

CbC to May 10

May 4 Su Reading A124 — Leviticus 8 — Ordaining the Priesthood

Audio: [Leviticus 8 \(ESV\)](#)

Consecrated for God — The formal ordination of the priests was of major importance. The whole congregation of Israel was called to observe it (v. 3). Adding emphasis to importance, this chapter is organized into seven sections, each ending with the expression, “*as the LORD commanded.*” The ordination service ended with the dire warning to priests that they were to complete it exactly as ordered, “*so that you do not die*” (v. 35). The ceremony included a sin offering of a bull for sins of the priests (v. 14), a burnt offering of a ram for connecting to and honoring Yahweh (v. 21), another burnt offering of a “*ram of ordination*” with its blood touched on the right ears, thumbs, and toes of the priests (v. 23), and finally the anointing of the garments of the priests (v. 30). Five times in this reading, the priests and the parts of the tabernacle were said to be “*consecrated*” by these actions, i.e., they were “set aside” for God’s use. We Christians have also been “consecrated” for God and His work. Paul wrote that “*if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work*” (2 Tim. 2:21).

May 5 M Reading A125 — Leviticus 9-10 — Daily Sacrifices Begin

Audio: [Leviticus 9-10 \(ESV\)](#)

Holy Fire — The seven days of ordination for the priests were completed, and it was time for the morning and evening daily sacrifices to begin with the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering (9:3-4). It had to be performed exactly as God had commanded it to be done. It was performed perfectly, and God demonstrated His approval by sending the fire of *glory* from heaven to consume what was already burning on the altar: “*...the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering*” (9:23-24). So far, so good. Then the two eldest sons of Aaron stepped in with what might be called the fire of *venture*. They apparently decided to play with the supernatural or to take a step into experimental worship. They “*each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them*” (10:1). It was “*unauthorized*” because it was “*not commanded.*” Immediately, a third kind of fire entered the picture, a fire of *judgment*: “*And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD*” (10:2). Moses then explained to Aaron with these words from God: “*Among those [of the priests] who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified*” (10:3). Aaron’s sons were not honoring God in their actions as representatives of the holy God before Israel. We also represent God to those around us. Are we honoring Him by our words and actions?

May 6 Tu Reading A126 — Leviticus 11-12 — Clean Animals and Mothers

Audio: [Leviticus 11-12 \(ESV\)](#)

Being Holy — God spoke to Aaron in yesterday’s reading, telling him to “*distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean*” (10:10). In today’s reading, He tells Moses and Aaron to teach the people “*to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean*” (11:47). The reasons for why God picked certain creatures to be clean or unclean is not always clear, but His descriptions of which are clean or unclean are quite well-defined. By obeying these laws to “*Consecrate yourselves...*” causes God’s people to “*be holy*” (11:44). The basis for our need to be holy is the holiness of God Himself: “*You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy*” (v. 45). Peter later quoted this verse in support of Christians’ need to be “*obedient children ... [not being] conformed to the passions of your former ignorance*” (1 Pet. 1:14). The tendency of many Christians today is to edge closer and closer to the thinking and ways of the majority, unbelieving culture that surrounds us.

No, we are to “*distinguish between the holy and the common*,” being willing to stand out in the crowd as being different, with a different lifestyle.

May 7 W Reading A127 — Leviticus 13 — Skin and Cloth Diseases

Audio: [Leviticus 13 \(ESV\)](#)

Separated from the Unclean — The Hebrew word that is translated “*leprous disease*” in the ESV (see vv. 2, 3) is a rather general term used for a variety of skin diseases, some being contagious and some not. Of the 35 times this word is used in the OT, it appears 29 times in this chapter and the next. The concern expressed in these two chapters was to isolate people or destroy things that endangered the community because of a disease. These threatening diseases were labeled “*unclean*” after being examined by a priest. The priest acted somewhat as a God-appointed medical doctor to diagnose the seriousness of these conditions. That which was diagnosed as “*unclean*,” was true not only in a medical sense, but also in a religious sense. They were not to come into contact with anything that was holy, like the tabernacle. After one was declared healed, or “*clean*,” they were free to worship within the tabernacle enclosure. A similar spiritual separation was declared by Paul for Christians not to be “*unequally yoked with unbelievers ... [and to] touch no unclean thing*” (2 Cor. 6:14, 17).

May 8 Th Reading A128 — Leviticus 14 — Cleansing a Man or House

Audio: [Leviticus 14 \(ESV\)](#)

The Cleansing Ordeal — Wow! What an involved process for declaring a healed man to be clean! I counted five required actions of the priest before “*he shall pronounce him clean*” from a previous disease (v. 7). Then the healed man had to do three additional things before “*he shall be clean*” (v. 8). After another seven days, he had to do three more things, “*and he shall be clean*” (v. 9). It wasn’t finished yet! On the following day, 12 more steps had to be done before the priest could finally declare him to be clean (v. 20). Twenty-three steps before a healed man could be officially declared clean. Aren’t you glad that you don’t have to do that under the New Testament requirements for cleansing? Our cleansing is so simple, depending only on our own “action” of yielding to Jesus in confession and faith: “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9).

Oh, now I see the crimson wave!
The fountain deep and wide;
Jesus, my Lord, mighty to save,
Points to His wounded side.

The cleansing stream I see, I see!
I plunge, and, oh, it cleanseth me!
Oh, praise the Lord, it cleanseth me!
It cleanseth me, yes, cleanseth me.

— Phoebe Palmer (b. 1807)

May 9 F Reading A129 — Leviticus 15 — Bodily Discharges

Audio: [Leviticus 15 \(ESV\)](#)

Sacrificing — Commenting on this chapter’s subject is relatively sensitive, but from a medical perspective, these rules were a way to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. What struck me in today’s reading was how often the sacrificing needs of “*two turtledoves or two pigeons*” are mentioned. They are required twice in this chapter and eight other times in Leviticus. If I lived in those days, I might want to go into the business of raising birds! Also, in this chapter is the frequent mention of bathing one’s whole body, and in one place it is specified that it must be in “*fresh water*”

(v. 13). That must have seemed very difficult since they were living in the water-scarce desert wilderness.

May 10 Sa Reading A130 — Leviticus 16 — The Day of Atonement

Audio: [Leviticus 16 \(ESV\)](#)

The Way to God — The Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur* in Hebrew) was instituted by God in direct connection to the death of Aaron's two oldest sons (v. 1), who were killed for their unauthorized attempt to offer incense before God (10:1). The first annual ritual of *Yom Kippur* was to be done by Aaron, exactly as God directed, "*so that he may not die*" (16:2). He was to bring a censer with burning coals from the altar into the Most Holy Place and sprinkle incense on the censer to create a cloud in which God would appear (vv. 2, 13). This was the only authorized way the censer was to be used by priests in OT times. When Jesus died on the cross, however, His death ripped open that separating curtain and instituted a new way for all repentant people to connect to God. The writer of Hebrews explained it this way: "*But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption*" (Heb. 9:11-12). When Jews celebrate Yom Kippur on October 2 this year, they will not understand that it was superseded once for all on the day Christ died.