

Understanding the Priesthood: The Old Testament

Part 1

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Is “priesthood” biblical? Many non-Catholic Christians do not think so.

What does the Bible have to say about priesthood?

We need to start with Adam:

I. The Priesthood at Creation

A. The Priesthood of Adam

- **Gen. 2:15** The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till (Heb. *work*) it and keep (Heb. *guard*) it.
- Num. 3:6 “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him. **7** They shall perform duties (Heb. *guard the things to be guarded*) for him and for the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister (Heb. *work the work*) at the tabernacle.”
- **Num 18:7** And you [Aaron] and your sons with you shall attend (Heb. *guard*) to your priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you shall serve (Heb. *work the work*). I give your priesthood as a gift, and any one else who comes near shall be put to death.

B. Eden and the Temple:

* **Gen. 2:10** A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. **11** The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; **12** and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.

* **Ex. 28:17** And you shall set in it four rows of stones. A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; **18** and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; **19** and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; **20** and the fourth row a beryl, an **onyx**, and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree.

* **1Chr. 29:2** [David speaking about the Temple] “So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the **gold** for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of **onyx** and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble ...

* **Ezek. 28:13** You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and **onyx**, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.

Ezek. 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east); and the water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar.

The motifs that help us connect Eden and Temple: G _____, J _____, the
R _____, P _____, A _____

C. Creation and the Temple:

Gen. 1:14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for **seasons** and for days and years,

Gen. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth *were finished*, and all the host of them. **2** And on the seventh day God finished his work which he *had done*, and he rested on the seventh day from *all his work* which he *had done*. **3** So God *blessed* the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from *all his work* which he *had done* in creation.

Ex. 39:32 Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was *finished*; and the people of Israel *had done* according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so *had they done*. **42** According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the people of Israel *had done all the work*. **43** And Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it; as the LORD had commanded, so had *they done it*. And Moses *blessed* them.

33 And he erected the court round the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the gate of the court. So Moses *finished the work*.

The Creation (the Cosmos) is a macro _____, the Tabernacle (or Temple)
is a micro _____

D. A Summary of the Duties of Priesthood: S _____ and

B _____, which renews and extends the C _____

Psa. 50:5 "Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a **covenant** with me by sacrifice!"

E. Problem: What was Adam's sacrifice?

Heb 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.

Gen. 2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep (lit *guard*) it.

Gen. 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?"

Where's Adam here?

Adam's sacrifice (and ours) is our very _____ (Rom 12:1)

II. The Priesthood of Noah:

Gen. 8:20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Gen. 9:8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, **9** “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you,

“The Hebrews claim that ... every patriarch, from Noah to Aaron, was a priest” (*Glossa Ordinaria* on Genesis 14)

Fatherhood is a natural _____, and priesthood is a supernatural

III. The Priesthood of the Patriarchs:

Abraham:

Gen. 12:8 Thence he removed to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.

Melchizedek:

Gen. 14:17 After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley). **18** And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. **19** And he blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; **20** and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!” And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Abraham and Isaac:

Gen. 22:1 After these things God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” **2** He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

Gen. 22:14 So Abraham called the name of that place The LORD will provide; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

Gen. 22:16 and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, **17** I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies, **18** and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.”

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III. The Priesthood of the Patriarchs, cont.

Isaac:

Gen. 26:24 And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your descendants for my servant Abraham’s sake.” **25** So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac’s servants dug a well.

Gen. 28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and **blessed** him, and charged him, “You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women.

Gen. 28:3 God Almighty **bless** you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. **4** May he give the **blessing** of Abraham to you and to your descendants with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings which God gave to Abraham!”

Jacob:

Gen. 35:6 And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, **7** and there he **built an altar**, and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.

Gen. 35:14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he **poured out a drink offering** on it, and poured oil on it. **15** So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

Gen. 48:9 Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.” And he said, “Bring them to me, I pray you, that I may **bless** them.”

