

Priesthood Order

Part 2

As we continue with our study of the priesthood orders it's important to keep in mind that "everything" presented in the TYPE, under the old covenant priesthood, is exalted, elevated, or ascends to a "higher dimension" of REALITY when we make the transformation to "another order of priest," i.e., the Order of Melchizedek. This transformation begins with a better covenant, which has better sacrifices, better promises, a better priesthood, a change of law, etc., which are all provisions for our participation in a higher calling.

Those whom God appointed under the old covenant as the "exalted" or first order of priesthood were limited to Aaron and his sons, along with Moses, as a result of their being sons of Amram, (Exalted People), who was Kohath's firstborn. The "function" of all other orders of priests was subject to their "placement as sons" under the "heads" of their families. The sons of Gershon were dedicated to perform certain functions and remain responsible to their "placement as sons" throughout their generations. The same principle applied to the sons of Kohath and Merari. One way we can view this order is from the "harvest" perspective. Moses, Aaron and his sons represent the "first of the firstfruits," the rest of the sons of Kohath: Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel, and the sons of Gershon and Merari represent "firstfruits" and the Levites represent a "kind of firstfruits." These ___ together ___ are the "Firstfruit Order" of **Israel**, and they are the Levitical Priesthood in its entirety. Israel is called "God's Firstborn" whom God chose to bear His name and through whom He desired to manifest/reveal Himself to the "Nations" and bless them. The purpose of the Priesthood, in relation to "men," was to teach Israel the Law, bear the names of Israel before God on the Breast Piece and Shoulder Stones of the High Priest's garments, offer sacrifices for their own sin and the sins of the people, and to prepare and lead Israel into the inheritance God promised them. Those who were destined to possess the Land of Canaan had to "grow up/mature" before they could inherit the promises.

We however, as administrators of the New Covenant, are not limited by a priesthood that was subject to death and whose ministration was not able to bring anyone to maturity/perfection. While those who were given as "gifts" to Aaron and his sons were limited, (who functioned according to their birth and placement as sons), those who are given as "gifts" to the church He is building, are born from above, function according to the power of an indestructible life, and not limited in their placement as sons. Those who the Christ has given out of the heavenly dimension, having descended and then ascending far above all heavens, are able to function according to His eternal purpose and are consecrated to do His works as administrators of the New Covenant. Whether the necessary work calls for an apostle, a prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher, all are to "grow up" into him who is the head, into Christ, for the perfecting of the saints for the work/ministration of spirit and life. These "priests" will become "ONE NEW MAN," and become a kingdom of priests who bear His name. These will bless the nations and fulfill, "the hope that at last the Creation itself would also be set free from the thralldom of decay so as to enjoy the liberty that will attend the glory of the children/sons of God." (From WNT)

I. The East Side (Continued)

C. Aaron was the firstborn son of Amram and Jochebed. There are few details recorded about his early life in Egypt and the first mention of him in scripture is where God's anger burned against Moses because he perceived himself to be lacking in his ability to speak the words God said He would teach him to say. So, God told Moses, "You are to speak to him, (Aaron), and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him." (Exo 4:15-16 NASB)

1. Although Aaron was the elder brother, his placement as a son was to serve Moses, his younger brother. However, his service to Moses was not as someone lesser in stature, rather; (as a "member" who would be Moses' mouth/voice), he was "needed" and, like Moses, totally dependent upon the LORD. In most other similar relationships, where the elder brother(s) served the younger there was a sense that the one being exalted/honored was more highly esteemed than those who served. (Consider Joseph and his brothers, Jacob and Esau, Isaac and his half-brother Ishmael, etc.). The level to which the "member" ascended or was exalted was according to God's purpose and not according to their personal achievement. The principle still applies which, simply stated, is, "All who fulfill the purpose of God, (do His Will), by functioning within the "placement as sons" that God has called, anointed, ordained, consecrated, and appointed them to, will prosper." God has the prerogative to bestow more honor on the member which is "lacking."

