

"YOU SHALL BE MY PEOPLE"

The Priests

Lesson 6

November 15

When Israel was camped at Mount Sinai, the LORD delivered a message through Moses. "You shall be to me a kingdom of _____ and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel" (Exo 19:6). After giving detailed instructions for the tabernacle (Exo 25-27), the LORD began outlining for Moses who the priests were to be and how they would serve in his tabernacle.

"Then bring near to you _____ your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar." (28:1)

Beyond this family, the entire tribe of _____ was "set apart" by God to serve in and guard the tabernacle (Num 3:5-13; 18:1-7; Deut 18:1-5). "They are a gift to you, given to the LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting" (Num 18:6).

The leader of all the priests was called the "_____ priest," and the very first one was Aaron.

For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on _____ of men in _____ to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. (Heb 5:1-4)

As the high priest served, he wore holy garments, "for glory and for beauty" (Exo 28; 39). Notice especially a few of the details:

- An _____ (Exo 28:6-14; 39:1-7) - a colorful linen garment that had two shoulder pieces, each holding an onyx stone. The names of the 12 sons of Israel were engraved on these two stones so that the high priest would carry their names before the LORD.
- A _____ of judgment (Exo 28:15-30; 39:8-21) - worn over the ephod and attached with gold chains and rings, the breastpiece had four rows, each with three precious stones. Each of the stones had engraved upon it the name of one of the tribes of Israel.
- A _____ of fine linen (Exo 28:36-39) - held a golden plate, "the holy crown" (Lev 8:9) on which were engraved in Hebrew the words, "_____ to the LORD."

The rest of the priests wore coats and sashes and caps with linen undergarments (Exo 28:40-42). These special clothes were to be "on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die" (Exo 28:43).



For Class & Family Discussion:

- “Priest” means “one who officiates.” When God said he wanted Israel to be “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” ([Exo 19:6](#)), what did he mean?

- Who was Aaron? What do we know about him from *Exodus*?

- In [Numbers 18](#), as he talks about the work of the priests, the LORD said to Aaron, “You and your sons with you shall guard your priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood as a gift, and any outsider who comes near shall be put to death” ([18:7](#)). Why would God say something like that? What was the big deal?

- Later in Israel’s history, when people—even kings—didn’t respect God’s pattern for the priesthood, the consequences were serious. What can we learn from passages like [1 Samuel 13:1-14](#) and [2 Chronicles 26:16-21](#)?

- We heard in [Hebrews 5:2](#) that every high priest was “beset with weakness.” What did that mean? [Exodus 29:29-30](#) might be helpful here...

- Let’s open our Bibles back to [Hebrews 7:23](#) and read it together. In your own words, what point is the writer making? What does he want to make sure we understand about Jesus in [7:24-28](#)? In what way is Jesus serving as a priest today and what makes his priesthood “better”?

- [1 Peter 2:4-10](#) makes a powerful point for Christians. Just like God spoke to Israel through Moses in the Old Testament, he’s speaking to disciples of Jesus through Peter. What do we need to understand? What does it mean, and how does it connect with what we’ve learned this evening? According to passages like [Hebrews 13:15-16](#) and [Romans 12:1-2](#), what are the sacrifices that we offer?