Gen. 48:15 And he **blessed** Joseph, and said, “The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has led me all my life long to this day, **16** the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, **bless** the lads; and in them let my name be perpetuated, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”

Joseph:

Gen. 41:45 And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

Gen. 45:8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and he has made me a **father** to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

IV. The Book of Exodus and the Sinai or “Old Covenant”

A. Israel was to be a _____ people:

Ex. 4:22 And you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is my first-born son, **23** and I say to you, “Let my son go that he may **serve** (work for) me”; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son.’”

Ex. 19:5 Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, **6** and you shall be to me a **royal priesthood** (or “kingdom of priests”) and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”
(cf. 1 Peter 2:9)

B. The Firstborn Sons were _____ priests:

Ex. 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. **5** And he sent **young men of the people of Israel**, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. **6** And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. **7** Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” **8** And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

C. The people and their firstborn _____ their priestly status:

Ex. 32:25 And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to their shame among their enemies), **26** then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, “Who is on the LORD’s side? Come to me.” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. **27** And he said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Put every man his sword on his side, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.’” **28** And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. **29** And Moses said, “Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day.”

D. The priest facilitated the _____ of sin, which permitted one to stay in the C_____

Lev. 5:5 When a man is guilty in any of these, he shall **confess** the sin he has committed, **6** and he shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD for the sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make **atonement** for him for his sin.

Lev. 5:10 Then he shall offer the second for a burnt offering according to the ordinance; and the priest shall make **atonement** for him for the sin which he has committed, and he shall be **forgiven**.

(John 20:23)

E. Among other sacrifices, the priest offered the M_____ offering:

Lev. 2:2 and bring it to Aaron’s sons the priests. And he shall take from it a handful of the fine flour and oil, with all of its frankincense; and the priest shall burn this as its **memorial** portion upon the altar, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

V. The Priesthood of David:

1Chr. 15:25 So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. **26** And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. **27** David was **clothed with a robe of fine linen**, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a **linen ephod**. **28** So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres.

1Chr. 16:1 And they brought the ark of God, and set it inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. **2** And when David had finished **offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings**, he **blessed the people in the name of the LORD**, **3** and distributed to all Israel, both men and women, to each a loaf of bread, a portion of meat (or “cup of wine”), and a cake of raisins.

Psa. 110 A Psalm of David. **1** The LORD says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.” **2** The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your foes! **3** Your people will offer themselves freely on the day you lead your host upon the holy mountains. From the womb of the morning like dew your youth will come to you. **4** The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a **priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek**.”

2Sam. 8:18 ... and David’s sons were priests.

Psa. 89:20 I have found David, my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him; ... **26** He shall cry to me, ‘Thou art my **Father**, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’ **27** And I will make him the **first-born** [son], the highest of the kings of the earth. **28** My steadfast love I will keep for him for ever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.

In David we see reintegrated the dignities of Adam, which Israel rejected at the Calf and elsewhere: S _____, K _____, P _____

VI. The Prophets and the Priesthood of the Coming (Messianic) Age:

A. Isaiah and the Future Priesthood:

Is. 56:3 Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely separate me from his people”; and let not the eunuch say, “Behold, I am a dry tree.” **4** For thus says the LORD: “To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, **5** I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off.

Is. 56:6 “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to **minister** to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his **servants**, every one who keeps the sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant — **7** these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; **their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar**; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. **8** Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.”

[**Ex. 28:35** And it shall be upon Aaron when he **ministers**, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD, and when he comes out, lest he die.]

Is. 61:5 Aliens shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers; **6** but you shall be called the **priests** of the LORD, men shall speak of you as the **ministers** of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory.

Is. 66:18 “For I know their works and their thoughts, and I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, **19** and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. **20** And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their cereal offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. **21** And some of them also I will take for **priests** and for **Levites**, says the LORD.

Isaiah foresees, in the coming age, an opening of the priesthood once again at

least to all I _____, and possibly also to

F _____ and E _____.

Matt. 19:12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it.

