

HEBREWS – LEVITICUS
“Purified By Blood”
Leviticus 8:10-24 & Hebrews 9:15-22
August 20, 2023

Leviticus 8:14-15

¹⁴ Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering.

¹⁵ And he killed it, and Moses took the blood, and with his finger put it on the horns of the altar around it and purified the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it to make atonement for it.¹

Hebrews 9:15-22

¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶ For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷ For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸ Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. ²² **Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.²**

“This is the Word of God” – “Thanks be to God.”

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Le 8:14–15). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Heb 9:15–22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

I love watching films or reading books that are built upon stories that draw me in and create what appears a bit of disjointedness only to connect toward the end and make everything clear. It takes a skilled writer to pull this off. These are the stories that resonate. Whereas those that do not work end up feeling as if there were two stories jammed together with no connective tissue only to meet a deadline or to ride high for a moment only to fizzle quickly. We see many films that end up on the free streaming services quickly for this and thus, are soon forgotten.

The story of God as revealed in his Word is so much more than a man-made story. When taken in its fullness, it soon becomes clear that the elements revealed in the early books come to fruition in the latter. The Old Testament epics that feature such biblical heroes as Abraham, Moses, Esther, David, and more are not simply stories that work well for children's Bibles but revealed, inspired, inerrant accounts of God working through his image-bearers all the while the full narrative is being implemented that is ultimately revealed in Christ and the story of the Gospel, not to mention the explosive growth of the church and the revealed message found in our final book of scripture.

There are more "aha moments" throughout the scriptures than can be covered in one setting...for those with ears to hear and eyes to see.

Thus, we look way back today to the book of Leviticus. This Old Testament book is one of the books of the law, of Torah, the writings given to Moses, the story of covenant between God and his people.

We have already spoken of the role of the priest, as we referenced in the book of Hebrews as Christ is our ultimate priest, in the order of Melchizedek, as well as King.

This phrase is not foreign to us today, and in evangelicalism and Baptist life has been quoted for centuries. Thus – not too shocking for us to hear that Jesus is "King of kings" and "Lord of lords." We are not shocked to

know that Jesus is our High Priest either, as that has been taught for centuries as well.

But, historically, especially for the Jewish people learning the Old Testament, the concept of a king being a priest was unheard of, in fact, was disallowed.

You may remember the story of King Saul in the Old Testament. Set apart by God, after the people begged for a king, but one of the steps that led to Saul's downfall was when he sinned by taking on the role reserved for the priest.

In the book of Isaiah we see the story of the prophet's calling and it begins with "In the year of King Uzziah's death..." and for many, that becomes a memorable time stamp, but also a story often forgotten or ignored. Why did Uzziah die when he did? This good king sinned by sinning horribly by attempting to act as God's priest for the people.

So, no small thing here.

Thus, we have to go back to this priesthood reality today for a bit. Hang on because there are a lot of details here that may leave you lost. Trust me, the details are important.

Today's roadmap:

- 1. CONSECRATED BY BLOOD**
- 2. COMMISSIONED BY BLOOD**
- 3. CLEANSED BY BLOOD**

CONSECRATED BY BLOOD

The word "consecrated" is a synonym for "ordained." Both are words we could say are "church words" for we just don't hear them much outside the church or outside our religious culture.

To help us understand the meaning, just think of them as meaning set apart. There is more, but not less to that definition.

Back in Leviticus 8 we see something happening that is interesting (and I don't say that lightly as often people just skim through this old book.)

You have the ordination service, the consecration moment, the “setting apart” reality for Aaron and his sons. Aaron is the brother of Moses. Moses has just been used by God as the point man for leading the Israelite people out of slavery in Egypt. The promise between God and his people through the setting up of the law, the covenant relationship between them, the Ten Commandments, the detailed descriptions of worship, the tabernacle construction, and all has been happening. Prior to this moment there is no Israelite priest. There is no priesthood under the law. Thus, we have everything needed for this vital role of mediator between God and his people, to fulfill the covenant...but there is no priest.

