

## Introduction and Scripture

### **Exodus 28:1–2 ESV**

“Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

### **Exodus 29:1 ESV**

“Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. Take one bull of the herd and two rams without blemish,

### **Exodus 29:35–46 ESV**

“Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. Through seven days shall you ordain them,

and every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall purify the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it to consecrate it.

Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

“Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly.

One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight.

And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a

hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering.

The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.

It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.

There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.

I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests.

I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God.

And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

## What is a priest?

A priest is functionally the bridge through which God is directly present and dwelling with humanity.

The function of a priest is to open the way to God for men and women. The Latin word for *priest* is *pontifex*, which means a *bridge-builder*. The priest is the one who builds a bridge between human beings and God.

**William Barclay**

## Adam and Eve are the original priests.

- They walk and talk with God in union and openness.
- God has designed humans to be the physical manifestation of his presence on earth.

### **Genesis 1:26** **ESV**

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

### **1 Corinthians 6:19–20** **ESV**

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

God chose the human race to be the priests of all creation, offering up creation's worship to him and bringing his wise order to it. When humans sinned, God chose the nation of Israel to be the priests of the human race, offering up human praise, and putting into operation God's solution to the problem of sin. Israel herself, however, was sinful; God chose a family of priests (the sons of Aaron) to be priests to the nation of priests. The priests themselves failed in their task; God sent his own Son to be both priest and sacrifice. The inverted pyramid of priesthood gets narrower and narrower until it reaches one point, and the point is Jesus on the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus is the moment when the human race, in the person of a single man, offers itself fully to the creator.

For the people of Israel, his new covenant people, God establishes priest through which they can encounter his presence.

For God to dwell with Israel, they needed to constantly be made righteous to be near his presence.

*God reveals that he wants to meet with the people in this sacred space.*

[Exodus 29:43](#) (ESV)

*There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.*

**Exodus 29:44–45 ESV**

I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests.

I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God.

When the people sin, or become unclean due to disease or blood, etc., the priests help the people regain right standing with God, so that they may exist in peace in near proximity to God's presence.

*The tabernacle, priests, and sacrificial system are what enable the divine presence to reside among [Israel].*

## Why do we need a priest?

1. We are unholy because of sin.
2. We make space unholy when we sin.
3. We need a guide to lead us back to holiness.

### **Exodus 32:19–21 ESV**

And as soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.

He took the calf that they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and scattered it on the water and made the people of Israel drink it.

And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?"

## Jesus is the true priest we all are in need of.

### **Hebrews 4:14–16** ESV

<sup>14</sup> Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

<sup>16</sup> Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.