B. The Prophets on the Return of David:

Is. 11:1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of **Jesse**, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

Is. 9:7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of **David**, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Jer. 23:5 “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for **David** a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

Jer. 30:9 But they shall serve the LORD their God and **David** their king, whom I will raise up for them.

Jer. 33:15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for **David**; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

Ezek. 34:23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant **David**, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.

Ezek. 37:24 “My servant **David** shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes.

As we leave the Old Testament, then, we anticipate eagerly an age when the

P_____ status of all God's people will be restored, and the

P_____ K_____ D_____ will once again rule over the
people of God.

Just as at Sinai, before the calf, the priestly people of God still had _____

_____ to represent them (the firstborn sons), so we may anticipate a
similar structure in the coming age.

The message of the Old Testament remains that God created us for a priestly role, as agents of

W_____, of S_____, and

B_____.

Priesthood in the New Testament

I. Priestly Themes in the Gospels: Jesus and the Apostles

- a. The Presentation: **Luke 2:2** *And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”...*
- i. Notice that Jesus is strangely not R_____ . A similar thing happens with S_____ in 1 Samuel 1. This may explain something of the reasons behind the Finding of the Boy Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-51).
- b. Plucking Grain on the Sabbath: **Matt. 12:1** *At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath.” 3 He said to them, “Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the law how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? 6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath.”*
- i. First, Jesus compares himself to David, and the apostles to David’s men, in a situation where David and his men performed a _____ act.
- ii. Secondly, he explicitly compares himself and his apostles with the T_____ P_____
- iii. The significance: Jesus is claiming for himself and his apostles P_____ P_____.
- c. Jesus’ Body as Temple: *“But He spoke of the Temple of his Body.”* (John 2:21)
Where in Judaism is there precedent for a man’s body=Temple?

Wisdom of Solomon 18:24: For upon [the High Priest's] long robe *the whole world was depicted*, and the glories of the fathers were engraved on the four rows of stones, and your majesty on the diadem upon his head.

Philo, Life of Moses 2:143: Then [Moses] gave [the priests] their sacred vestments, giving to his brother [Aaron, the High Priest] the robe which reached down to his feet, and the mantle which covered his shoulders, as a sort of breast-plate, being *an embroidered robe, adorned with all kinds of figures, and a representation of the universe*.

Philo, Life of Moses 2:135: The High Priest “represents the world” and is a “microcosm” (*brachys kosmos*).

Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities 3:180*: for if anyone do but consider the fabric of the tabernacle, and take a view of the garments of the high priest, and of those vessels which we make use of in our sacred ministration, he will find ... they were every one made in way of imitation and representation of the universe.

d. The Seamless Tunic: “*His tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom.*” (John 19:23)

Josephus, *Antiquities 3:159-161*: The high priest is indeed adorned with ... a vestment of a blue color. This also is a long robe, reaching to his feet ... Now this vesture *was not composed of two pieces, nor was it sewed together upon the shoulders and the sides, but it was one long vestment so woven as to have an aperture for the neck ...*

e. The Footwashing of the Disciples: **John 13:1** *Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 And during supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. 5 Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. 6 He came to Simon Peter; and Peter said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand." 8 Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." 9 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean all over; and you are clean, but not every one of you." 11 For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "You are not all clean."*

Who had to wash their feet in order to perform any ministry? (Exod 3:19-21). The _____! (Previously they had a complete bath [Lev 8:6])

“*If I do not wash you, you have no portion (Gk meris) in me*” John 13:8
What is the OT background for this phrase? *It is almost exclusively* _____
Num 18:20-21; Deut 10:9; 12:12; 14:27,29; Josh 18:7

f. The High Priestly Prayer (John 17): **John 17:1** *When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, 2 since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. 4 I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do; 5 and now, Father, glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made.*

6 “I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, and they have kept thy word. 7 Now they know that everything that thou hast given me is from thee; 8 for I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9 I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine; 10 all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth. 18 As thou didst send 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 consecrated in truth.

