28 – the Levitical Priests served only for a short time, but Jesus does not and will not die and is therefore better than the Levitical Priesthood because He was sinless, and is always going to be our Mediator.

Hebrews 8:1-6 – Because Christ is *eternal* His Priesthood is better than the Melchizedek and Levitical Priesthoods.

Hebrews 9:11-15 – He *offered His own blood*, which was better than the blood of bulls and goats...

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6. Hebrews (9:11-15), 9:16-28 – He was the Sacrifice

Hebrews 9:16-28 – We deserved to die for our sins, but our transgressions were placed upon Him as *Is. 53* says. The *first covenant* was ratified or made in blood (*vs. 20-22 – Exodus 24:1-8*). Since the *New is a covenant*, blood had to be spilled (covenant means “*to cut*”) to establish it.

7. Hebrews 1:1-4, 10:11-14 – *He Sat Down* – It is Finished!

Hebrews 1:1-3 – Not only did God speak to people through Scripture, but also through Christ, who *sat down* at the *right hand* of the *Father*.

Hebrews 10:11-14 – Christ sat down because His work was done. Neither the High Priest, nor the Priests EVER sat down during his work.

8. Revelation 1:9-20 – The High Priest and Judge

Revelation 1:9-15 – Part of what John describes is for judgment and part of what is described are the High Priestly garments Jesus wears.

E. Christians are Priests by Application

1. 1 Peter 1:10-21 – We are to be Holy

Peter is specifically writing to Messianic Jews. He is reminding them of *who they are* and *whose they are* as followers of YHWH and now as followers of Christ. He said to *them*, that as the High Priest and Priests of the Old Testament were set apart to God, pure, living rightly, undefiled, so they were to be holy.

2. Romans 12:1-2 – We Offer Ourselves as a Living Sacrifice

Read *Romans 12:1-2*. Christ gave Himself for our sins and we are to be a living sacrifice and not be conformed to this world but transformed through the renewing of our minds through the truth and love of God and His word. *Explain further...*

3. We can Pray to God – Ephesians 6:17-20, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

While anyone in the Old Testament could pray, and *could have a relationship with God*, they were limited in their approach to God because of the sacrificial system. Christ, the final sacrifice has come!

V. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS and CHALLENGES

Will we continue to learn what it means for Jesus to be our personal High Priest? Have we offered ourselves as a living sacrifice (*Romans 12:1-2*)? As the Priests were to be holy, are we seeking to live a holy life? Do we pray for others and ask others to pray for us? Do we understand the book of *Hebrews*? Will we share these truths?