

THE OLD TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD

The Old Testament Today

Banska Bystrica, 22nd May 2022

Exodus 28:1-2 "Then bring near to you Aaron 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. ² And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.... **28:41 - 29:1** And you shall put them on Aaron your brother, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. ⁴² You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; ⁴³ and they shall 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. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him.

Ἐφ' ὃν γὰρ λέγεται ταῦτα, φυλῆς ἑτέρας μετέσχηκεν, ἀφ' ἧς οὐδεὶς προσέσχηκεν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ. ¹⁴ Πρόδηλον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξ Ἰουδα ἀνατέταλκεν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν, εἰς ἣν φυλὴν οὐδὲν περὶ ἱερωσύνης Μωϋσῆς ἐλάλησεν. ¹⁵ Καὶ περισσώτερον ἔτι κατάδηλόν ἐστιν, εἰ κατὰ τὴν ὁμοίότητα Μελχισεδέκ ἀνίσταται ἱερεὺς ἕτερος, ¹⁶ ὃς οὐ κατὰ νόμον ἐντολῆς σαρκικῆς γέγονεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ δύναμιν ζωῆς ἀκαταλύτου. ¹⁷ μαρτυρεῖ γὰρ ὅτι Σὺ ἱερεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ. ¹⁸ Ἀθέτησις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προαγούσης ἐντολῆς, διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές. ¹⁹ οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος, ἐπεισαγωγὴ δὲ κρείττονος ἐλπίδος, δι' ἧς ἐγγίζομεν τῷ θεῷ.

Hebrews 7:13-19 For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. ¹⁵ This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." ¹⁸ On the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

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0. INTRODUCTION

0.1. THE PROBLEM OF INDIVIDUALISM

- Do we need a go-between to approach God?
- the Mediator

0.2. THE IDEA OF PRIESTHOOD

- the DIFFERENCE → ontological (holiness)
- the DIFFERENCE → ethical (righteousness)
- **Job 33:19-28** "Man is also rebuked with pain on his bed and with continual strife in his bones, ²⁰ so that his life loathes bread, and his appetite the choicest food. ²¹ His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out. ²² His soul draws near the pit, and his life to those who bring death. ²³ If there be for him an angel, a mediator, one of the thousand, (מַלְאֲכֵי) to declare to man what is right for him, ²⁴ and he is merciful to him, and says, 'Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom; ²⁵ let his flesh become fresh with youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor'; ²⁶ then man prays to God, and he accepts him; he sees his face with a shout of joy, and he restores to man his righteousness. ²⁷ He sings before men and says: 'I sinned and perverted what was right, and it was not repaid to me. ²⁸ He has redeemed my soul from going down into the pit, and my life shall look upon the light.'
- **Exodus 20:18-19** ¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die."

0.3. THE GREATNESS OF PRIESTHOOD

- **Nu 18:20** And the LORD said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. **I am your portion and your inheritance** among the people of Israel.
- [Uzziah] **2Chr 26:16** But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was unfaithful to the LORD his God and entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

0.4. CHRIST – THE ANOINTED ONE

- *munus triplex* → (1) prophet; (2) priest; (3) king

1. AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

1.1. SACRIFICES

- priests → "butchers"

1.2. INTERCESSION

- rows of gems in ephod with the names of the Israel tribes

1.3. TEACHING/JUDGING

- **Lev 10:10-11** You are **to distinguish between the holy and the common**, and between the unclean and the clean, ¹¹ and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them by Moses.

[TORRANCE *Royal Priesthood*] All that the priest does, all liturgical action, answers to the Word given to the priest who bears that Word and mediates it to man, and only in relation to that primary function does he have the other functions of oblation and sacrifice.

2. CHRIST'S PRIESTLY WORK

- **Ps 110:4** The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."
- **Heb 7:12** For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well.
- **Heb 7:15-17** This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

2.1. THE CROSS

- all OT sacrifices
- **2Cor 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God

2.2. INTERCESSION

- **John 17:16-22** They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. ²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,
- **1 John 2:1-2** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

2.3. TEACHING/JUDGING

- **John 12:47-48** If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.

3. THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

- **1 Peter 2:9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, (βασιλειον ιεράτευμα) a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- **Rom 15:15-16** But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God ¹⁶ to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit

3.1. BRINGING SACRIFICES

- **Rom 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- **1Pt 2:5** you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- **Hebrews 13:15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

3.2. INTERCEDING

- **Mt 5:44** But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
- **1Cor 4:12** and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; ¹³ when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things

3.3. TEACHING/JUDGING

- **2Cor 2:15-16** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

4. TO REMEMBER

- There is no access to God without a Mediator.
- Our Mediator is Jesus – do we love him? (**1Cor 16:22** If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!)
- Proclaiming the gospel and intercession is the work of believers as “priests in Christ”.