

God's Priesthood-- Part 2

In our first article on God's priesthood, it was shown how Jesus raised a man named Lazarus from the dead. The parable is showing every student of the Bible that it is only Jesus, who is called the word of God, that could restore the office of Priest that was vacant since the day of Melchisedec (compare Genesis 14:18 with Hebrews 7 :17).

We can read of those who were to be priest in Genesis 19: 4, " Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto Myself". Verse 5, " Now therefore if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all the people: for all the earth is mine". Verse 6, "And ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priest*, and a Holy nation, these are the words which thou shall speak to the children of Israel".

At the time of the Exodus, it is estimated that the nation numbered approximately two and a half million people. How could it be possible that all would be God's priest?

What does a priest do anyway? Today when we think of a Priest, Minister or someone of the Clergy we usually think of someone that stands before us as a representative of God and teaches or lectures to mold and shape our character. At the time of the Exodus and even today, that is not always the case. There is much more to the name Lazarus than we can realize.

To get a better understanding of the name Lazarus and all that our Heavenly Father expects from His Priesthood we would need to examine Luke 16:19, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day". verse 20, " And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus which was laid at His gate, full of sores". Question, does this man Lazarus seem like he would be one of God's priest? He carries the name Lazarus, the same name of the individual that Jesus Christ raised from the dead. Sounds like there could be a contradiction in

this poor mans fate doesn't it. Maybe, or maybe not. God is the only one that should judge His children. We know that it is God that gives us the understanding and there are no contradictions in His word.

We are told in the book of Hebrews 7: 20, that Jesus, because of His perfect sacrifice and resurrection, became a high priest after the Order of Melchisedec. Now we have a high priest that can administer justice without partiality.

Peter states the same thing that was written in Exodus the 19th chapter. 1st Peter 2:9, “ But ye are a chosen generation, *a royal priesthood, an Holy nation, a peculiar people*, that ye should show praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”.

When the Hebrew children were delivered out of bondage at the time of the Exodus, God wanted to be their King and Priest. He wanted to teach them His Laws and reap the benefits of the obedience to His law's among themselves and also other's who they would come in contact with. But they rebelled and wouldn't have God as their King. Its hard to understand, because of the extraordinary events that took place in delivering His people from Egypt, why they rebelled. Because of His mercy, God set up the Levitical priesthood and continued working with them.

If they were to have an excuse for their rebellion, it might be that they didn't have the books of the Bible as a written example so as to make the necessary corrections in their lives as we do today. For one thing, they didn't have God's Holy Spirit available to them as we do because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are very fortunate today because we can open our Bibles and be led by the Spirit of Christ as reveled by His word. His word seals us in our minds with His truth and not the teachings and imaginations of men.

Body of Christ

Stephen, in his discourse to the religious leaders, explains who those were that were delivered from bondage by God at the time of the Exodus. Acts, 7: 37, “ This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear”. And verse 38, “ This was he, that was in the *church in the wilderness* with the angel which spoke with him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us”:

That Prophet that Moses writes about was Jesus Christ who says in Matthew 16:18, that He would build His church. The word church is the Greek word ekklesia and means called out ones. God doesn't do anything different but leads by the same means today as then otherwise we would be confusing. Today, Christ is gathering those who would become part of the church that He is building and the only difference is He's calling one or a few at a time to Himself. (John 6:44)

1 Colossians, 1: 18, “ And He is head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the first born from the dead”. Here the body is called the church, but what does the body do? The only way to understand the body is to examine our own lives and how we had to grow from children to adulthood. 1st Peter 2: 2, “ As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye might grow thereby. The church (body) needs to grow in the word of God in order to know our purpose. 1: Cor. 12 : 4, “ Now there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worked all in all. Read 1 Cor. 12: 7 to the end of the chapter to grasp the work that the many member body would be doing.

All the members of the body would have different talents and abilities. These are God given abilities and these abilities vary within each of God's children. Until we are sure what we should be doing it never hurts to do what we know is right, within the bounds

that our Heavenly Father allows, using common sense.

Matt. 25: 35-46, tells of the kind of service those of the true church would be doing. The one thing these members have in common is called the greatest gift of all by the Apostle Paul in 1st Cor.13 and it is love. Without the first fruit of God's Holy Spirit which is love ,we can't do much that is right on our own. We wouldn't have many good works without the love that comes from our Father.

The analogy written in Luke 16: 19, concerning the rich man dressed in purple and fine linen gives us a little insight in what God is telling us. In the book of Rev. 19: 8, talking of those that would take part in the marriage to Christ, that they would be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white and not purple. The beggar, on the other hand would be taken by the angles to Abraham bosom. The beggar wasn't rich and didn't think of himself of any special importance but he was a child of Abraham.

We can know that no matter what stature we find ourselves in this age or weather our works are great or small we can look to do our part because we are God's church. We are the very member body of Christ and called out to serve others as *God's Priest and His Holy nation.*