

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Leviticus 08: 18-23

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the Bible again. We'll continue to read Leviticus chapter 8, and today we'll read from verse 18 to verse 23.

God desires to dwell among His people, but how can a glorious, holy, and righteous God dwell among sinful, impure, and common people? Therefore, God first revealed to Moses the need to build the Tabernacle. After the Tabernacle was constructed, God further revealed to Moses the system for establishing the priesthood. The priests were to help the Israelites offer sacrifices, so that their sins could be covered, and peace could be established between them and God. Only then could they be accepted by God, allowing Him to rightfully dwell among His people.

Leviticus chapter 8 describes how Moses, following God's commands, established Aaron as the high priest and Aaron's sons as priests. Since this was the first time the priesthood was established, God used Moses to initiate the system. During this process, Moses temporarily took on the role of a priest to offer sacrifices on behalf of Aaron and his sons. If you read the chapter carefully, you will notice one phrase repeated frequently: "as the Lord commanded Moses." In establishing the priesthood, God did not give Moses any freedom to improvise; he had to follow God's instructions exactly. This set a good example for future priests: everything must be done according to God's commands.

The establishment of the priesthood had to take place at the entrance of the Tabernacle, in the presence of the Israelites as witnesses. Today, we will describe the entire process, which involves seven steps.

The first step is washing with water: Moses was to wash Aaron and his sons with water, which, in the New Testament typology, represents baptism and salvation. In John 13:10, when Jesus washed His disciples' feet, He said, "He who is bathed needs

only to wash his feet, but is completely clean." Washing the feet symbolizes that those who have believed and been baptized are already clean, but because they still walk in the world, their feet are inevitably stained by its dust. Therefore, Jesus washed the disciples' feet and instructed them to wash each other's feet. Similarly, priests must be believers who have been baptized to fulfill their priestly duties. Before serving and offering sacrifices, the priests had to wash their hands and feet in the basin.

The second step is putting on garments: The high priest's garments were glorious and beautiful. In the New Testament, only Christ is our common High Priest. Christ wears the ephod, carrying all the saints on His shoulders, signifying that He is our support and strength. Christ also wears the breastplate, carrying the saints on His heart, full of love, care, and compassion. The Urim and Thummim, placed in the breastplate of judgment, signify that Christ leads each saint according to God's will, guiding them in love to understand and follow God's purpose. Christ also wears the crown and golden plate, signifying that in His glory, He leads every saint into glory with Him.

Priests were also required to wear the tunic, tie the sash, and wrap the turban around their heads, symbolizing that everyone who desires to serve must follow Jesus Christ, our High Priest, in serving the church. Each of us should be filled with the virtues of Christ's humanity, girded with truth, and obedient to God's guidance in our lives.

The third step in establishing the priesthood was anointing the tabernacle. Moses anointed the tabernacle and every item within it with holy anointing oil, setting it apart as holy and dedicated to God. The Tabernacle, in this context, is a foreshadowing of the New Testament church. The New Testament church is formed when all those who have received grace and salvation come together to praise and worship God. To be part of the church, the requirement is simple: belief in salvation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or being anointed by the Holy Spirit.

In the first establishment of the priesthood, Moses anointed the tabernacle and all its contents, making everything within it holy. Since the tabernacle had not been

used by humans yet, it was free from any impurity, and therefore, when offering sin sacrifices, the blood of the sacrifice did not need to be brought into the Holy Place.

The fourth step is anointing the high priest: The precious oil was then poured on Aaron's head, running down his beard and onto his robes, as described in Psalm 133:2. Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, became our High Priest. Psalm 45:7 speaks of God anointing Him with the oil of gladness. Before Jesus began His ministry, He first went to John the Baptist to be baptized. In Luke 3:21-22, when Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. This fulfilled the prophecy from Isaiah 61:1-2, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison, to those who are bound."

Jesus began His ministry after being anointed, and He returned to Nazareth, where He had grown up. He went to the synagogue and read His first public message, recorded in Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." This was a direct reference to Isaiah 61:1-2. At this point in the Old Testament, only the High Priest was anointed, while the regular priests were not. The anointing of the priests would take place later during the ceremony of ordination, or consecration, for their official ministry.

The fifth step in the ordination process involves offering a bull as a sin offering. Although Aaron wore the high priestly garments and had been anointed with oil, he was still human and carried within him a sinful nature. Therefore, a bull had to be offered as a sin offering to atone for the sins of the priests. The blood of the bull was applied to the four horns of the altar, and the rest was poured at the base of the altar. The fat and kidneys of the bull were burned on the altar, producing a pleasing aroma to God, while the rest of the bull was taken outside the camp and burned in the designated area where the ashes of the burnt offering were

discarded. Through the offering of the bull for the sin offering, the priests' inherent sinful nature was addressed.

In the New Testament, the high priest and the sacrificial offering are unified in Jesus Christ, who offered Himself as the sin offering. The bull in this sin offering represents Christ. His blood cleanses us from sin, His beauty and the deep love with which He died for humanity are remembered by God, and His body, bearing the sins of humanity, was crucified outside the city at Golgotha.

