

The Duties of The Priest

Part 20

“But you are the chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

The priests are the personals who minister and serve before God. They are accountable to God in their services; for they lead the people in the way of righteousness and through them people ought to know the truth and live in it; that what the Lord had promised His people through Moses, ***“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ‘You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” (Exodus 19:5-6)***

In the Old Testament God had allocated the tribe of Levi from the twelve tribes of Israel to be the family from whom the priests would arise to serve and to minister before him. But in the New Testament, after Jesus Christ the Son of God came from heaven to earth and after His death on the cross for our sins and after His resurrection from the death, those who receive Him as Saviour and Lord, and those who follow His steps they are the true priests for God. They are the Royal priesthood, who serve Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords; they are the people who proclaim His goodness and his righteousness to others. They are the chosen people and they prove their calling by living in holiness. They are set apart from the world as a holy nation, a people belonging to God. They are called out of darkness into His wonderful light to declare the praises of God to the whole world.

The priests are accountable before God to lead the people in the ways of the Lord and to keep them in His teaching. The word of God in the bible speaks to us the following: ***“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge, “Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priest; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.” (Hosea 4:6)*** Knowing the word of God and knowing how to apply it in life is so essential for people who accepted Christ. But how the people will have the knowledge of the word of God? This is the responsibility of the priests. They are the church leaders whom God assigned to lead His people and to teach them His word. But if the priests had rejected the word of God, as they don't want to follow and they don't want to teach or unable to teach because they are not willing to live in holiness, then what will happen? As a consequences of that not only themselves are rejected but their spiritual children, the disciples, will not be approved by the Lord because they don't know the word of God and they don't apply God's teaching in their lives.

At the time of the prophet Malachi God was not happy with His people; they did not honour God by presenting to Him defective sacrifices and gifts. If they would presented them to men it will not be acceptable. And this is what the Lord says, ***“A son honours his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honour due to me? If I am a master, where is the respect due to me?” says the LORD Almighty. “It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.” “But you ask, ‘How have we shown contempt for your name?’ “You placed defiled food on my altar.” “But you ask, ‘How have we defiled you?’ “By saying that the LORD'S table is contemptible. When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept says the LORD Almighty.” (Malachi 1:6-8)*** People use to bring gifts to the governors to please them and make them happy so they can ask

favour from them. So for this reason they will bring their best to them. God was facing the people with this fact because when they were bringing their sacrifices and offerings to the LORD they were not bringing their best but what they don't need, or the defective and what they want to throw away. And here God is challenging them that when you want to ask favour from your governor you bring them your best. But how about God your Creator whom really you need His favour all the time to protect you and provide for you and to answer your prayer, will you not need to bring to Him your best? When you offer to God the less quality of your time, effort, and money then you will not receive God's favour because He knows you are cheating Him.

The people became so wicked, for them serving God became a burden; they exchanged their loyalty to God to loyalty toward men and governor. They were willing to do their best to gain people's favour and approval, and for them to please God became a burden. God was so upset with such attitude. In people's life when God will not become their center and focus, they find it so difficult to offer anything to God and you will find out that their best resources will be directed to please human figures and authorities who will approve to them their own plans and projects. When this is happening then this is idol worship because those human figures had become their focus and their gods. As God was sad with people's bad action toward Him, He declared to them that His name will be still glorified around the world even if his own people where not willing to honour Him and give what is due to Him, ***“My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty. ¹²“But you profane it by saying, ‘The Lord's table is defiled,’ and, ‘Its food is contemptible.’ ¹³And you say, ‘What a burden!’ and you sniff at it contemptuously,” says the Lord Almighty. “When you bring injured, lame or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?” says the Lord.” (Malachi 1:11-13)***

When people behave in such a way God is so grieving with the attitude of the people and what he is seeing from their acts and what He is hearing from their words. And this is what He promised to those who withhold from Him what is due for Him, ***“Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,” says the Lord Almighty, “and my name is to be feared among the nations.” (Malachi 1:14)***

And who is responsible for that bad behavior of the people toward God? The priests who lead the people are responsible because they are in error. The church leaders should teach the people to honour God in everything, training them to give Him the best and to live in holiness, and to serve Him as a first priority in their lives.

My dear and beloved: It is an honour to be a Christian. It is also a shield to live in Holiness, and is a privilege to serve God and to focus your life and attention unto Him by offering to Him your heart and life, and accepting His will and plans and giving to Him the best of your time, money and effort as you agree to pray.

My prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of your Son Jesus Christ who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to preach and teach in accordance to the full truth of Your Word. Lord I commit myself to give precise instructions and teach your people your ways; nothing false will be in my lips. I will speak your words to sinners without compromising so they will turn in repentance toward you and worship you and serve you wholeheartedly. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.