

The Father as the Family Priest

Job 1:4-6; Deut 6:1-25

The responsibility of headship makes little sense and is even impossible without the possibility of priesthood

INTRODUCTION:

- ❑ *How many of us consider ourselves to be priests? What are the main functions of a priest?*
- ❑ Certain institutions and functions are foundational to life and society.
- ❑ Some things do not change: family, society, etc.
- ❑ We need to be brilliant in the basics, not first in the novelties. Priesthood is one of the oldest functions in the Bible and will exist through out eternity. It's functions may change, but its necessity will always be there.
- ❑ The need for priests has always been there. In the Bible, the office went through many changes, but certain aspects of the functions are unchanging.
- ❑ The Levitical system instructs us, on the functions of the priest, but often we need to go back to the beginning to find the basics of priesthood, just as we need to do for **Marriage, Tithing, Sabbath, etc.** God's real purpose and plan are only fore-shadowed in the Law. The final fulfillment is found in Christ and in the Newer Testaament.

Three OT Functions: *(All ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ)*

- ❑ Prophet – A downward function – Instructor/Informer
- ❑ Priest – A upward function – Intercessor/Instructor/Mediator
- ❑ King – A forward function - Leader

Priest:

- ❑ First mentioned of the word “priest” is used in reference to *Melchizedek*. But *Cf. Cain and Abel functioning as their own priests*
- ❑ The Jews had the office of the priests. Other Nations also did, cf. Egyptians and Medianites
- ❑ But before that every family had the function of the priest. – The Father or the Patriarch of the family.

- ❑ Fathers were priests before the Levitical system.

- ❑ Now each believer is a priest (1Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6), but the fathers, who know the Lord still have a priestly function to perform within the family.
- ❑ We need to remember that pastors are not priests. They oftentimes perform priestly functions, but they are not priests. All believers are now priests cf. priesthood of all believers

Definition of a Priest:

- A person authorized to perform and administer religious rites as an intermediary between the people and God.

Sac-er-do-tal-ism: The belief that priests act as mediators between God and human beings.

Functions of the Priest: *Ministers to God and to Man*

- ❑ To offer sacrifices and gifts - Ministers to God
- ❑ To represent the people to God - Mediator. . . Advocate
- ❑ To teach and instruct in the law - Spokesperson for God.

Aspects of the Priest's Life that needs to be considered:

- ❑ Calling
- ❑ Consecration
- ❑ Character
- ❑ Conduct
- ❑ Commitment
- ❑ Clothing

“Without defects” = symbolized wholeness and holiness.

Their clothing of the priests in the Old Testament had tremendous significance:

*“The clothes, which the priests wore also, carried great significance. Their **white linen garments symbolized holiness and glory**. They also wore a coat woven in **one piece without a seam to indicate their spiritual integrity, wholeness, and righteousness**. The four- cornered cloth of the coat signified that the priest belonged to the kingdom of God. The cap, resembling an opening flower, symbolized the fresh, vigorous life of the one who wore it. **The girdle, or sash, a belt which encircled the priest's body, was the priestly sign of service**. It showed that the wearer was an office bearer and administrator in the kingdom of God, cf. Exodus 39”.*

EXPOSITION:

Four Men who functioned well as Family Priests:

Whatever was written in the OT was written for our instruction. Rom 15:4, *”For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”*

Enoch (Gen 5:21-24) – A Walker

- *One of the most instructive portions in the Scriptures on fathering, not so much what it says as what it implies and represents.*
 - *Enoch was an exception to the dismal refrain. Only change in others = name and number of years. They lived and died – kicked the bucket.*
 - *Enoch was, "The shining star of the patriarchal period" (Matthew Henry)*
 - *He is an example of what it was meant to be like.*
 - *Not expiration, but translation. cf. Heb 11:5; Jude 1:14 2Kings 2:3-5;*
 - *His life was not one of the longest, but it was one of the most rewarding and fulfilled. Is it any wonder that his son is the one with the record for longevity?*
 - *Was it co-incidental that he lived 365 years? His year was 360 days - A lunar calendar. That tells me we need to live each day for the Lord (Application).*
 - *Enoch was a priest, as well as a prophet, cf. Noah, a prophet of righteousness (2Pet 2:5). Cf. also **Jude 1:14** Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones*
 - *Progression: saint, priest, prophet.*
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- ❑ We know nothing of him before he became a father
 - ❑ Walked with God after fathering Methuselah
 - ❑ Rewarding pilgrimage
 - ❑ His life was against the norm of his day. He did not let the “world pressed him in its mold”. He was set in changing the world, not let the world changed him. He was a pace-setter, not a “spineless, copy-cat”.

