

Exodus 29
Psalm 110
Hebrews 10:19-39

“Consecrated Priests”

July 16, 2017

A friend of mine recently made an important observation:

“You will often hear various theologians say that Jesus is the hermeneutical key to the Old Testament. In fact, one of those people is me. However, it is important to note that the converse is true as well, [as Ephraim Radner puts it]: “Jesus is rightly interpreted by Leviticus.” (or Exodus)

‘Jesus is rightly interpreted by Leviticus,
so that the actual meaning of what he does,
what he teaches,
and who he is
is informed even by the details of, for example,
the laws on bodily fluids,
sexual relations, genealogy, and planting.’ (Radner, p20)

“So it is very important to note this well:
That Jesus is the interpretive key to the Old Testament
does not mean that we are now allowed to dismiss portions of the Old Testament that,
in our very limited understanding,
do not line up with who we think Jesus is.
Jesus is the interpretive key to the Old Testament.
But the Old Testament is the interpretive key to Jesus.” (Jerry Shepherd)

If you want to understand what Jesus has done as our great high priest,
then you need to understand the consecration of the priests in the OT.

Our Psalm of response is Psalm 110.
Psalm 110 is the song that includes the line,
“you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”
Psalm 110 reflects on the fact that the priesthood of Aaron cannot last forever.
We need a priest greater than Aaron.
We need a king greater than David.

And so let us sing Psalm 110.

Sing Psalm 110
Read Hebrews 10:19-39

In Hebrews 10, we hear about how *we* have been consecrated as priests –
our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience,
and our bodies washed with pure water.

In your baptism you were consecrated as a priest –

as you were united with our great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

What does that mean?

What does it mean that you have been consecrated as a priest?

Well, that's why Hebrews says,

‘let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of *faith*’

‘let us hold fast the confession of our *hope*’

‘And let us consider how to stir up one another to *love* and good works...’

Faith, hope, and love.

These are the things that are to characterize our priesthood.

Faith – as we believe God’s promises.

Hope – as we hold fast in the midst of trials.

And Love – as we stir each other up – as we encourage each other.

And really, this is what Exodus 29 is all about!

In Exodus 29, Israel is gathered at Mt. Sinai.

The LORD has said that he will travel with them to the promised Land.

They are dwelling in tents in the wilderness –

so God tells them to build a tent for him – so that he can travel in their midst.

They are cooking on campfires –

so God tells them to build a portable grill (the altar) – so that he can eat with them.

And now God tells Moses to set apart Aaron and his sons as priests –

as those who will serve in his holy dwelling place.

In Exodus 24, it was the young men – from every tribe of Israel –

who served at the altar.

But now God ordains Aaron and his sons,

so that there will be a holy priesthood that is devoted to serving the LORD’s house.

At Sinai Israel was told “you are a royal priesthood, a holy nation.”

Now the LORD chooses a portion of Israel to be a special priesthood within Israel.

So when Hebrews tells us that we are *all* consecrated as priests in Jesus,

that means that *all of us* are consecrated to holy service in the LORD’s house.

Sure, the NT will talk about a variety of gifts that the Spirit gives –

not everyone has the same *role* in the church –

but all of us have been united to Christ – the great high priest –

and therefore we have all been consecrated in him to a holy priesthood.

So let’s look at what that means.

1. Clothing Aaron and His Sons with the Priesthood (v1-9)

29 “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, ² and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil. You shall make them of fine wheat flour. ³ You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and bring the bull and the two rams.

In verses 1-3 we hear about the items needed for consecration:

one bull, two rams *without blemish* –
that which is offered to God must be blameless – without blemish.
We give *our best* to God – not the leftovers!

If you love your wife, you will give her the *best* of your time –
not the leftovers at the end of doing everything else!
Even so, if we love God, we will give him *our best*.

The ordination offerings also include a grain offering –
unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil.

Meat and bread – the basic staples of life – are used in God’s service.

⁴ *You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and wash them with water.*
⁵ *Then you shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the coat and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod.* ⁶ *And you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban.* ⁷ *You shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him.* ⁸ *Then you shall bring his sons and put coats on them,* ⁹ *and you shall gird Aaron and his sons with sashes and bind caps on them. And the priesthood shall be theirs by a statute forever. Thus you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.*

And then Aaron and his sons are to be dressed in their priestly garments.

We looked at these last week –
they are now dressed for glory and for beauty.
Aaron is now decked out in garments of salvation – garments of righteousness –
so that he might enter the holy of holies – so that he might *be* “Adam” –
the image of God in the most holy place.

Before he is dressed, however, he must first be washed with water.