"For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." (Rom 12:4-8 NASB)

For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not *a part* of the body," it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body. And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not *a part* of the body," it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those *members* of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, whereas our more presentable members have no need *of it*. But God has *so* composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that *member* which lacked, (1Co 12:14-24)

The equality of Moses and Aaron is evident when we read the many verses that refer to them “speaking” as one voice and “doing” as one man. For instance, “Then **Moses and Aaron** went and assembled all the elders of the sons of Israel” (Exo 4:29) And afterward **Moses and Aaron** came and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'” “But Pharaoh said, “Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides, I will not let Israel go.” Then **they** said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, otherwise He will fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” But the king of Egypt said to them, “**Moses and Aaron**, why do you draw the people away from their work? Get *back* to your labors!” (Exo 5:1-4) It was *the same* **Aaron and Moses** to whom the LORD said, “Bring out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their hosts.” They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing out the sons of Israel from Egypt; it was *the same* **Moses and Aaron**. (Exo 6:26-27)

2. Aaron married Elisheba and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. (Exo 6:23)

a. Elisheba = “My God has sworn” or “God is an oath,” Her name is the same as N.T. “Elizabeth,” (the mother of John the Baptist), who was descended from Aaron

1.) The daughter of Amminadab and Sister of Nahshon

a.) Amminadab was of the tribe of Judah, descended from Perez who was Tamar's son by Judah. (See genealogy in I Chron 2:) Also, (Ruth 4: and Matthew 1:)

b.) Nahshon was the “Chief Leader” of Judah

The marriage between Aaron and Elisheba reveals the connection seen as the “O.T. Type” linking the “Priest/King” Order of Administration in the New Testament, i.e., A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a Kingdom of Priests.

3. Before the Levitical Order of Priests was established and confirmed those who were “priests” among the Israelites and could approach God through the offerings were likely the “firstborn,” or elders who exhibited a quality of character that was more developed than the “average/mere” man. This is intimated in some of the ancient writings called “Mekilta” but it's uncertain who these men actually were. It is clear that they were not to come near the mountain, (Sinai), when God called Moses to come to the top of the mountain, go back down, set bounds, then come up again and bring Aaron with him.

“The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. “Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, or else the LORD will break out against them.” Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up to

Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate it.'" Then the LORD said to him, "Go down and come up *again*, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them." (Exo 19:20-24)

For the sake of time and space, suffice it to say, "After Moses and Aaron returned to the foot of Sinai, there were "others" who had been "cleansed" and went up the mountain, although none went to the top except Moses, until we read that Moses was there for forty days and nights, receiving the commandments, the pattern for the Tabernacle, appointment of craftsmen, and instructions concerning the Priesthood after the Order of Aaron. From the time Moses ascended with Joshua, Chapter twenty four of Exodus, until the end of Chapter thirty one, we are reading some of what God spoke to Moses during those forty days. This may give us a clue to some of the things Jesus spoke to his disciples after his resurrection, when he spoke to them for forty days, "things concerning the Kingdom of God."

It was after Moses was told to "come down" because the people had corrupted themselves that we see the "Levitical Order" established. "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*." (Exo 32:7) We will consider this aspect of priesthood in greater detail as our study progresses.

4. Aaron's Calling and Placement

a. Aaron "confirmed" four times as "Priest"

1.) When he was washed, clothed, and anointed.

"Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. "You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as **a priest** to Me. "You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them; and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations." (Exo 40:12-15)

2.) When Korah, Dathan and Abiram rose up in opposition to Aaron's placement as Priest

"Then Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi, is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the *rest of* the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister to them; and that He has brought you near, *Korah*, and all your brothers, sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking for the priesthood also? "Therefore **you and all your company/followers** are gathered together against the LORD; **but as for Aaron, who is he** that you grumble against him?" Then Moses sent a summons to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; but they said, "We will not come up. (Num 16:8-12 various)

3.) When the Israelites challenged Aaron's placement as God's choice as High Priest

"Speak to **the sons of Israel**, and get from them **a rod for each father's household**: twelve rods, from all their **leaders according to their fathers' households**. You shall write each name on his rod, and write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi; for there is one rod for the head of *each* of their fathers' households. "You shall then deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you. "It will come about that **the rod of the man whom I choose** will sprout. Thus I will lessen from upon Myself the grumbings of the sons

of Israel, who are grumbling against you." Moses therefore spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' households, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods. So Moses deposited the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds. (Num 17:2-8)

