

“Set Apart Service (Consecration)” (Lev. 8)

1. Introduction (1-5)

- a. Command (1, 5) “The call to serve God begins with his initiative, not ours. ‘No-one takes this honour upon himself; he must be called by God.’¹² Once more, then, the voice of God addresses Moses; his subject is no longer the offering of sacrifices, as it has been in chapters 1–7, but the installation of the priesthood. Each step of the way—eleven in all—we read that *the Lord commanded* (4, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36), emphasizing that it is both God’s will that is being revealed and his instructions that the people are following with scrupulous care. The introduction of the Aaronic priesthood was not a human invention but a divine creation. Several features marked the call, and still mark the call to Christian service today.”¹ Called not contrived see 10:1-2
- b. Context (Exod.) “The eighth chapter of Leviticus provides the fulfillment of the command at Exodus 29 to “consecrate Aaron and Aaron’s sons to the priesthood.” Why is the realization of the command so far from the initial decree? The answer is clarified by the context. Moses is commanded to consecrate Aaron and his sons into the priesthood by means of a series of sacrifices. Thus Moses must learn the sacrificial procedures (Leviticus 1–7) before he can proceed with the priestly consecration. He will also need to consecrate the tabernacle (8:10–11) before he can consecrate the priests, for when the tabernacle and its sanctums were assembled (Exod 40:17–33) they had not been consecrated.”²
- c. Components (2) such people, place, and items are set apart (lit. consecrated) for holy service from and to God. Thus the need to sanctify common earthly things for holy employment.
- d. Community (3) *the entire assembly*, which probably means the representative elders who would witness the events in the tabernacle court on behalf of the whole community (*cf.* 9:1) (though doubtless there were as many spectators as could find a viewing point).³ Cf. 4:15.
- e. Location (4) prescribed place of atonement and offerings

2. Preparation (6-13)

- a. Cleansing (6) cleansing precedes communion and service. Although the five categorical sacrifices are often mentioned together⁴ in different combinations, the purifying and guilt sacrifices had to precede the voluntary burnt offerings of thanksgiving, fellowship, and peace. Cleansing comes before service.
- b. Clothing (7-13)
 - i. Royalty: High Priest more elaborate and even a hint of royalty before Israel had a monarchy. “The more elaborate clothing of the high priest set him apart as leader of the priests (in much the same way as the more elaborate uniform of a general sets him apart as leader of the soldiers). It is also significant that his clothing had royal overtones: *robes* are identified elsewhere as the clothing of princes (1 Sam. 18:4) and kings (1 Sam. 24:4, 11); *blue* was associated with the clothing of a kingdom’s lead administrators (Ezek. 23:6); *turbans* are associated with crowns

¹² Heb. 5:4.

¹ Tidball, D. (2005). *The Message of Leviticus: Free to Be Holy* (A. Motyer & D. Tidball, Eds.; p. 109). Inter-Varsity Press.

² Milgrom, J. (2004). *A Continental Commentary: Leviticus: a book of ritual and ethics* (p. 78). Fortress Press.

³ Wright, C. J. H. (1994). *Leviticus*. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 134). Inter-Varsity Press.

⁴ In fact, if you’re not paying close attention to the narrative, you can easily get the sacrifices confused as one will be discussed and then another inserted without much indication.

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(Ezek. 21:26); and the word translated *emblem* (v. 9, NIV) elsewhere describes a king’s ‘crown’ (2 Kgs 11:12). Such royal clothing would have reminded the Israelites that the high priest was part of a royal administration. In short, he led the royal attendants (the priests) of the heavenly King (the Lord), who was dwelling in the midst of his kingdom people (the Israelites) in his holy palace.”⁵

