

# Bethany Bible Study & Discussion



## Malachi Part-3 (chapter 2:1-9) KJV

11.8.2023

2: 1-9

## Calling & Chastisement of Priests

**CHARGE TO & CHASTISEMENT OF PRIESTS:** What was the charge given to priests? What will be the chastisement if they are negligent? (1-3)

**CHARACTER OF PRIESTS:** What are desirable qualities of priests? (4-7)

**FAILURE OF PRIESTS & CONSEQUENCES:** What were the four failures of priests? What was the consequence? (8-9)

**Reflection:** How did Christ & the Cross change the role of priests? How does this passage relate to today's church?

# Brief background on Levites/Priests

How were they selected? What was their role? Who were the high Priests? Example of blessing/punishment on priests.

# Who are the Levite priests?

**Origin:** Priests are from the tribe of Levi (3<sup>rd</sup> son of Jacob) (Genesis 29:34)

Levi killed the men of Shechem to avenge the rape of their sister Dinah (Genesis 34); Levi engaged in conspiracy to kill Joseph

**Jacob's prophecy:** Levites will be scattered (Genesis 49:7)

Fulfilled when Levites did not inherit land, and were scattered in promised land. (Deuteronomy 18:1-8)

Levites chosen: Levites chosen to serve God

Moses & Aaron from the tribe of Levi.

Aaron & sons chosen to be the priests

Aaron was the first high priest of Israel

Aaron's sons: Nadab | Ibihu | Eleazar | Ithamar

(grandson: Phinehas)

# Not all Levites were high Priests

## Numbers 18

And the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. <sup>2</sup> And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness. <sup>6</sup> And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. <sup>7</sup> Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the vail; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

**Exodus 28:1** And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.

# Privileges of high priests (Aaron and his sons)

Aaron was the first high priest of Israel.

High Priests could enter the most holy place once a year on the day of atonement (I Chronicles 6:48-49)

- Tabernacle: outer court | Holy Place | Most Holy Place
- Outer court: sacrifices made by priests and Levites
- Holy Place included: Golden lampstand, Table of Shewbread, and Altar of incense
- Most Holy place included: Ark of the covenant

Discovered the will of God (Numbers 27:21)

# Provision for Levites and Priests

Levites did not inherit any land but were allotted 48 cities to raise their families

Levites: Israelites gave 10% to the Levites

Priests: Levites gave 10% to the Aaron's sons

+ portion of animal and meal offerings

# Levites/Priests blessed when they took the Lord's side

## Idolatry of golden calf:

Levites stood with Moses to slay the idolaters (Exodus 32:25-29)

Adultery and Idolatry : Phinehas (Aaron's grandson) used Javelin to kill the Israelite man and Midianite woman (as per law, adultery & idolatry punishable by death) (Numbers 25:10-13)

<sup>10</sup> And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>11</sup> Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. <sup>12</sup> Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: <sup>13</sup> And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.

# Levites blessed when they took the Lord's side

EXODUS 32: 25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:) <sup>26</sup> Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, **Who is on the Lord's side?** let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. <sup>27</sup> And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.

<sup>28</sup> And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

<sup>29</sup> For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.



# Priests punished

**LEVITICUS 10** And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered **strange fire** before the Lord, which he commanded them not. <sup>2</sup> And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

**Role of  
Levitical  
Priests:**  
(from  
Deuteronomy)

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Carry the ark (10:8)

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Stand and Minister to the Lord (10:8, 18:3)

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Bless his name (10:8)

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**Intercessor, and Offer sacrifices** (33:10)

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**Judge** (17:9)

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Encourager during battle (20:2-4)

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**Teach** (33:10)



Over time, Corruption, Idolatry and Immorality crept into the office of Priests as Israelites were influenced by pagan cultures.  
Malachi addressing these problems

# Burden of God due to failure of priests

**Malachi 1:6-14**

Priests accepted  
and offered  
blemished  
sacrifices

**Malachi 2:1-9**

Priests failed to  
honor expectations  
of Levitical  
priesthood

**Malachi 2:10-16**

Priests guilty of  
divorce and  
marrying pagan  
women



# Charge & Chastisement (1-3)

## Charge to Priests

<sup>2</sup> If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name,

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“And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you” (1)

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To hear

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To lay it to heart (meditate, apply)

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To give glory to His name

# Charge to Priests (and us)

And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.  
<sup>2</sup> If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts,

**To hear | To lay it to heart | To give glory to His name**

The same charge is also given to us!