20 “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee; and these know that thou hast sent me. 26 I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

1. Parallel in Structure to the _____.

Lev. 16:17: “There shall be no man in the tent of meeting when he enters to make atonement in the holy place until he comes out and has made atonement (1) for himself and (2) for his house and (3) for all the assembly of Israel.”

2. Involves the revelation of the _____.

Mishnah, Sanhedrin 11:1: “Whoever speaks distinctly will have no share in the world to come.”

But see Mishnah Yoma 3:8, 4:2 and Sirach 50:20

3. Jesus' request: John 17:17–19 _____

What kind of men do you sanctify/consecrate (*hagiazō*)? Ex 19:22; 28:41; 29:1,33,44; 30:30; 40:13; Lev 8:11-12; 21:8

- g. The Last Supper: **Matt 26:27** *And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

The phrase "Blood of the Covenant" refers back to Exod 24:8, where _____, acting in a priestly role, offers sacrifices and sprinkles blood in order to establish a _____. Likewise, the _____ of sins in the OT was accomplished ordinarily through the ministry of the _____.

1 Cor. 11:23 *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

"Do this in remembrance (*anamnesis*)" calls to mind the OT sacrificial system, which included a "remembrance" (*anamnesis*) sacrifice. Lev 2:9,16; 5:12, etc. Jesus is authorizing the apostles to continue his Moses-like, priestly sacrificial covenant-establishing sacrifice.

II. What kind of priest is Jesus? The Book of Hebrews

- a. A Difficult Passage to Understand: **Heb. 7:1** *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; 2 and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace. 3 He is without father or mother or genealogy, and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever.*

Heb. 7:11 *Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? 12 For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. 13 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.*

Heb. 7:15 *This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, 16 who has become a priest, not according to a legal requirement concerning bodily descent but by the power of an indestructible life. 17 For it is witnessed of him, "Thou art a priest for ever, 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); on the*

other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

- b. The key to understanding the passage: the requirements of the Levitical priesthood to demonstrate your G_____ on your F_____ and your M_____ side, and then your service was limited, beginning with age _____ and ending at age _____. (See Num 4:3 and throughout Num 4).
- c. Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, like his father David. In Jewish tradition, this was the ancient priesthood of the F_____, S_____, passed down to Melchizedek from Shem.
- d. This is the priesthood that we participate in: **Heb. 12:22** *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 and to the assembly (ekklesia, "church") of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel.*

III. Two Modes of Participation in Christ's Priesthood: The C_____ and the M_____

a. The Common:

- i. **Rom. 12:1** *I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*
- ii. **1 Pet. 2:9** *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

Compare Exod 19:5-6: "Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, ... 6 you shall be to me a royal priesthood (often translated "kingdom of priests") and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

b. The Common Priesthood in the Catholic Tradition:

- i. St. Peter Chrysologus (AD 380-450): *Listen now to what the Apostle urges us to do. I appeal to you, he says, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice. By this exhortation of his, Paul has raised all men to priestly status. How marvelous is the priesthood of the Christian, for he is both the victim that is offered on his own behalf, and the priest who makes the offering. He does not need to go beyond himself to seek what he is to immolate to God: with himself and in himself he brings the sacrifice he is to offer God for himself. The victim remains and the priest remains, always one and the same.*

Immolated, the victim still lives: the priest who immolates cannot kill. Truly it is an amazing sacrifice in which a body is offered without being slain and blood is offered without being shed. (Sermo 108, PL 52, 499-500; Office of Readings for Tuesday of the 4th Week of Easter)

- ii. **St. Augustine (AD 354-430):** *Just as we call all the baptized Christians, in virtue of the one chrism, so we also call all of them priests, because they are members of the one priest.* (The City of God, XX, 10)
- iii. **The Catechism: §1591** The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is called the "common priesthood of the faithful." Based on this common priesthood and ordered to its service, there exists another participation in the mission of Christ: the ministry conferred by the sacrament of Holy Orders, where the task is to serve in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community.
- iv. **St. Josemaría Escrivá (1902-1975):** All Christians, without exception, have been made priests of our lives, 'to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Pet 2:5). Everything we do can be an expression of our obedience to God's will and so perpetuate the mission of the God-man. (*Christ is Passing By*, §96)

