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## Lesson 9 – Office and Work of the High Priest

In early times the patriarchs were priests over their own households, and God's original design was that the eldest son should take his father's place as priest of the family, but the plan of God was often thwarted by the sins of the eldest son.

1) What did God tell Cain?

**Genesis 4:7** If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt \_\_\_\_\_ over him.

Sin prevented Cain from being the leader of the family.

On account of sin, Reuben, the first-born of Jacob, lost “**the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power,**” which was his inherited right. (**Genesis 49:3,4**) When but a youth, Joseph cultivated those traits of character that gave him “**the excellency**” above his brethren. It is very probable that the coat of many colors given to him by his father in **Genesis 37:3-4**, was interpreted by his brethren as indicating his accession to the priesthood.

2) What does Deuteronomy 21:17 tell us about the rights of the firstborn?

... by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the \_\_\_\_\_ is his.

God gave His First-born for the redemption of the world, and for that reason, in God's plan, the first-born always inherited special privileges. To him came a double portion of his father's estate, the priesthood, and, the first-born in the descent from Isaac, the honor of being the progenitor of the Messiah. If the first-born proved unworthy, his inheritance was given to others, as in the case of Reuben, where Judah became the progenitor of Christ, Joseph received the double portion, and Levi received the priesthood.

3) What did God say about the sons of Levi?

**Numbers 3:12** And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the \_\_\_\_\_ that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;

**Numbers 3:13** Because all the \_\_\_\_\_ are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.

Here you see a shift of the work of mediation between God and man going from the firstborn of each family to a Priesthood, which by the way, is seen in the earthly family. Adam fell from grace and needed redemption. Jesus gave his life for us, was the sacrifice, and also was the mediator on Adam's behalf.



It was because the tribe of Levi stood true to God in time of a crisis, that God chose them to serve before Him (See **Deuteronomy 33:8-11**); and when the service of the sanctuary was established, the priesthood was given to Aaron and his sons, and the remainder of the tribe of Levi were to do the work of the sanctuary under the direction of the priests.

Aaron was appointed to officiate as high priest and his sons as common priests, the eldest son to take the office of high priest on Aaron's death.

4) Who were the Priests to represent?

**Isaiah 9:6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the \_\_\_\_\_ shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of \_\_\_\_\_.

They were to bear the burdens of the people. The anointing oil and the blood was then sprinkled upon Aaron and his sons, typifying the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit, which alone could fully qualify them to fill the holy office. (See **Exodus 29:5-35**)

The priesthood remained unbroken in Aaron's family until the sins of Eli and his sons made it necessary to change, and for a time Samuel, an Ephrathite, filled the office of leading priest in Israel. Abiathar was thrust out of the office of the priesthood in fulfilment of the prophecy given to Eli. But Zadok, who filled the office of High Priest in the time of David and Solomon, was thought by many to be a grandson of Eli. As the Israelites departed from the Lord, the priesthood became corrupt, until in the time of Christ it was bought and sold for money.

5) All of the Priests entered the Holy Place, Who ONLY Entered the Most Holy Place?

**Hebrews 9:7** But into the second went the \_\_\_\_\_ alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

God designed that the high priest should more nearly represent Christ than any other priest. The work of every priest was a type of Christ's work, but the common priests performed work only in the court and the first apartment of the sanctuary, while the high priest officiated not only in the court and the first apartment, as well as the common priests, but went alone into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement.

It was impossible for one man to perform all the work of the sanctuary that typified the work of Christ, and for that reason, there was a company of common Priests to assist the High Priest. It is always a rule that a higher official can fill the offices below him. The High Priest offered burnt-offerings in the court and sin-offerings in the first apartment. The author of Hebrews speaks of the High Priest offering the sin-offerings where the blood was taken into the Sanctuary (**Hebrews 13:11**).



6) What were other jobs only the High Priest could do?

**Exodus 30:7** And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet \_\_\_\_\_ every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.

**Exodus 30:8** And when Aaron lighteth the \_\_\_\_\_ at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

While the High Priest could perform any work in the first apartment that other Priests could perform, there was a daily service in the first apartment of the sanctuary that none but the High Priest could perform. He alone could burn incense upon the golden altar before the Lord, and trim and light the lamps on the golden candlestick. Each morning and evening, twice every day throughout the entire year, the High Priest officiated in the first apartment of the Sanctuary.

The crowning service of the whole year was on the tenth day of the seventh month when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies alone to make atonement for the sins of the people. Upon his breast in the stones of the breast-plate were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes, typifying Christ our High Priest as He thinks upon us individually, and confesses our names as they come up in review before God.



***Can you see how Jesus fulfilled the role of High Priest? \_\_\_\_\_***

***Are you interested in learning more about the duties of the priest? \_\_\_\_\_***

***Will you now ask Him to be your Mediator between you and the Father? \_\_\_\_\_***