4.) When Aaron was "Consecrated" by Moses

"You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may **minister as priests to Me.** (Exo 30:30) "So Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and the garments of his sons with him." (Lev 8:30)

Note: A distinction between number one, 1.) and number four, 4.), has been made to show that the anointing oil "poured" upon Aaron's head during his consecration/ordination as "**a priest**," that ran down over his beard and down to the hem of his priestly garments, is not the same as the oil that was "sprinkled" on Aaron, and his garments during his consecration/ordination. The first anointing was not with blood, let alone the blood of the second ram, (the last of the live consecration offerings), also called the ram of ordination, before embarking upon the seven days of consecration/ordination and entering into a higher dimension of ministration before God and for men, as His "**High Priest**." (We may consider Moses continued to serve God faithfully as a servant in all His house for a testimony as "Chief Priest." Although that "title" is not found in scripture the principle concerning those who are "first/chief" in their placement as sons is clearly seen in various passages, including, "They came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He *began* to question them, "What were you discussing on the way?" But they kept silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another which *of them was* the greatest. Sitting down, He called the twelve and *said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Taking a child, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me." (Mar 9:33-37) He certainly was "last" in his generation, his death coming after Miriam and Aaron had died and Eleazar and Joshua took their places and led the sons of Israel into their inheritance.)

5. Aaron's Death followed the death of Miriam, who died at Kadesh and was buried there. His death on Hor is stated in a "matter of fact" way without any emphasis on his "life." "Now when they set out from Kadesh, the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom, saying, "Aaron will be gathered to his people; for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah. "Take Aaron and his son Eleazar and bring them up to Mount Hor; and strip Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar. So Aaron will be gathered *to his people*, and will die there." So Moses did just as the LORD had commanded, and they went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. After Moses had stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on his son Eleazar, Aaron died there on the mountain top. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. When all the congregation saw that Aaron had died, all the house of Israel wept

for Aaron thirty days. (Num 20:22-29)

The foregoing account of Aaron's death is one of many passages of scripture that is "loaded" with meaning and has to be explored in depth to get its full importance. We will not take time to give every detail but a "summary" of some of the events that lead to his death seems relevant.

After having sojourned in the wilderness for thirty-eight years we again find Israel gathered at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, which is where they had contended with Moses and Aaron about the lack of water and where Joshua, Caleb and the "spies" were sent out and came back with the fruit of Eschol and gave their reports about the Land of Canaan. (*Refs.)

It was here that Moses and Aaron disbelieved and disobeyed God, striking the rock instead of speaking to it. (Also, where Korah and the others rose up against the LORD regarding his choice of priesthood.) Their arrival at Kadesh was in the first month of the fortieth year of their wandering and all the sons of Israel gathered there. Miriam died and was buried there during this first month. From there they traveled to Hor, which is approximately forty-eight miles from Kadesh. It was here, four months after Miriam's death that Aaron died on the top of the mountain.

Hor is significant because, **Mount Hor**; which, according to Bunting (f), was forty eight miles from Kadesh; this had not its name from the Horim or Horites, nor they from that, their name being written with a different letter, but from Harar, a mountain, for the word itself signifies a mountain; wherefore it may be rendered, "a mountain of the mountain", which Jarchi interprets a **mountain on the top of a mountain**. Josephus (g) says, that here stood a city, formerly called Arce, since ___ Petra, surrounded with an high mountain, where Aaron went and died; and Pliny says (h) of Petra, that it is encompassed with inaccessible mountains.

*Refs. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go up to this mountain of Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. "When you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was; for in the wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to treat Me as holy before their eyes at the water." (**These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.**) Then Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, (Num 27:12-15) Also, "I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought word back to him as *it was* in my heart. (Jos 14:7) These passages seem to settle the question as to whether this Kadesh is the same as Kadesh-barnea, at least in my mind. Old maps and Old commentaries are inconclusive because of the many differing "opinions." Some maps show three different locations for Kadesh-barnea and most of the commentaries differ.

Although there has been much concerning Aaron that has been omitted, this concludes this portion of our outline. In the next segment we will continue his legacy through the lives of his sons.

(To be continued...)