Israel, in a sense is a priesthood, though not every Israelite is a priest. This is the fulfillment of promise and the covenant.

For Christians today, especially Baptists, we take this reality to heart. For centuries it was understood the people as priesthood, yet not without a mediator.

Following the Protestant Reformation, we have seen strong emphasis on what we call the “priesthood of believers.” We hold to this, knowing that we, through Christ have access to the Father as Christ is our priest and thus, in him we can experience this priesthood of believers which ultimately allows us access too.

Yet, it is not “priesthood of the believer” in a singular form, but plural. It is “priesthood of believers.” This is important as we understand the

church to be the bride of Christ. We are priests together, not solitary priests.³

Timothy George states it clearly this way:

In my own Baptist family, for instance, it became common in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to speak of the “priesthood of *the believer*.” The reformers, however, spoke instead of the “priesthood of *all believers*” (plural). For them it was never a matter of a lonely, isolated seeker of truth, but rather of a band of faithful believers united in a common confession as a local, visible *congregatio sanctorum*.⁴

American Baptist historian Winthrop Hudson said **“The practical effect of the stress upon ‘soul competency’ as the cardinal doctrine of Baptists was to make every man’s hat his own church.”⁵**

What does this mean – as a sidebar it is a strong reminder that the individualistic principle of faith (yes – it is true that each person comes to Christ one at a time) eliminated the understanding and need, and rightful order of the local body of believers (the church) as expressed in the New Testament. The result has been hundreds of local churches with thousands of temporal members who either change churches like some people change shoes chasing the latest 2.0 version of church in town, or have abandoned church altogether sinfully believing that their membership is little more than a name on a roster with no expectations or role within the body. Thus, this moment in the history of Israel is not just important for Israel, but for all under the New Covenant as well.

Leviticus 8:1-9

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,² “Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments and the anointing oil and the bull of the sin

³ Mohler, R. Albert, Jr, Leviticus 8:1-9:8. <https://albertmohler.com/2021/12/12/leviticus-81-98>.

⁴ George, Timothy. “The Priesthood of All Believers: Timothy George.” *First Things*, 31 Oct. 2013, www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2016/10/the-priesthood-of-all-believers.

⁵ George, Timothy.

offering and the two rams and the basket of unleavened bread. ³ And assemble all the congregation **at the entrance of the tent of meeting.**”

⁴ And Moses did as the LORD commanded him, and the congregation was assembled at the **entrance of the tent of meeting.**

⁵ And Moses said to the congregation, “This is the thing that the LORD has commanded to be done.” ⁶ And Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water. ⁷ And he put the coat on him and tied the sash around his waist and clothed him with the robe and put the ephod on him and tied the skillfully woven band of the ephod around him, binding it to him with the band. ⁸ And he placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim. ⁹ And he set the turban on his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden plate, the holy crown, as the LORD commanded Moses. ⁶

Vital points not to miss:

- Entrance of the tent of meeting. These men are not yet priests and not yet ready to enter. The people cannot enter. This is more than symbolic. The priests need a priest. We see the “**already but not yet**” illustrated here.
- The vestments – clothing never worn prior. These robes are for the first time placed on a person. The details of the color and the jewels are given in other books of the law.

Leviticus 8:10-13

¹⁰ Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. ¹¹ And he sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its utensils and the basin and its stand, to consecrate them. ¹² And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him to consecrate him. ¹³ And Moses brought Aaron’s sons and clothed them with coats and tied sashes around their waists and bound caps on them, as the LORD commanded Moses. ⁷

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Le 8:1–9). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Le 8:10–13). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Then, we are told that the tabernacle and all the elements within were set apart as well. These too were anointed. Oil upon the elements and the altar. Oil upon the head of Aaron.

The man must be cleansed prior to entering. The room is cleansed and holy. This is no small thing.

