

Consecration and Dedication

People today claiming to be “Torah observant” actually observe so little of the Torah, their declarations of faithful obedience would be laughable if they weren’t so sad. If I told you I was a “law-abiding citizen,” you’d be inclined to believe me, I suppose, since I’m not in prison. But if you then discovered that I haven’t filed an income tax return in a decade, I habitually drive twenty miles an hour over the speed limit, and I steal little old ladies’ Social Security checks out of their mailboxes to feed my drug habit, you’d begin to have reservations about my truthfulness on the matter, wouldn’t you? And *then*, if I were to explain to you that my definition of “law-abiding” means keeping only the rules that I like, the ones that are convenient, that don’t hinder my “pursuit of happiness” or run counter to my personal take on what the law *should* be (since I think Congress is full of idiots), you’d call me a fool as well as a liar. The fact that I’m not an ax murderer wouldn’t necessarily classify me as being “law-abiding.”

The problem with someone who thinks like this is their fundamental lack of respect for the authority behind the law—whether the Torah or the statutes of the land. They’re saying in their hearts, *I follow a higher authority*. The reason most people claiming to be Torah observant *aren’t* is primarily that they’re following not the Authority behind it (i.e., Yahweh) but someone they consider an even higher authority—the rabbis of orthodox Judaism, whose spokesman and figurehead is Maimonides. They would protest, of course, that they *are* obeying Yahweh (or they would, if they were willing to use His name). But facts and simple logic silence their protests: if Yahweh and the rabbis disagree (and they often do), then the one you follow is the one you *de facto* consider the higher authority.

There’s a catch, however. As we’ve observed, the Torah is more instructions than a list of laws or rules. Some precepts, of course, can be easily codified in legal terms easily appreciated by all men everywhere: “Don’t murder people.” “Don’t eat pigs.” “Don’t circulate false reports.” “Don’t marry your sister.” These are blatantly practical; their symbolic components are difficult to see and easy to ignore. Others are admittedly harder to get a handle on because their symbolism shares center stage with their overt practice: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it set apart.” “Eat no bread made with yeast for a week every spring, starting on the 15th day of the month of Nisan.” These are our first clues that Yahweh is interested in something far deeper than our mere obedience, our submission to His

authority. He's asking His people to act out a scene, like a game of spiritual charades. Why? So that when we finally "get it," we'll never forget it.

Still other precepts—the vast majority—are purely symbolic. That is, though physically acted out in the generations to whom they were first announced, these have no "practical" application in the daily lives of most people today. I'd estimate that eighty to ninety percent of the Torah's precepts—most everything having to do with the Tabernacle, the Priesthood, and the sacrifices—fall into this category. These constitute the primary reason that outward Torah observance is an illusive myth. These symbolic mitzvot *cannot* be performed today, no matter how serious or devoted the worshipper is. The Sanctuary does not exist. The priesthood is scattered, unidentified, and ceremonially unclean. From the Torah's point of view, performing the Levitical sacrifices under these conditions would be just as illegal as *not* performing them.

Would-be observers of the Torah, then, have a serious problem if they're not willing to honestly consider the symbolic component of the "Law," for in truth, this is by far the largest part of it. The heart of the issue is the subject of our present chapter—Yahweh's incessant insistence that certain things be consecrated, dedicated, sanctified, and set apart to Him. If He merely wanted us to obey His rules and behave ourselves, if all He wanted to do was exert top-down control over our lives, then this would all have been quite unnecessary. The Torah, in that case, might have looked more like the Qur'an. And (to play devil's advocate) if this whole thing were actually a ploy by the Hebrew priesthood to grasp wealth and power for themselves (alas, the all-too-common pursuit of "priests" of many persuasions), they would not have begun by stripping themselves of all rights of inheritance in the Promised Land, nor by defining their role as hard-working servants of God rather than as exalted political leaders in Israel. No, all the internal evidence points toward authorship of the Torah by a God who wished to explain in ways both subtle and obvious His love for us, His concern for our well being, His plan for saving us, and His omniscient foreknowledge.

That being said, we should all be "Torah observant." I don't mean we should be looking for loopholes in reality, inventing ways to convince ourselves we're doing what can't be done. Rather, we should *observe* the Torah—look at it with an eye toward discovering what Yahweh actually said to us within its pages. Don't blame me if such a course of action leads you directly and unambiguously to Yahshua the Messiah. Blame Yahweh for that.