## **But**

- Hardened and sinful hearts cannot hear
- Words are lost when we are careless
  - Psalm 119:11 Thy word have I hid in my heart
  - I Samuel 3:19 And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and did let none of his words fall to the ground
- We often seek self-glory rather than to glorify God

# Chastisement

and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. <sup>3</sup> Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it.

Chastisement for not hearing | taking to heart | glorifying God

## God's curse (instead of blessings)

- Blessings (sacrifices & gifts) not accepted and turned to curse
- Seed corrupted (curse continued to next generation)
- Dung (disposable elements) thrown on faces (maybe symbolic)
- Priests will be disposed off with the dung (or lose their positions)

**EXODUS 29:11-14** <sup>11</sup> And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. <sup>12</sup> And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar. <sup>13</sup> And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul that is above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and burn them upon the altar. <sup>14</sup> But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp:



# Condemnation or call to repentance

Priests were told what to do ... but failed to obey

**God highlights our failure not to condemn us but to bring us to a point of confession & repentance**

- Priests must confess their failures of
  - Not hearing | Not depositing in heart | Not glorifying God
- Repent ... and do not repeat again

# Disobedience leads to curses

**Deuteronomy 28:15** But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

**Blessings** (Deuteronomy 28:1-14) **reversed to chastisement/curses if Israelites disobey** (Deuteronomy 28:15-35)

# Character of Priests

(4-7)

## High calling of Priests (4-7)

<sup>4</sup> And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. <sup>5</sup> **My covenant was with him of life and peace;** and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

<sup>6</sup> The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. <sup>7</sup> For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

# High calling of Priests (4-7)

Levi of the past **contrasted** with the corrupt Levites of today

## Godly Priests (Levites) characterized by:

- Reverential fear of God (fear is fear caused by respect as a son honoreth his father out of reverential fear)
- Truth in mouth and no iniquity in lips (deliver God's message without editing)
- Walked in peace and equity (integrity, character)
- Turned people from iniquity or sin (focus of the messages)
- Possessed knowledge of Word
- Sought by people because of their knowledge


# High calling of Priests

God holds the leaders to high standards

Priests were supposed to teach and lead people to holiness, and to keep the temple holy. But priests were not faithful in their role.

When God's leaders fall, God renders their work unprofitable and worthless. It not only affect them but also God's children.

Hence Prophet Malachi rendering strong message to priests.



# Failures of Priests & Consequences (8-9)

## Failure of Priests & consequence (8-9)

<sup>8</sup> But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts.

<sup>9</sup> Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.



# Failure of Priests & consequence

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## Four Failures

Drifted from God's ways (8)

Lead others astray and caused to stumble (8)

Corrupted the covenant of Levi (8)

Partial in application of law or in their role as judges (9)

similar failures are seen in today's church leaders

**Consequence:** Priests lose their position of respect

**Reflection:**

**How did Christ & the Cross change the role of priests?  
How does this passage relate to today's church?**



Today we don't  
need human  
priests ... **Christ**  
**is our High**  
**Priest**

# Today we don't need human priests ... Christ is our High Priest

**We don't need a high priest** to intercede for us anymore

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

**Jesus is our great high priest**


**Hebrews 4: 14** Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,

When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain separating holy and most holy place was torn (Mathew 27:51) Christ sacrifice on cross opened the way to everyone and eliminated the need for sacrifice (Hebrews 7:11-17, Hebrews 10:19-22)

**Hebrews 10: 19** Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; <sup>21</sup> And having an high priest over the house of God; <sup>22</sup> Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

**HEBREWS 7: 11-17** If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? <sup>12</sup>For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. <sup>13</sup>For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. <sup>14</sup>For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. <sup>15</sup>And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, <sup>16</sup>Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. <sup>17</sup>For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.





High calling of Priests =  
High calling of leaders =  
High calling of believers

High calling of  
Priests = High  
calling of  
leaders = High  
calling of all  
believers

God's anointed positions come with responsibility of obedience, stewardship, commitment, and character, and doing it all for His glory.

High calling of Priests  
= High calling of leaders  
= High calling of all  
believers

**Warning James 3:1** My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

**Qualities of leader Titus 1:7-9** For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; <sup>8</sup> But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; <sup>9</sup> Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

**Calling of all believers I Peter 2:9** But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

**Original Calling of Israelites EXODUS 19: 3** And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; <sup>4</sup> Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant**, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: <sup>6</sup> And **ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.**



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