Then, as I read earlier, we have the sacrifice of the bull, as was explained in Exodus, but now was for the sins of Aaron and his sons. They lay their hands on the head of the bull, symbolically placing their sins upon it. The bull is killed and the blood is spread upon the horns (the corners) of the large altar. The passage continues to tell how portions of the bull were burned on the altar and the remainder of the bull, its skin, its flesh and remaining parts were to be burned up in fire OUTSIDE the camp.

Some within the camp – some outside the camp. A foreshadowing of the final sacrifice who would shed blood within the city (by the beatings upon him) and then who would die outside the city on a hill known as the skull.

This is not random.

Aaron and his sons were set apart as priests. While every priest was to be a Levite, not every Levite was a priest.

The sacrifice of the ram as a burnt offering is then offered. And...beginning in verse 22 a new offering was given.

The “ram of ordination” leading to the commissioning.

COMMISSIONED BY BLOOD

Leviticus 8:22-24

²² Then he presented the other ram, the ram of ordination, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. ²³ And he killed it, and Moses took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴ Then he presented Aaron's sons, and Moses put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses threw the blood against the sides of the altar.⁸

Some questions may arise at this point.

We have a new, designated sacrifice. The ram of ordination is offered. The priests to be lay their hands upon the head of the ram. The laying on of hands is instituted. First as a sign of repentance of sin. Second as a sign of commissioning.

Sometimes things are offered in scripture without much explanation. It leaves many hanging in the mystery and to be honest, most of us cannot handle this. We want to know!!!!

So, here we have this strange ritual instituted. One that is not replicated today, but is not to be ignored.

Moses takes some blood from this dead ram of ordination.

He puts the blood on the lobe of Aaron's right ear.

He puts the blood on the thumb of his right hand.

He puts the blood on the big toe of the right foot.

Then, he does the same to Aaron's sons, the other priests.

Nice.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Le 8:22–24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

What?

This is not truly as hard to understand. The symbolism is great. The blood of the ram is the blood of ordination, of consecration, and becomes the blood of commission.

Thus, priests, what you hear (the ear) what you do (the thumb) and where you go (the toe) are consecrated and holy as you represent mediation between the chosen people of God and God himself.

This is temporal as the priest is not sinless here. Yet, it is serious and not to be taken lightly. Thus the regular sacrifices are not just reminders, but renewals of the covenant commissioning to have ears to hear, to work for the glory of God and as you go, to serve faithfully the people of God, while honoring him.

Sounds like that which Christ and the apostles instructed the believers and the church.

CLEANSED BY BLOOD

How can something that seems dirty – like blood – make one clean?

Romans 6:23

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. ⁹

It really does all connect.

And when it comes together it is amazing!

Under the law, as the Hebrew writer reminds the reader, “almost everything is purified by blood.” For it is the blood that fulfills the payment, covers the cost, pays the bill, and offers forgiveness of sin.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 6:23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

It is the blood of Christ, the ultimate sacrifice, the lamb of God, the final sin atonement, the one who never sinned, but took on the sin of you, me, and everyone here that makes the way. The blood makes us clean because it is not our blood. Christ took on the grime, heinousness, filth, ungodliness, lying, cheating, pornographic, adulterating, murderous, abusive, cheating, selfish, corrupt sin of humanity and gave his own, pure, holy, unstained, incorruptible life blood as payment.

So that we may be washed clean. Forever.

Romans 5:8

⁸but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.¹⁰

There Is a Fountain

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains:
Lose all their guilty stains,
Lose all their guilty stains;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away:
Wash all my sins away,
Wash all my sins away;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 5:8). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed ones of God
Be saved, to sin no more:
Be saved, to sin no more,
Be saved, to sin no more;
Till all the ransomed ones of God,
Be saved to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die:
And shall be till I die,
And shall be till I die;
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save:
I'll sing Thy power to save,
I'll sing Thy power to save;
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save.¹¹

¹¹ There is a Fountain. <https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/1006>