CONSECRATING THE PRIESTS

(751) *Consecrate Aaron and his sons.* “**And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, the anointing oil, a bull as the sin offering, two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.’ So Moses did as Yahweh commanded him. And the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. And Moses said to the congregation, ‘This is what Yahweh commanded to be done.’**” (Leviticus 8:1-5) Doing what “Yahweh had commanded to be done” was described in detail in the following verses, but the instructions themselves were given back in Exodus 29. We encountered one small facet of this passage in Mitzvah #473, where I noted that you’d have to “ramble on for pages” to get to the bottom of it all. My mandate for Volume I didn’t allow me to “ramble” then, but the time has come, I’m afraid. Our next thirteen precepts will explore the subject of the priests’ consecration in detail.

We should ask ourselves right up front: why did Yahweh direct that Aaron and his sons should be “hallowed” or “consecrated” with such exacting ritual? This wasn’t a coronation. They weren’t being invested with the trappings of political power. Moses was the current leader of Israel, and his successor would be Joshua, an Ephraimite—neither of them were priests. And kings in Israel were destined to come from the tribe of Judah, not Levi (cf. Genesis 49:10). Since our inherent talents are inconsequential (in the grand scheme of things), it is Yahweh’s prerogative to choose which of His people will be gifted and allowed to serve in which capacity. In this case, the priests were the chosen family (Aaron’s) of the chosen tribe (Levi) of the chosen nation (Israel), none of which were up to the task under their own steam. As we learned with the golden calf debacle and the fatal screw-up of Nadab and Abihu (a “Darwin-award” event if ever there was one), Aaron and his boys weren’t exactly “priest” material on their own. Nor had they asked for the job. Yahweh had simply said, “You’re it.”

So again, why all the fuss? Because Aaron and his sons were assigned to work on behalf of their nation in the very presence of God. They were to act as symbolic intercessors between Israel (a “stubborn and stiff-necked people”) and Yahweh Himself. Their workplace was to be the Tabernacle, where the Shekinah glory of Yahweh would “inhabit” the Most Holy Place. If the job was performed with something less than the proper reverence, it could be fatal. The point was that since Yahweh was “holy,” that is, set apart in all respects from any other entity that might be worshipped by man—unique, separate, and infinitely greater—then those who ministered in His presence (even in that of the diminished divine manifestation called the Shekinah) must be “holy” as well: set apart from

the world for His service, consecrated, dedicated, and totally focused. But Aaron's family, though divinely selected for the job, was never the point. They were symbolic of something larger, something that pertained to the entire human race. They were to be the prototypes for God's greatest invention: a way for fallen, sinful man to be reconciled to his Creator.

Here, then, is the summary of what Moses was to do to consecrate Aaron and his sons for the ministry set before them. The particulars will be covered in the precepts to come, found in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8. **“And this is what you shall do to them to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests: Take one young bull [Precept #752] and two rams without blemish [Precepts #753 and #754], and unleavened bread [Precept #758], unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil (you shall make them of wheat flour). You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, with the bull and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons you shall bring to the door of the tabernacle of meeting [Precept #763], and you shall wash them with water. Then you shall take the garments [Precept #759], put the tunic on Aaron, and the robe of the ephod, the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the intricately woven band of the ephod.”** The priestly garments, you'll recall, were discussed at length in our previous chapter. **“You shall put the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban. And you shall take the anointing oil [Precept #762], pour it on his head, and anoint him. Then you shall bring his sons [Precept #760] and put tunics on them. And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on them. The priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute [Precept #761]. So you shall consecrate Aaron and his sons.”** (Exodus 29:1-9)

As an overview, then, we see that the consecration of the priests involved three animal sacrifices, unleavened bread, cakes, and wafers (all made of wheat flour from which the chaff had been removed), olive oil, water for cleansing, specially prepared garments, specially formulated anointing oil, and the priests themselves—Aaron and his sons. This ceremony was to “hallow them,” that is, make them holy or set apart for “ministering” to Yahweh. That in itself is (or ought to be) astonishing. *Individual men* are being set apart to “minister” to the Creator of the universe? That's like saying “this family of garden slugs are being consecrated to assist the Master Gardener.” There's nothing we slugs can do to be worthy of the task set before us. Worse, we're not even smart enough to know that. Why the Master would condescend to choose and enable us (among all the other backyard vermin) is beyond our ability to comprehend. Our race is so primitive, some of our brother slugs don't even believe the Gardener exists. But perhaps that's why He's so profuse and detailed in His instructions, and why they're so esoteric: we slugs

aren't capable of inventing anything like this, not if we want it to make perfect sense in some larger context.

