

HEROES OF THE FAITH

MOSES: The Priest's Special Holiness

Chapter 21

15 February 2023



➤ Thrust

❖ Twofold

- I. The office of the priest was holy.
- II. The office was above man. It was God ordained.

- ❖ The priest had to be holy in body, conduct, & ceremonially clean.
- ❖ The priest was God's representative.
- ❖ The OT priest was a type of Christ. (1 Timothy 2:5)
 - ☐ Shown in his mediation between God and Israel.
 - ☐ Shown in the priest's official character – cleansed, more holy than other men.
 - ☐ His perfection pointed to a perfect priesthood.
 - ☐ Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4)

➤ God spoke to Moses. (vv. 1-24)

- ❖ God gave Moses a word he was to convey to Aaron and his sons (priests). (v. 1)
- ❖ Uncleanness by touching the dead. (vv. 1-4)
 - ☐ No one was to make himself unclean by touching a dead body in Israel. (v. 1)
 - ☐ Exception: "...relative..." = Wife is inferred in this Hebrew term. (v. 2)
 - ☐ Exception: mother, father, son, daughter, brother.
 - ☐ Exception: Includes virgin sister. Once married, no longer a close relative. (v. 3)
 - ☐ He is to remain clean before Israel. (v. 4)

➤ Practices of disfigurement (vv. 5-6)

- ❖ No bald patches for their heads, shaving off the edges of their beards, nor body cutting. (v. 5)
- ❖ 19:27-28: Apparent heathen/cultic signs of grief.
- ❖ God forbade these practices in Israel, most especially with His priests.
- ❖ God commanded His priests to be holy. (v. 6)
- ❖ God forbade His priests to profane His name.
- ❖ In order to minister to God's people, priests were to be holy.

➤ Marriage (vv. 7-8)



- ❖ A priest could not marry a prostitute. (v. 7)
- ❖ A priest could not marry a woman who had been defiled.
- ❖ A priest could not marry a woman who had been divorced from her husband.
- ❖ Why?: No question of paternity could exist for the next generation of priests.
- ❖ The priest had to be holy & sanctified. (v. 8; 1 Peter 1:15-16)

➤ God's expectations for a priest and his family. (v. 9)

❖ Daughter

- ☐ If she chose prostitution, she profaned God, her father, her family, & herself.
- ☐ God's punishment for her was death by fire. (20:14)
- ☐ Sin is more heinous for those God has chosen for special service to Him.

➤ The high priest (vv. 10-15)

- ❖ "...on whose head the anointing oil is poured..." – designated the high priest. (v. 10)
- ❖ And, the high priest's sons – who were called to a special sanctity of service.
 - ☐ Exodus 30:30: God commanded Aaron & his sons be anointed as priests.
 - ☐ Leviticus 8:12: Moses anointed Aaron as the high priest.
 - ☐ Deuteronomy 10:6: High priesthood is transferred from Aaron to his son, Eleazer.
 - ☐ Numbers 25:11: High priesthood is transferred from Eleazer to his son, Phinehas.
- ❖ One consecrated to wear the priestly garments.
- ❖ His hair could not hang loose. He could not wear torn clothing.
- ❖ He could not touch a dead body, even his mother and father, so he remained clean. (v. 11)
- ❖ The meaning of the priest's inability to leave the sanctuary is unclear. (v. 12; *illustration*)
 - ☐ There were no living quarters in the tabernacle, or the tabernacle courtyard.
 - ☐ The priesthood was a 24-hour a day vocation.
 - ☐ Numbers 3:38
 - Moses, Aaron, & his sons camped before the tabernacle entrance.
 - Their tents were outside of the courtyard.
 - Toward the sunrise, guarding the sanctuary itself, protecting Israel.
 - Any outsider who came had to die.
- ❖ A priest's wife was an Israelite virgin. (v. 13)
- ❖ A priest could not marry... (vv. 14, 7)
 - ☐ ...a widow, a divorced woman, a defiled woman, or a prostitute.
- ❖ A priest's children also were to be holy – above approach. (v. 15, 7; 1 Peter 1:15-16)
 - ☐ Marrying an Israelite virgin made his successor legitimate.
 - ☐ By this, the successor's rise to the holy office was without question.