The sixth step is offering a ram as a burnt offering: After Aaron and his sons offered the bull for the sin offering to deal with their sinful nature, they then offered a ram as a burnt offering to dedicate themselves fully to God. This was done so that their offering would be acceptable to God. The order of these offerings contrasts with the sequence of their future service on behalf of the people. In Leviticus 6, we read that the priests were to offer burnt offerings every morning and evening, and the fire for the burnt offering was never to go out. The people's other sacrifices, such as sin offerings, guilt offerings, and peace offerings, were always offered on top of the burnt offering.

For the priests, however, the sin offering had to be made first to deal with their sinful nature. Only after the sin was removed could the burnt offering be presented, making the priests acceptable to God. After the priests were ordained, their ability to offer sacrifices for the people rested on the fact that they had already offered a burnt offering, which made them acceptable in God's eyes. Thus, the sacrifices for the people could then be received by God.

When dealing with the sin offering, if the priest has sinned and the people have fallen into sin, a bull must again be offered as a sin offering. The priest is required to bring the bull's blood into the tabernacle, sprinkle it on the veil, and apply it to the four corners of the golden altar. This action is meant to reopen the way from the altar to the Holy of Holies, allowing the priest to once again be accepted by God. Therefore, the sin of the priest must first be dealt with, and only afterward can the priest offer the burnt offering.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ, the eternal High Priest, became the sin offering once and for all, offering Himself to remove the sins of the saints. As a result, New Testament believers only need to apply the blood of Jesus Christ, and their sins can be forgiven. There is no need for repeated sin offerings; believers only need to fully dedicate themselves to God. Yesterday, we read about the sin offering, and today we will study the burnt offering.

Verse 18: “Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering. And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram.”

Moses brought two rams, one of which was for the burnt offering. Aaron and his sons were to lay their hands on the head of the ram, symbolizing their union with the animal. The burnt offering signifies a complete offering of oneself to God, a spiritual experience that every serving priest must have.

Verse 19-20: “and Moses killed it. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat.”

After the ram was slaughtered, Moses was to sprinkle its blood around the altar, symbolizing the steadfastness of salvation. The ram was then to be cut into pieces, with its head, the pieces of flesh, and its fat all burned on the altar as a burnt offering.

Verse 21: “Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord, as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

After the ram was cut into pieces, its entrails were to be washed with water, as well as its legs. Then the entire ram was to be burned on the altar, becoming a pleasing aroma to the Lord. This was an offering by fire to the Lord.

Moses performed each step according to what the Lord had commanded. Up to this point, there have been six steps, all preparatory and not yet formally entering into the consecration of the priesthood. The seventh step is the formal consecration, which involves offering the second ram. The ordination (or consecration) of the priesthood follows a similar procedure to the peace offering, but includes additional handling of the blood to anoint the priests, ensuring they are properly consecrated for their duties. Today we have only begun; we will continue with the details tomorrow.

Verse 22-23: “And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, and Moses killed it. Also, he took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron’s right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.”

The second ram is the ram of consecration. Aaron and his sons were to first place their hands on the ram's head, signifying their complete union with the ram, and then slaughter the ram. Moses then performed some specific actions: he applied the ram's blood to Aaron's right ear lobe, the thumb of his right hand, and the thumb of his right foot.

First, the blood was applied to the lobe of the high priest's right ear. Psalm 40:6 says, “My ears You have opened.” The high priest’s ears needed to be redeemed first. The priest’s most important task is to hear God's word and then help the people offer sacrifices according to God's will. People are prone to selective hearing, only hearing what they want. Only after the ears are redeemed can they be fully devoted to hearing the Lord’s word.

Next, Moses applied the blood to the thumb of Aaron's right hand. After hearing and understanding the Lord’s word, the right hand must faithfully execute the Lord's

commands without compromise. The blood on the thumb signifies that the right hand is filled with the Lord's grace, ensuring that every work done is redeemed.

Then, Moses applied the blood to the thumb of Aaron's right foot. The feet represent the path one walks. The blood on the thumb of the foot signifies that the path should be redeemed, walking continually in God's will. Jesus Christ is the high priest for all New Testament believers. During His earthly ministry, His ears were open; He lived in constant communion with the Father and always heard the Father's voice. Everything He did was according to the Father's commands, and every path He walked was guided by the Father's direction. Jesus truly is our faithful high priest and has set a perfect example for us. Every believer who wishes to serve in the church should follow Jesus Christ's lead.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You for clearly recording the laws of ordination in Leviticus. This helps every New Testament believer who desires to serve in the church understand how to prepare themselves. We are so blessed in the New Testament; Jesus Christ is our faithful high priest. In every church gathering, He leads us, the priests, in offering worship and praise to God, and in serving every child of God in the church. Bless our church with a group of devoted believers willing to dedicate themselves to serving as a team of priests, serving God and serving people together. May our church be a beautiful witness for You on earth. We pray in Jesus Christ's holy name. Amen!