- (752) *Sacrifice the bull of sin offering.* **“You shall also have the bull brought before the tabernacle of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the bull. Then you shall kill the bull before Yahweh, by the door of the tabernacle of meeting. You shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour all the blood beside the base of the altar. And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar. But the flesh of the bull, with its skin and its offal, you shall burn with fire outside the camp. It is a sin offering.”** (Exodus 29:10-14) The sin offering (Hebrew: *chata't*) was normally offered when an Israelite realized he had fallen short of Yahweh's standard in some specific way. Here it is offered preemptively. The bull was the normal sin offering for a priest (as was a male goat for a ruler of the people and a female sheep or goat for an ordinary citizen). Though all Levitical blood sacrifices ultimately point to Yahshua on Calvary, they also indicate specific subsets of our fallen nature for which His sacrifice atones: the bull, as we have seen, represents false doctrine or teaching. Thus this preemptory sin offering is the priest's pledge to renounce and guard against falsehood on his watch. The placing of the priest's hands upon the head of the bull symbolically transfers the sin of the priest to the bull—it is a picture of atonement. The bull is then slain in the Tabernacle courtyard, its proximity to the tent of meeting being an indicator that this is part of the Plan of God: innocent blood is being shed on behalf of the guilty—something that must occur before fellowship between Yahweh and man can be reestablished.

The Leviticus passage explains some of the other details: **“And he brought the bull for the sin offering. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull for the sin offering.”** One bull sufficed for all of the priests. One Messiah would be enough. **“And Moses killed it. Then he took the blood, and put some on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and purified the altar.”** Note that Moses himself killed the bull. In this scene, Moses is playing the part of Yahweh, Aaron the role of Yahshua our High Priest, and his sons represent us who follow Him in faith—those who are “born” into His Spirit. The altar was “purified” through the symbolic application of the bull's blood to the “horns” that adorned its four corners. This was done with Moses' finger, telling us that Yahweh Himself is doing the work of purification. **“And he poured the blood at the base of the altar, and consecrated it, to make atonement for it.”** The “he” here is still Moses. It's another reminder that Yahweh voluntarily offered Yahshua up as a sacrifice—we didn't “overpower God” when we slew His Messiah.

As usual, the inedible fatty parts were burned on the altar to honor Yahweh. **“Then he took all the fat that was on the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned them on the altar. But the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its offal, he burned with fire outside the camp, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.”** (Leviticus 8:14-17) The rest of the bull was burned outside the camp. This is an obvious reference to the site of Yahshua’s crucifixion—which took place outside Jerusalem’s city walls. It’s fascinating that atonement was achieved through the shedding of blood at the altar, but the judgment that made the sacrifice efficacious (the “burning with fire”) occurred “outside the camp.” In the final enactment of this prophetic rehearsal, the “altar” where Yahshua’s blood was shed and the place of judgment “outside the camp” were *in the same location*: not at the Temple, but a few hundred yards away, probably the same spot where Abraham’s almost-sacrifice of Isaac had taken place two thousand years previously.

It’s worth noting that under normal circumstances the priests would have partaken of the meat of a sin offering (one that didn’t involve their own sin, that is) and in the case of a trespass offering, they would have been given the hide as well (see Precept #773). But here, the entire offering (with the exception of the fatty parts given to Yahweh) was to be taken outside the camp and burned. The point? We cannot benefit or profit from our own sin.

- (753) *Sacrifice the first ram—of burnt offering.* **“You shall also take one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram; and you shall kill the ram, and you shall take its blood and sprinkle it all around on the altar. Then you shall cut the ram in pieces, wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and with its head. And you shall burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to Yahweh; it is a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh.”** (Exodus 29:15-18) The second animal offering in the consecration process was an *olah*, or “burnt offering.” This time, a ram is used—a preview of the “Lamb of God” (as John the Baptist would later phrase it) **“who takes away the sin of the world,”** (John 1:29) but one with horns, symbolizing the authority of the One being sacrificed. This messianic connotation is further confirmed by Yahweh’s designation of Abraham’s intended sacrifice of his son as an *olah* (cf. Genesis 22:2). Total dedication is implied in the *olah*, for the entire sacrifice was to be consumed by fire upon the altar. Cutting the body in pieces reminds me of what Yahshua said as He prepared to sacrifice Himself: **“The Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of**

Me.” (I Corinthians 11:23-24) The washing of the entrails and legs indicates that the Sacrifice was clean, inside and out.