And after he is dressed, he must be anointed with oil –
the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes! (psalm 133:2).

The early church understood how our baptism is our priestly consecration –
and so very early on, they added the ritual of anointing with oil
at the end of the baptismal ceremony.

It was a beautiful idea –
though I am sorry to say that it led to all sorts of mess in the middle ages –
when people lost sight of the point, and wound up creating a new sacrament
(the Roman Catholic sacrament of confirmation).

But when Hebrews 10 speaks of baptism as our priestly consecration,
there is no reference to anointing with oil –
it’s just the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,
and the body washed with pure water.

But in order to get past the cherubim – in order to get past the guardians of God’s holy place –
Aaron must be consecrated – sanctified – set apart as *holy* to the LORD.

And for that they needed a sin offering, a burnt offering, and a peace offering.
(That’s why there are *three* animals here!)

2. Sanctifying Aaron and His Sons with the Offerings (v10-28)

a. The Bull as Sin Offering (v10-14)

¹⁰ “Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. ¹¹ Then you shall kill the bull before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting, ¹² and shall take part of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger; and the rest of^{the} the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar. ¹³ And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar. ¹⁴ But the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

Aaron and his sons start by laying their hands on the head of the bull.

This laying on of hands is designed as a symbolic transfer of life and death.

So when Moses kills the bull before the LORD –

the death of the bull is designed to represent the death of Aaron and his sons.

The “base” of the altar – is the same word used for the “foundations” of the earth.

As we have seen, the courtyard of the tabernacle – where the bronze altar is – represents the earth (and the tabernacle represents the heavens).

Just like the Holy Place – the first part of the tabernacle – represents “this age,” and the Holy of Holies represents “the age to come” (Heb 9).

So when the blood is poured out at the “foundation” of the altar – it symbolically poured out at the foundations of the earth.

Sin has corrupted all the earth.

Only the shedding of blood can cleanse and restore creation.

(although as Hebrews tells us – the blood of bulls and goats was not able to pay for sin –

Only the blood of Christ – only the blood of one who was both God and man – could satisfy for sin.)

But here the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung is burned with fire *outside the camp*.

What does “outside the camp” represent?

It’s awfully tempting to say that this represents *hell* – but that’s not what God says!

Hebrews 13:11-13 explains this:

“For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.

So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.

For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.”

Outside the camp does not refer to *hell* – but to the Gentile world –

the world outside the holy community –
a world that *needs to be saved*.

The burning of the sin offering *outside the camp*

represents the fact that sin is utterly inconsistent with the holy community.

So what do you do when the holy community is contaminated with sin?

The sin needs to be dealt with!

But if it is the *priest* who is contaminated (either with his own sin –
or with the corporate sin of the whole community – see Leviticus 4 for details),
then how can the priest offer sacrifices?

Before the priest can offer sacrifices for *others* he must offer a sin offering for himself.

He cannot even offer a burnt offering (to approach God)
until he has offered a sin offering.

The altar itself must be sanctified – consecrated – with blood.

And so the sin offering is offered to consecrate the altar.

Only when the sin of the priest is atoned for –
only then can he bring burnt offerings and peace offerings.

And that is what the two rams are for.

b. The First Ram as Burnt Offering (v15-18)

¹⁵ “Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, ¹⁶ and you shall kill the ram and shall take its blood and throw it against the sides of the altar.

¹⁷ Then you shall cut the ram into pieces, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and its head, ¹⁸ and burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the LORD. It is a pleasing aroma, a food offering^[b] to the LORD.

Then Moses takes the first ram, and Aaron and his sons lay their hands on the head of the ram.

(Again, there is a transfer of life and death –
and the fact that this keeps happening year after year – day after day –
reminds us – and reminded them! – that they needed a better sacrifice!)

But in verse 17, there are three words used to describe this offering:

a “burnt offering”

a “pleasing aroma”

a “food offering.”

Each is important.

The language of the “burnt offering” comes from a root meaning, “to go up.”

And what are you doing when you offer a burnt offering?

You are *going up* into the presence of God.

The burnt offering – or the “going up offering” –
is the way that Israel comes into the presence of God.

And what is more, the smoke of the “going up offering” ascends to God as a “pleasing aroma” –

a sweet smell.

God has said that he is bringing his people to himself –
he *wants* to dwell with his people – to have a meal with his people.
And so when he smells the aroma of the “going up offering” –
when he smells the burning of the blameless sacrifice –
he is pleased.

Why?

Think back to the story of Abraham.

God told Abraham to offer his son, Isaac, as a burnt offering.

