

Welcome to 10 Minute Topics

This week's topic is: Priestly Duties and Laws

The Jewish priesthood began with the anointing of Aaron and his sons as well as the Tabernacle and all the vessels.

Vayikra – Chapter 8

(1)And the L-rd spoke unto Moses, saying: (2)'Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and the bullock of the sin-offering, and the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread; (3)and assemble thou all the congregation at the door of the tent of meeting.' (4)And Moses did as the L-rd commanded him; and the congregation was assembled at the door of the tent of meeting. (5)And Moses said unto the congregation: 'This is the thing which the L-rd has commanded to be done.' (6)And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. (7)And he put upon him the tunic, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and bound it unto him. (8)And he placed the breastplate upon him; and in the breastplate he put the Urim and the Thummim. (9)And he set the Turban upon his head; and upon the Turban, in front, did he set the golden plate, the holy crown; as the L-rd commanded Moses. (10)And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. (11)And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its vessels, and the laver and its base, to sanctify them. (12)And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him. (13)And Moses brought Aaron's sons, and clothed them with tunics, and girded them with girdles, and bound headdresses upon them; as the L-rd commanded Moses.

A sin offering and a burnt offering were then offered on the altar by Aaron and his sons.

(14)And the bullock of the sin-offering was brought; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock of the sin-offering. (15)And when it was slain, Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured out the remaining blood at the base of the altar, and sanctified it, to make atonement for it. (16)And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses made it smoke upon the altar. (17)But the bullock, and its skin, and its flesh, and its dung, were burnt with fire without the camp; as the L-rd commanded Moses. (18)And the ram of the burnt-offering was presented; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. (19) And when it was killed, Moses dashed the blood against the altar round about. (20)And when the ram was cut into its pieces, Moses made the head, and the pieces, and the fats go up in smoke. (21)And when the inwards and the legs were washed with water, Moses made the whole ram smoke upon the altar; it was a burnt-offering for a sweet savor; it was an offering made by fire unto the L-rd; as the L-rd commanded Moses.

A consecration ram was then offered as a wave offering sacrifice by Aaron and his sons.

(22)And the other ram was presented, the ram of consecration, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. (23)And when it was slain, Moses took of the blood thereof, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. (24)And Aaron's sons were brought, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot; and Moses dashed the blood against the altar round about. (25)And he took the fat, and the fat tail, and all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right thigh. (26)And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the L-rd, he took one unleavened cake, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat, and upon the right thigh. (27)And he put the whole upon the hands of Aaron, and upon the hands of his sons, and waved them for a wave-offering before the L-rd. (28)And Moses took them from off their hands, and made them smoke on the altar upon the burnt-offering; they were a consecration-offering for a sweet savor; it was an offering made by fire unto the L-rd. (29)And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave-offering before the L-rd; it was Moses' portion of the ram of consecration; as the L-rd commanded Moses. (30)And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him. (31)And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons: 'Boil the flesh at the door of the tent of meeting; and there eat it and the bread that is in the basket of consecration, as I commanded, saying: Aaron and his sons shall eat it. (32)And that which remains of the flesh and of the bread shall ye burn with fire. (33)And you shall not go out from the door of the tent of meeting seven days, until the days of your consecration be fulfilled; for He shall consecrate you seven days. (34)As has been done - this day, so the L-rd has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. (35)And at the door of the tent of meeting shall you abide day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the L-rd, that you die not; for so I am commanded. (36)And Aaron and his sons did all the things which the L-rd commanded by the hand of Moses.

On the eighth day, Moses spoke to Aaron and his sons, the elders, and the people of Israel. A sin offering, burnt offering, peace offering, and meal offering were then offered.