It’s refreshing to see that Moses and Aaron could follow instructions. **“Then he brought the ram as the burnt offering. And Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, and Moses killed it. Then he sprinkled the blood all around on the altar. And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat. Then he washed the entrails and the legs in water. And Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.”** (Leviticus 8:18-21) Again, every detail is significant. One ram was sufficient as an *olah* for Aaron and all of his sons, just as one Messiah would be a sufficient sacrifice to atone for the sins of all mankind. The laying of their hands upon the head of the ram again symbolized the transference of guilt from them to the ram. And the sprinkling of the ram’s blood around the altar again demonstrated that innocent life had been sacrificed on behalf of the guilty.

Remember, this whole bloody ritual had but one objective—to consecrate Aaron and his sons as priests to minister in the presence of Yahweh on behalf of the people. Their own best behavior would not have been remotely enough to qualify them to perform the task God had called them to do. Righteousness was required, but Yahweh had to provide that righteousness Himself, for it was beyond man’s ability to supply. The reason Yahweh found the smoke of the burning ram a “sweet aroma” was that it proved (in this instance, anyway) that these men were obedient and faithful—willing to let Him do whatever it would take to make them holy. What smelled so sweet to Yahweh was the scent of absolute trust.

(754) *Sacrifice the second ram—of consecration.* **“You shall also take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram. Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.”** (Exodus 29:19-20) The third and last sacrificial animal was another ram. This one, however, has very different symbolic significance, rounding out the picture of the “Lamb of God with Authority” that the ram represents, for there is more to Yahshua than His substitutionary death to atone for our sins. Much more.

For the third time we see Moses, playing the role of God, slaying the ram in order to consecrate the priests. This time, however, the blood (metaphorical of life itself) is employed somewhat differently. As before, some is sprinkled at the base of the altar. But Moses was also to take some

of it and apply it directly to certain body parts on Aaron and his sons. First, the tip of the ear represents what one hears. Why the *right* ear? Perhaps this indicates truth (while the left would indicate falsehood), the message being: heed only truth, not lies. Note that what one hears automatically includes what one speaks: we are neither to utter nor listen to false reports. This admonition implies a certain amount of discernment, wariness, even skepticism concerning the things of the world, and at the same time requires a depth of understanding in the area of God's revealed Word—our baseline standard of truth.

In the same way, the thumb of the right hand would indicate “doing the right thing,” and the big toe of the right foot would signify “walking in the right path.” It's no coincidence that the word the rabbis use to denote the “Jewish Law,” *halakhah*, actually means “the path one walks,” from the Hebrew verb *halak*—to go, walk, or travel. Again, the “right thing” and the “right path” are defined by the Torah—not by our appetites, desires, or best intentions. And remember what is being applied here. It's not water, which would have signified that our words, deeds, and walk need to be “cleaned up.” No, it's *blood*, telling us rather that in order for our words, deeds, and walk to be consecrated to Yahweh, innocent blood must be shed—a guiltless life must be sacrificed. Our own lives won't suffice, however: we're not innocent. We can't get to God on our own, no matter how hard we work to clean up our act. Only Yahweh can bring us to Yahweh.

And so we read of Moses' further compliance with the requirements of the law of priestly consecration. **“And he brought the second ram, the ram of consecration. Then Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, and Moses killed it. Also he took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. Then he brought Aaron's sons. And Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. And Moses sprinkled the blood all around on the altar.”** (Leviticus 8:22-24) Did Moses and Aaron understand the symbolism they were acting out? The ear, thumb, and toe metaphors are pretty obvious. But the blood of the innocent animal? I can pretty much guarantee that that's something *nobody* understood until Yahshua explained what He had accomplished on Golgotha—after His resurrection. When we finally *get it*—when we at last come to terms with Yahweh's grand plan of redemption, epicentered in the innocent life and sacrificial death of His Messiah, we can only echo the sentiments of the two disciples on the Emmaus road: **“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”** (Luke 24:32)

(755) *Anoint the priests and their clothing with oil and blood. And you shall take some of the blood [of the second ram] that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and on his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he and his garments shall be hallowed, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.*" (Exodus 29:21) The process of consecration continues, and this time, it's messy. I wonder what a good CSI could make of this. *Blood spatter—looks like blunt force cast off. This guy was close to whoever got killed. And there's some kind of oily substance. We ran it through the mass-spec and came up with olive oil, myrrh, cinnamon, sweet cane, and cassia. It's some kind of bitter-sweet anointing oil. All these priests had the same blood and oil sprinkle patterns on them. What do you think it means? Ritual murder? Human sacrifice?*