God had *already promised* Abraham that Isaac was the *one* through whom
God’s covenant promises would come to all the earth.

So Abraham *knew* that whatever happened on that mountain,
Isaac would go on to grow up and get married and have children.

Because *God had promised*.

When atheists ask me, “What would you do if God told you to kill your son?”

My response is always, “He can’t – because my sons are *not*
the only ones through whom God’s covenant promises
will come to all the earth!”

The story of Abraham and Isaac cannot be ripped out of its context!

Its context is in the Pentateuch – the Five Books of Moses.

And *here* – at the consecration of Aaron –
you begin to realize how the story of Abraham and Isaac
would have been understood by Israel.

Because by the time that the story of Abraham and Isaac is written down
they would have already watched the consecration of Aaron.

The ram of the burnt offering is the ram in the thicket that replaced Isaac.

God is *pleased* with the sweet smell of the burning ram
that is offered in place of his people.

Why?

Because *he knows* that this is what *he* will do.

God the Son – the second person of the Holy Trinity –

will come in our flesh so that he might offer *himself* as the “going up offering” –
as a sweet aroma to his Father –
so that he might bring us into his presence.

And then there is the “food offering.”

The word here has to do with *fire* (so the “fire offering” might be appropriate here) –
unless you want to get colloquial,
in which case you could say “a cook-out” to the LORD.

The burnt offering, after all, is the part of the worship service where the whole animal is burned.

God alone consumes the “going up offering.”

There is nothing that Aaron and his sons can do to “ascend the hill of the LORD”
(and yes, when Psalm 24 asks ‘who can ascend the hill of the LORD?’
it uses the same root!)

You can only ascend the hill of the LORD and stand in his holy place
if God himself opens the way

(which is the point of Psalm 24 and the coming of the King of Glory!)

c. The Ram of Ordination (v19-28)

i. The Sprinkling of Blood to Make Holy (v19-21)

¹⁹ “You shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram,
²⁰ and you shall kill the ram and take part of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tips of the right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the great toes of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the sides of the altar. ²¹ Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. He and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.

And a third time Aaron and his sons lay their hands on the head of an animal –
this time on the second ram – the ram of ordination.

Moses then kills the ram and takes part of its blood and puts it on the tip of Aaron's right ear,
and on his right thumb,
and on his right big toe (and on his sons as well).

In one sense, these are the body parts that are visible outside his clothing –
and they also function to symbolize the whole body –
top, middle, and bottom.

But the ear highlights the consecration of Aaron's hearing –
listen to what the LORD commands you!

The right hand is a symbol of power –
and is now consecrated to do the work of performing the offerings to the LORD.

Aaron's foot will carry him into the Holy of Holies –
and thus is now consecrated to walk in the presence of the LORD.

And then Moses is to take part of the blood from the altar, mix it with the anointing oil
(described in the next chapter),
and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments.
The priestly robes would be spattered with blood and oil from day one.
(And yes, you should see echoes of Christ and the Holy Spirit here).

The priest enters his labors clothed with Christ and his Spirit.
That is the only way that he can enter the presence of a holy God!

As Hebrews 10:22 puts it,
“let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,
with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed with pure water.”

We have been consecrated by Jesus as priests in him.

ii. The Wave/Burnt Offering – a “Food Offering to the LORD” (v22-25)

²² “You shall also take the fat from the ram and the fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and the right thigh (for it is a ram

of ordination),²³ and one loaf of bread and one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD.²⁴ You shall put all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD.²⁵ Then you shall take them from their hands and burn them on the altar on top of the burnt offering, as a pleasing aroma before the LORD. It is a food offering to the LORD.

And then Moses takes the fat, the liver, and the kidneys –
along with the right thigh of the ram of ordination
(the right thigh will ordinarily be the priest's portion –
but for the ram of ordination, this will be *God's* portion.)
And then Moses takes one loaf of bread and one cake of bread made with oil,
and one wafer of unleavened bread,
and all this meat and bread is placed in the hands of Aaron and his sons –
for a “wave offering” before the LORD.

The idea here is that the one doing the ordaining (in this case, Moses)
is presenting the ordinand before the LORD, together with the gifts
that the ordinand is bringing to the LORD.

iii. The Wave/Peace Offering – a Portion for Moses (the Priest) (v26-28)

²⁶ “You shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron's ordination and wave it for a wave offering before the LORD, and it shall be your portion.²⁷ And you shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering that is waved and the thigh of the priests' portion that is contributed from the ram of ordination, from what was Aaron's and his sons'.²⁸ It shall be for Aaron and his sons as a perpetual due from the people of Israel, for it is a contribution. It shall be a contribution from the people of Israel from their peace offerings, their contribution to the LORD.