Job (Job 1:4-5) – A Witness

One of the most colourful characters in the Bible

- ❑ Feared God
- ❑ Knew God was holy
- ❑ Early in the morning = diligent
- ❑ Regular custom = Habitually
- ❑ He was concerned that his children might have sinned. Many of have children who are sinning and cursing God. What are we doing about it? Don't ridicule them, but praying for them, performing your priestly function on their behalf and watch God does His work in them. Our children we given to us so we can help them to grow. But God also gave them to us so they can help us to grow.
 - There are no guarantees in the Scriptures that your children will walk with the Lord. But the best insurance is your walk and prayer for them. This increases the odds immensely.
 - “What of Prov 22:6?” I hear you ask. Is that a promise or a principle? Are there promises in Proverbs?
- ❑ His Calling
- ❑ His Character - He was blameless and upright
- ❑ His Conduct - He shunned evil
- ❑ His Commitment - to God and to his family

Is it any wonder that Satan was after this man?

Abraham (Gen 22:1-19; 15:9-10) – A Worshipper

- ❑ Isaac was not surprise that his dad was going to worship. This was a common occurrence to him. This time it was strange that the father was not taking a lamb.
- ❑ Did not worship his family

- ❑ Preferred the Giver to the gifts.
- ❑ It cost him to serve God – even in terms of his family.
- ❑ He was a worshipper. Every place was an altar for him. Read Genesis and follow him around for a while. It won't be too long before you find him building an altar and calling on the Lord.

Joshua (Josh 24:14-16) – A Worker

- ❑ Leaders outside the home (of a nation), but never forget he was also the leader at home. Win at work and loose at Home = Loose
- ❑ Lapse in leadership in the home affects leadership outside the home
- ❑ Nowhere else, than the home, is failure as a leader more detrimental. His example inspired a nation and brought revival

The Man

- ❑ His Ministry - His Methods - His Motives

CONCLUSION:

The Priest:

- ❑ His Calling – To serve God and others
- ❑ His Character – Blameless and upright
- ❑ His Conduct – Far God and shunned evil
- ❑ His Commitment – To God, his family and others

One Lesson from Each Man for Each of US Today:

- ❑ **Enoch:** Walked with God because the children were watching
- ❑ **Job** – Feared God , and found this was the secret of the fearless life
 - Your children will cause your fears and tears. How will you cope? What's your game plan?
- ❑ **Abraham** – Obeyed God regardless of the cost – Father of Faith
- ❑ **Joshua** – Committed to served God even if no one else would.

Bring your troubles and struggles to God - yours and your family- and watch Him work in you and your situations and circumstances. Whatever He calls us to do is possible. He enables, equips and accompanies to provide and to prosper. His commandments are always accompanied by His commitment.

Additional Notes: (The Father as the Family Priest)

<p>Rebuke the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Destroyer ❑ Devourer ❑ Deceiver <p><i>External and Internal functions</i></p>	<p>But also (Three Functions towards our families):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Inspire ❑ Instruct ❑ Instruct <p>- Bless God and bless people</p>
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Consider the Man as:

Provider	Pastor	Lover	Husband	Churchman
Protector	Prophet	Leader	Father	Employee/Employer
Priest	Preacher	Labourer	Friend	Child

What other lessons can we learn about the being a Family Priest from?

- Ex 12:3, 21
- Ezra 7:10
- John 17:19
- Heb 4:14-16

Jesus as a Priest (Heb 4:14-16):

As our high priest, He had passion for God and compassion for people. He is our pattern:

He is:

- Sympathetic to our weaknesses
- Empathetic to our situations and circumstances
- Gracious and merciful
- He sanctified Himself because of us cf. Jn 17:19

Your effectiveness as a priest will be determined by:

1. Purity before God
2. Empathy for people – feel with
3. Sympathy for others – feel for

Consider the implications of:

- Dedication
- Consecration
- Intercession
- Instruction
- Inspiration
- Protection