Vayikra – Chapter 9

(1)And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel; (2)and he said unto Aaron: 'Take thee a bull-calf for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, without blemish, and offer them before the L-rd. (3)And unto the children of Israel thou shall speak, saying: Take a he-goat for a sin-offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering; (4)and an ox and a ram for peace-offerings, to sacrifice before the L-rd; and a meal-offering mingled with oil; for today the L-rd appears unto you.' (5)And they brought that which Moses commanded before the tent of meeting; and all the congregation drew near and stood before the L-rd. (6)And Moses said: 'This is the thing which the L-rd commanded that you should do; that the glory of the L-rd may appear unto you.' (7)And Moses said unto

Aaron: 'Draw near unto the altar, and offer your sin-offering, and your burnt-offering, and make atonement for yourself, and for the people; and present the offering of the people, and make atonement for them; as the L-rd commanded.' (8)So Aaron drew near unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin-offering, which was for himself. (9)And the sons of Aaron presented the blood unto him; and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the base of the altar. (10)But the fat, and the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver of the sin-offering, he made smoke upon the altar; as the L-rd commanded Moses. (11)And the flesh and the skin were burnt with fire without the camp. (12)And he slew the burnt-offering; and Aaron's sons delivered unto him the blood, and he dashed it against the altar round about. (13)And they delivered the burnt-offering unto him, piece by piece, and the head; and he made them smoke upon the altar. (14)And he washed the inwards and the legs, and made them smoke upon the burnt-offering on the altar. (15)And the people's offering was presented; and he took the goat of the sin-offering which was for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as for the first. (16)And the burnt-offering was presented; and he offered it according to the ordinance. (17)And the meal-offering was presented; and he filled his hand from it, and made it smoke upon the altar, besides the burnt-offering of the morning. (18)He slew also the ox and the ram, the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which was for the people; and Aaron's sons delivered unto him the blood, and he dashed it against the altar round about, (19)and the fat of the ox, and of the ram, the fat tail, and that which covered the inwards, and the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver. (20)And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he made the fat smoke upon the altar. (21)And the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved for a wave-offering before the L-rd; as Moses commanded. (22)And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings. (23)And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and came out, and blessed the people; and the glory of the L-rd appeared unto all the people. (24)And there came forth fire from before the L-rd, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat; and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Laws regarding the priests were meted out from G-d through Moses.

Vayikra – Chapter 21

(1)And the L-rd said unto Moses: Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them: There shall none defile himself for the dead among his people; (2)except for his kin, that is near unto him, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother; (3)and for his sister a virgin, that is near unto him, that has had no husband, for her may he defile himself. (4)He shall not defile himself, being a chief man among his people, to profane himself. (5)They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corners of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh. (6)They shall be holy unto their G-d, and not profane the name of their G-d; for the offerings of the L-rd made by fire, the bread of their G-d, they do offer; therefore they shall be holy. (7)They shall not take a woman that is a harlot, or profaned; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband; for he is holy unto his G-d. (8)You shall sanctify him therefore; for he offers the bread of your G-d; he shall be holy unto you; for I the L-rd, who sanctify you, am holy. (9)And the daughter of any priest, if she

profane herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father: she shall be burnt with fire. (10)And the priest that is highest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil is poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not let the hair of his head go loose, nor rend his clothes; (11)neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother; (12)neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his G-d; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his G-d is upon him: I am the L-rd. (13)And he shall take a wife in her virginity. (14)A widow, or one divorced, or a profaned woman, or a harlot, these shall he not take; but a virgin of his own people shall he take to wife. (15)And he shall not profane his seed among his people; for I am the L-rd who sanctify him. (16)And the L-rd spoke unto Moses, saying: (17)Speak unto Aaron, saying: Whosoever he be of thy seed throughout their generations that has a blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his G-d. (18)For whatsoever man he be that has a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that has any thing maimed, or anything too long, (19)or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed, (20)or crook-backed, or a dwarf, or that has his eye overspread, or is scabbed, or scurvy, or has his stones crushed; (21)no man of the seed of Aaron the priest, that has a blemish, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the L-rd made by fire; he has a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his G-d. (22)He may eat the bread of his G-d, both of the most holy, and of the holy. (23)Only he shall not go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he has a blemish; that he profane not My holy places; for I am the L-rd who sanctify them. (24)So Moses spoke unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.

Text based on “The Holy Scriptures” – Jewish Publication Society, 1917

*The usage of G-d and L-rd is in compliance with the command to not take the Name of G-d in vain or to erase His Name. If you print out these pages, please treat them with respect. If you need to get rid of them, please take them to a synagogue and ask that they be reused or placed in a geniza.

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