And then in verse 26 we hear what Moses receives as his portion as the one doing the ordaining:
the breast of the ram of Aaron's ordination.

The ordination offering is a type of peace offering
(Leviticus describes a number of different peace offerings).
The basic point of the peace offering is that because of the sin offering
(dealing with the sin of the priest – or sin of the people),
and because of the burnt offering
(the “going up” offering whereby the people of God come before the LORD),
therefore we have peace with God,
and may sit down to a meal together.

But in order to do all this, you need a priest!
You need someone who can make these offerings for you.
And so the right thigh and the breast of the peace offering
is the portion for the priests.

Of course, in the ordination offering, the right thigh belongs to the LORD –
since only the LORD can call a man to the priesthood.
And the breast of the ordination offering belongs to the one doing the ordainin
(in this case, Moses).

Which, of course, raises the question – *how did Moses get ordained?*

Remember the burning bush?

God had consecrated Moses himself.

(It's sort of like the question, "Who ordained the apostles?")

Jesus called them – and his call *constituted* them as apostles –
in the same way that God's call *constituted* Isaiah as a prophet.

The rest of us need to go through a process –
administered by those whom God called!

This is why I have often pointed out that Presbyterians believe in apostolic succession:
all Presbyterian pastors were ordained by pastors who were ordained by pastors –
all the way back to the apostles!)

3. Succession: Aaron's Sons Shall Succeed Him (v29-30)

²⁹ *"The holy garments of Aaron shall be for his sons after him; they shall be anointed in them and ordained in them. ³⁰ The son who succeeds him as priest, who comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the Holy Place, shall wear them seven days.*

The question of succession takes center stage in verses 29-30.

The holy garments serve as the mark of the high priesthood.

Aaron's son will take his place as high priest,

and the holy garments will be passed down from father to son for generations.

(The text never deals with the question of what to do when the holy garments get threadbare –
but one can easily surmise the process:

simply make a copy of the holy garments and consecrate them!)

Hebrews 7 points out that the order of Aaron is shown to be weak and insufficient,

because it requires "bodily descent" –

whereas the priesthood of our Lord Jesus is established

by the power of an indestructible life.

And the Christian ministry, therefore,

is not inherited from father to son –

but is passed down through training and mentoring and the laying on of hands.

4. Partaking of the Ram of Ordination (v31-34)

³¹ *"You shall take the ram of ordination and boil its flesh in a holy place. ³² And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket in the entrance of the tent of meeting.*

³³ *They shall eat those things with which atonement was made at their ordination and consecration, but an outsider shall not eat of them, because they are holy. ³⁴ And if any of the flesh for the ordination or of the bread remain until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.*

Verses 31-34 then take us back to the consecration ceremony itself.

The meat from the ram of ordination is boiled "in a holy place" –

meaning *not* on the bronze altar –

but most likely in the courtyard of the tabernacle

(although it could also be outside the courtyard –

the only restriction is that it must be a "holy" place –

somewhere inside the camp that is "set apart."

Verse 33 is especially important:

“They shall eat those things with which atonement was made
at their ordination and consecration,
but an outsider shall not eat of them, because they are holy.”

Think about this:

the priest shall eat the holy bread and the holy meat
the bread and meat from the ram which was used to ordain and consecrate them.

Think back to the Passover.

At the Passover, the Passover Lamb died in the place of the firstborn.

The firstborn – and their families –
partook of the animal whose death replaced their own.

In the same way, the priest – and his family – partakes of the animal
whose death sanctified him and set him apart for the priesthood.

From that day on, the priest and his family will partake of holy food every day.

You can understand why the early church had communion
every time they gathered together.

(The frequency of communion in the early church was either weekly or daily –
depending on how often they gathered together!)

Because the early church understood the priesthood of all believers.

If we are *priests* – if we have been joined to the family of Jesus the High Priest –
then we partake regularly of the holy food – the body and blood of Jesus.

The only way that the Lord’s Supper can become an empty ritual

is if worship itself has become an empty ritual –

and that can only happen if Christ himself is no longer present with his people!

And that *can* happen!

Jesus warns the church of Ephesus in Revelation 2:5 that he will remove the lampstand
from the church that refuses to repent of their apostasy.

I think that we are seeing that happen to the mainline churches today.

They have not repented, and their lampstands are being removed –
so they are withering and dying away.

5. The Consecration of the Altar (v35-46)

a. The Seven Day Ordination Service for Priest and Altar (v35-37)

³⁵ “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, ³⁶ 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. ³⁷ 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.