With this priestly soul, which I ask God to grant all of you, you have to see to it that in the midst of your daily occupations, your entire life is turned into a continual praise of God: constant prayer and reparation, petition and sacrifice for all mankind. And all of this in intimate and assiduous union with Christ Jesus, in the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar. (*Letter of March 28, 1955*, §4)

c. The Common Priesthood in the Mass

- i. **The Offering of the Gifts:** "Expedit ut fideles participationem suam oblatione manifestent, afferendo sive panem et vinum ad Eucharistiae celebrationem, sive alia dona, quibus necessitatibus Ecclesiae et pauperum subveniatur."
"It is desirable that the faithful manifest their participation in the oblation by bringing forward either bread and wine for the celebration of the Eucharist, or other gifts, for the necessities of the Church and the poor."
- ii. **Before the Prayer over the Gifts:** "Orate, fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem."
"Pray, Brethren, that my sacrifice and yours become acceptable to God the Father Almighty."

d. What the Common Priesthood Means:

- i. Not that we are D_____ P_____!
- ii. We express our priesthood in the W_____ and in O_____ L_____!
- iii. Essential elements of our priestly character:
 - 1. P_____

2. M_____
 3. Excellent performance of our w_____ (“duties of state”)
 4. _____(Evangelism)
- iv. Recovering a robust vision of the common priesthood is essential for answering both P_____ and D_____.

IV. The Second Mode of Participation in Christ’s Priesthood: The Ministerial

- a. The Apostles held an “office”: *Acts 1:15 In those days Peter stood up among the brethren (the company of persons was in all about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 “Brethren, the scripture had to be fulfilled, ... concerning Judas who was guide to those who arrested Jesus. ... 20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his habitation become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it’; and ‘His office (episcopate, literally “bishopric” or “episcopate”) let another take.’ 21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ... must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” 23 And they put forward two... 24 And they prayed and said, “Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which one of these two thou hast chosen 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside, to go to his own place.” 26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was enrolled with the eleven apostles.*
- b. The beginnings of Holy Orders in Acts 6: *1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them.*
- c. The Pastoral Epistles:

1 Tim. 4:14 Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders (presbuteroi, “priests”) laid their hands upon you.

1 Tim. 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor participate in another man’s sins; keep yourself pure.

2 Tim. 1:6 Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands;

Titus 1:5 This is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you,
- d. Obedience to those the Apostles appointed: **Heb. 13:17** *Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no*

advantage to you.

- e. The synthesis: (1) Jesus appointed leaders (the apostles) with a _____ duty to “do this in remembrance of me” as well as to baptize, etc. (2) When the Church became too big, the apostles laid hands on others to help them fulfill their C_____. (3) After the death of the apostles, these *episcopoi* (overseers) and *presbuteroi* (elders) continued the Apostle’s mission, with their A_____. (4) So it is today. (5) There is no other model of Church government except this _____ system of appointment.

V. A Postscript: What about calling priests “Father”?

Do we take Jesus literally when he says “Call no one on earth ‘Father’”? No, because we follow the example of the Apostles. The Apostles (and even Jesus himself) call human beings “father” in the following NT scriptures:

Luke 16:24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.’

Rom. 4:11 He received circumcision as a sign or seal of the righteousness which he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them,

Rom. 4:16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants — not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all,

Phil. 2:22 But Timothy’s worth you know, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

1Cor. 4:15 For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

1Cor. 10:1 I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,

Gal. 1:14 and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

1Th. 2:11 for you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you

1Tim. 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father; treat younger men like brothers,

Philem. 1:10 I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment.

1John 2:13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

This last example is interesting, because the Apostle John is probably speaking not to literal fathers but to the “elders” (Gk. presbuteroi) of the congregation: i.e. the priests.