Yes, detective, it means all of that, and more. The High Priest and his sons not only wore the story of mankind's redemption upon their bodies in the symbolic accoutrements of their office (see the previous chapter, Precepts #734-#743), they were also anointed—consecrated by Yahweh—to perform a specific task on behalf of mankind: to intercede between a holy God and sinful men. The ingredients used to make the exclusive anointing oil were discussed under Mitzvah #436. Again (briefly): olive oil is the Holy Spirit—the vehicle for everything else; myrrh is bitterness, the sorrows and suffering of the Messiah on our behalf; cinnamon speaks of the attraction between us and our Savior; cane indicates the measure of a man—the standard of which is Yahshua; and cassia is the sweet spice used to prepare Him for burial. These ingredients define who the Messiah was, what He did, and how He did it.

But there is one more substance with which the priests were “anointed”—the blood of the ram, signifying that innocent life had been sacrificed on their (our) behalf. Without that, the spiritual life of Yahshua, His sorrow on our account, His attractiveness, His moral perfection, and *even His death* would have availed us nothing. That should be a shocking revelation: the fact that He died does us no good if we don't allow His death to atone for our sin. Our works, alms, and penance have no power to save us. Only Yahshua's spilled blood and substitutionary death can do that. But its efficacy depends upon our trust.

So Moses did as he was told. **“Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.”** (Leviticus 8:30) The “religious” component within us wants to

scream, *Wait! You're spoiling all the workmanship and skill that went into making these fancy garments! They're going to be ruined. How're we supposed to awe the sheeple if the priestly vestments have big stains all over them? What a waste.* Exactly Yahweh's point. He was about to send a Perfectly Good Human into a lost world, watch Him be anointed with the spit of jeering Roman soldiers and stand by silently while He was sprinkled with His own blood as His flesh was shredded with a cruel flagellum and pierced with evil spikes. *What a waste*—if you and I reject this sacrifice in favor of some salvation scheme of our own invention.

- (756) *Eat the ram of consecration.* **“And you shall take the ram of the consecration and boil its flesh in the holy place. Then Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of meeting. They shall eat those things with which the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them; but an outsider shall not eat them, because they are holy.”** (Exodus 29:31-33) We aren't quite done with the second ram, the “ram of consecration.” So far, the priests have symbolically transferred their guilt onto his head, he's been slain, his blood has metaphorically anointed their words, their work, and their walk, and then it has been sprinkled all over them, mingled with the richly significant oil of anointing. Now Aaron and his sons are to “eat the flesh of the ram” and eat the unleavened bread of consecration.

The provocative words of Yahshua still ring in our ears: **“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.... Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.... Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”** (John 6:35, 47-51, 53-58) If the scribes and Pharisees had comprehended the meaning of Exodus 29, they would have understood that Yahshua *was* the ram of consecration; He *was* the life-giving bread. This was no pointless religious ceremony—it was a dress rehearsal for the redemption of all mankind.

It wasn't enough for Aaron and his sons to know about the ram, to kill him, or even to apply his blood to their appendages and garments. They had to assimilate him—*eat* him—take him within their very being as life-giving spiritual nourishment. The ram and the bread were described as **“those things with which the atonement was made,”** things that would have the effect of “consecrating and sanctifying” them. But physical food wasn't what Yahweh was talking about. Yahshua taught, **“Whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated. But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”** (Matthew 15:17-20) Food can't sanctify people any more than it can defile them. It's what the food *represents* that counts: assimilate Yahshua and you will have gained life. Assimilate nothing and you become nothing. Assimilate *Satan* and you will have attained a living death. You are what you eat.

Two more points need our attention. First, the meat was to be boiled, not roasted. We are being told that as believers, as consecrated “priests,” we will not partake of judgment. Then, Yahweh says, **“An outsider shall not eat them [i.e., the ram and the bread], because they are holy.”** What, precisely, is an “outsider?” In this context, it's obviously meant to primarily denote anyone who is not a priest. But the word itself has a more focused connotation. It's the Hebrew verb *zahr*, meaning to be a stranger, a foreigner, an enemy, one who is estranged or alienated from you. The broader meaning of our text, then, becomes clear: no one who is estranged from Yahweh, who is foreign to Him or alienated from Him, will find nourishment or sustenance in Yahshua—the Lamb of God, the Living Bread. Why? Because He is holy—set apart for God's glory and purpose. And what is that purpose? It's stated in His name, Yahshua: it means Yahweh is Salvation—our redemption is achieved not through our good works, penance, obeisance, alms, or sacrifice. *Yahweh* is salvation.