Verses 35-37 then tells us that the ordination service lasts for seven days.

When Moses actually does this in Leviticus 8,

it is clear that Aaron and his sons only enter into their priestly ministry
on the *eighth* day.

This is a reminder to us that in the OT, the *eighth day* was the day of worship.
 The seventh day is the day of *rest* – but the *eighth day* is the day of worship –
 thus reminding Israel that the endless cycle of sabbaths –
 the endless cycle of seventh-days –
 needed a day beyond the seven – an eighth day.
 The feasts of Israel are oriented around the first day and the eighth day.
 The feast of Pentecost was *always* on a Sunday
 (the day after the seventh sabbath after Passover).
 The feast of Tabernacles had sacred assemblies on the first and eighth days.
 Likewise the consecration of the priest lasted for seven days –
 and then the priest entered his new creation labors on the *eighth day*.
 And when a person was unclean due to leprosy or other reasons –
 their purification echoed the consecration of the priest,
 as they would go through a seven-day purification,
 resulting in their restoration to the worshipping community
on the eighth day.

Why did the apostles always worship on the Lord’s Day?
 Because the *whole* of the OT taught them to expect that the new creation
 would dawn on the first day of the week – the eighth day of the old creation!

b. The Daily Offering (v38-43)

³⁸ “Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. ³⁹ One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. ⁴⁰ And with the first lamb a tenth measure^[c] of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin^[d] of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. ⁴¹ 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. ⁴² 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. ⁴³ There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.

Verses 38-43 then describe the regular daily offerings in the tabernacle –
 a lamb offered in the morning as a burnt offering –
 and a lamb offered in the evening as a burnt offering –
 each with its grain offering and drink offering.

Remember that the burnt offering is the “going up offering” –
 the offering by which God’s people draw near to the LORD.

That’s why the LORD says that they shall do this *every day* – morning and evening –
 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.”

God wants to be near his people – to dwell with his people –
 and he wants his presence to be a *good thing* for you!

But for God’s presence to be a good thing for you – then *your sin* needs to be dealt with!

All this elaborate ceremony and ritual for the ordination of the priests
is designed to show you how *big a deal* it is to deal with sin!

[read verses 44-46]

c. The Purpose of Consecration: “I Will Dwell among Them” (v44-46)

⁴⁴ *I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests.* ⁴⁵ *I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God.* ⁴⁶ *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.*

Why have been spending so much time working through the details of Exodus 29?

Well, think about what would be the case if Jesus had come *without* the OT?

Jesus would have died and been raised –

and we would have said,

“What does it mean?”

That’s why I said at the beginning of the sermon –

that not only does Jesus interpret the OT –

but the OT interprets Jesus!

When you see all these details about the priests and the offerings –

you start to see all sorts of things about the *meaning* of what Jesus did!

He is the sin offering that takes our sin upon himself.

He is the burnt offering that brings us near to God.

And he is the peace offering – the ordination offering –

who consecrates us as a royal priesthood in him

and of whom we partake as we participate in the body and blood of Christ at his Table.

But there is another part of this that we caught a glimpse of earlier from Hebrews 13:11-13 –

“For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places

by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin

are burned outside the camp.

So Jesus also suffered outside the gate

in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.

For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.”

Outside the camp does not refer to *hell* –

but to the Gentile world –

the world outside the holy community –

a world that *needs to be saved*.

If we are a kingdom of priests – a holy nation –

then as we participate in Christ and his holy flesh and blood,

we are also called to participate in his sufferings –

to bear the reproach that he endured.

As Hebrews 13 goes on to say:

“For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.
Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,
that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.
Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,
for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” (13:14-15)

Hebrews uses the language of *sacrifice* twice in these two verses.

We offer the sacrifice of praise with our lips – as our words become a sacrifice!
And we offer pleasing sacrifices in our good deeds – and as we share what we have.

Everything God has given you is to be used in *his service*.
You are a holy priesthood, consecrated for holy service.
When Jesus said to the rich young ruler,
“Sell all that you have, give to the poor, and come follow me,”
he was saying that everything you have belongs to him
and needs to be used in his service!

Satan would like you to think that you can serve God on Sunday –
and maybe for a few minutes on other days –
but then you can serve *him* the rest of the week!

But the priest has no such division of labor.

A priest is engaged in holy service every day.
As a holy priest in Christ’s service,
you can engage in any honorable labor.
But everything you do is to be done in service to Christ.
How you use your apartment – your car – your clothing –
how you speak – how you walk – how you work –
all these things are to be done as unto the Lord.

End with Psalm 133