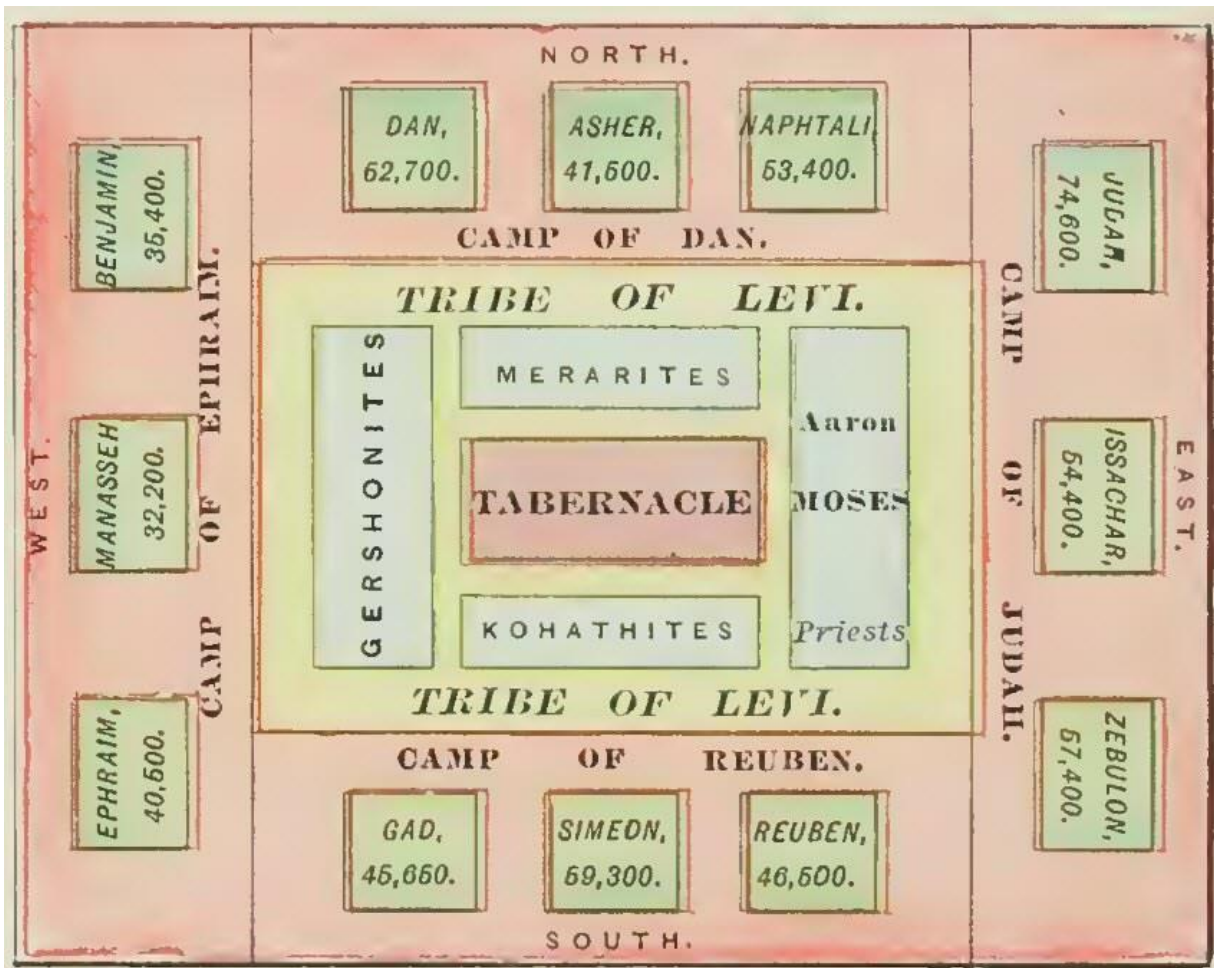


Illustration: #1



➤ Priestly physical requirements (vv. 16-24)

❖ God spoke to Moses... (v. 16; *illustration #2*)

- ❑ No generational priest with a physical blemish could approach the Holy of Holies. (v. 17)
- ❑ Blemish: blind, lame, mutilated face (hair lip, etc.), an elongated limb. (v. 18)
 - Blindness was common in antiquity.
 - Because broken bones were not often set, or poorly set, lameness was a problem.
- ❑ Blemish: injured foot, injured hand (v. 19)
- ❑ Blemish: hunchback, dwarf, vision defect, skin disease, crushed testicles (v. 20)
 - The word for crushed testicles is only used here.
 - Its exact meaning is unclear.
- ❑ None of Aaron's descendants with a physical defect can offer bread in the tabernacle. (v. 21)
- ❑ He may partake of God's bread. (v. 22)
- ❑ He could not go through the veil, or approach the altar, because of the blemish. (v. 23)
- ❑ Moses declared these things to Aaron, his sons, & all of Israel. (v. 24)



Illustration #2



Group Questions

1) Read Leviticus 19:2. God's expectations of the Jews were clear. His expectations for Christians today are clear. Read 1 John 2:3-6. Do a verse-by-verse study of the latter passage in the following manner:

- Observation: "What do you see?"
- Interpretation: "What does it mean?"
- Application: "How do I apply it to my life?"

2) There are two inescapable facts regarding the ancient priesthood. First, the office of a priest was holy. Second, the office was above the man. In this chapter, God revealed clear expectations for the office of priest. Today, God has clear expectations for His children. What are they? Read 1 Peter 1:14-16. Again, do a verse-by-verse study of this text.

- Observation: "What do you see?"
- Interpretation: "What does it mean?"
- Application: "How do I apply it to my life?"

3) Read Romans 12:2. Discuss where holiness begins, and what this means to Christians.