- ii. Resolve: (Not mere optics) Holy garments are not enough but prescribed obedience is vital cf. 10:1-2. What is shown on the outside must signify what is inside. Many in the Church today have elevated those who seemingly outwardly demonstrate Christian virtues all while arguing for them w/o the basis of Jesus actual person and work e.g. Jordon Peterson, Dennis Prager. But eventually, even the outer will match the inner.
 - iii. Rags to Robes (see Zech. 3:3-5 below) The detailed description of priestly attire is found in Exod. 28. Consider the Clothing:
 1. Linen for Loins v. 7, Exod. 28:42. One must not be indignant but have dignity when serving God. Dignity does not equate to self-righteous or self-important pride. Rather, it refers to an obedient humility. Such loin cloths were of fine linen and certainly prescribed for comfort as well.
 2. Robe of Royalty v. 7. See Sklar above.
 3. Vivid Vest v. 7 cf. Exod. 28:9-12, 17ff. Identification re: the 12 tribes, stones, engraved w/ respective colors signifying personal identification with solidarity of covenant community. Follow the motif into Christ: Rev. 2:17; 3:12 cf. 19:11-14 and back to OT Isa. 62:2-3.
 4. Divine Dice v. 8 cf. Exod.28:30. Such were prescribed to determine God’s counsel/direction and were worn over the High Priest’s heart Exod. 28:30.
 5. Headband of Holiness v. 9 cf. Exod.28:36-38 cf. Rev. 7:3; 22:4.
 6. Righteous Robes: All of God’s people are to be covered in righteousness. Covering of Salvation Isa. 61:10! And like that of the high priests such as Aaron and Joshua (Zech. 3:3-5), we too must disrobe our filthy rags of self-righteousness (Isa. 64:6) and receive the righteous robe of Christ (Ro. 13:14). And then, we will be able to offer acceptable sacrifices of gratitude, fellowship, and peace as well as reconcile others to God as a nation of priests. (1 Pet. 2:9 cf. Exod. 19:6 & Rev. 1:6!)
 7. Attractive Attire: Thankfully we do not have to perform the beautiful yet daunting and laborious ceremonies yet we have the privilege of displaying vital virtues of our High Priest e.g. Col. 3:12; Ro. 13:12-14; 1 Thes. 5:8.
3. Purification (14-17) Bull of Sin Offering
 - a. Identification (14)
 - b. Sacrifice (15)
 - c. Offering (16)
 - d. Removal (17) Lev. 16:27 cf. Heb. 13:10-12. The atoning sacrifices for sin/guilt are not shared with priests but only offered to God.
 4. Consecration (18-36) Rams of Burnt Offering and Consecration
 - a. First Ram
 - i. Blood consecrated the altar.

⁵ Sklar, J. (2013). [*Leviticus: An Introduction and Commentary*](#) (D. G. Firth, Ed.; Vol. 3, pp. 144–145). Inter-Varsity Press.

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- ii. Offered entirely as a sweet ascending aroma.
- b. Second Ram
 - i. Blood consecrated the priests. Vv. 23-24 A sanctified life requires a listening ear, righteous hands that do justly, and feet that faithfully follow the Covenant LORD (CL) to match the holiness marked on our foreheads.
 - ii. Offered to both God and priests as a shared communion v31. The CL did the Purification alone and thus they could not share in the sacrifice (Jesus paid for 100% of our sins). Here with the sanctifying offerings, priests have practical functions of which to participate and thus they may share in the communion of offerings. In Christ our offerings of free volitional not contributing to our justification but of our sanctification. Consider several NT verses on the joint contribution and process of sanctification: Heb. 9:14; 10:14; 12:10; 1 Thes. 5:23; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13.
- c. Seven Days
 - i. Set apart time for set apart priests.
 - ii. “So that you may not die”
 - iii. We are 100% saved (justified) by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8) yet we are judged by our works from salvation either receiving or losing reward (1 Cor. 3:15). And sometimes believers lose their lives cf. 1 Jn. 5:16 cf. Acts 5:1-10; 1 Cor. 11:30; 5:5 see Lev. 10:1-2.

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God consecrates the profane to be holy. Why? Because all humanity is profane and yet He calls, consecrates, and commissions people for His Kingdom. Isaiah saw a vision of the LORD and rightly feared for his life saying, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” (Isa. 6:5 ESV). We rightly still perform ceremonies and employ objects of symbolism to acknowledge our Savior/King and to remind us of His great deeds and love for us. We still rightly ordain those called unto official ministry of the Gospel. And we rightly still uphold the demands of qualifications for said ministers. But all of the redeemed have become priests to their families, neighbors, associates, and loved ones; hence the NT affirms the standards of conduct still apply to each believer. Not all are called into full-time ministry, but all the redeemed are called to sanctification by offering their bodies as living sacrifices unto our High Priest who has already paid for our purification. Some of God’s people are set apart to serve the Body, but all of His people are to be set apart from the profane.