(757) *Burn the left-overs of the consecration offering.* **“And if any of the flesh of the consecration offerings, or of the bread, remains until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.”** (Exodus 29:34) Though the meat of the second ram was to be boiled, that doesn't mean judgment—the application of fire—wasn't part of the picture. Anything left over when the day of consecration had passed—whether meat or bread—was to be consumed in flame upon the altar. We are being informed that whatever isn't consecrated will be judged. Further, there is a window of opportunity in which we must act, if we are to act at all. The prospect for redemption lasts only for “today”—while we live on this

earth as mortal humans. The window of opportunity does not remain open for eternity. As Paul reminds us, **“In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”** (II Corinthians 6:2, cf. Isaiah 49:8)

Both the ram and the bread were symbolic of the Messiah’s sacrifice, not man’s penance. So Yahweh is *not* saying that if we fail to partake of the sacrifice He has provided, we can later atone for our own sins by enduring judgment ourselves. Quite the contrary: the only acceptable sacrifice is Innocence—and *we aren’t innocent*. No, only Yahshua is qualified to suffer judgment in our place. If we do not avail ourselves of the spiritual nourishment He provides while the day of opportunity remains, the wrath He endured on our behalf will (at least on a personal level) have been suffered for nothing. How do you think Yahweh feels about having sent His Son to Calvary only to hear the vast majority of His intended beneficiaries say, “We don’t care. We will not have this Man to rule over us!” What would *you* do under those circumstances? I can guarantee that *I* wouldn’t have shown the same restraint and patience Yahweh has.

- (758) *Perform the first wave offering of consecration. “Also you shall take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them, the right thigh (for it is a ram of consecration), one loaf of bread, one cake made with oil, and one wafer from the basket of the unleavened bread that is before Yahweh; and you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and you shall wave them as a wave offering before Yahweh. You shall receive them back from their hands and burn them on the altar as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before Yahweh. It is an offering made by fire to Yahweh.”* (Exodus 29:22-25) The next two entries are instructions further explaining what’s entailed in Precept #756—“Eat the ram of consecration.” As usual in offerings to be eaten by the priests, the fat portions were to be set aside in homage to Yahweh. For whatever reason, these fatty pieces were culturally considered the “best” parts of the animal. Moses (whom, you’ll recall, was playing the role of God in the priests’ consecration process) was doing the butchering of the ram. He was to cut out the fat portions and hand them to Aaron and his sons, who were in turn to “wave” or “heave” them before Yahweh, that is, lift them into the air as a sign of their dedication to Him. They were then to be handed back to Moses, who would place them on the bronze altar, where they would be completely burned. The symbolic meaning of all this is evident: Yahweh would deliver to mankind the best He had to offer—His own “Son”—who would be lifted up by those He had been sent to save in an act of atoning sacrifice (see John 3:14). But it wouldn’t be Man who slew

the Sacrifice or subjected Him to judgment. You can't steal something that is freely given. No, Yahweh provided the sacrifice—He provided *Himself*.

The fatty pieces of the ram weren't the only items to be waved before Yahweh. The ram's right thigh was His as well. Although we aren't told why, we can guess easily enough. As with the priests' earlobe, thumb, and big toe (see Precept #754), the *right side* was specified. The thigh was the biggest, strongest muscle the ram had for propelling itself. The meaning, then, seems to be that the "ram of consecration" (ultimately predictive of the Messiah) would be motivated by goodness, propelled forward by righteousness.

There was also an offering of grain products. Three different forms of "bread" were specified, so it behooves us to investigate what distinguishes them. First, the "loaf of bread" (unleavened, according to Leviticus 8:26) was *kikkar lechem*, literally, "round food." This is a reminder that **"Man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh."** (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Second, the "cake" (the *chalah lechem*—literally "pierced food") was a cake made of finely ground flour that bore characteristic perforations. The root of the word *chalah* is *chahal*, as in **"He was wounded (*chahal*: pierced, fatally wounded, bored through) for our transgressions."** (Isaiah 53:5) The word also has psychological connotations—to defile, pollute, or profane. Thus Leviticus 22:31-32 instructs us, **"I am Yahweh. You shall not profane (*chahal*) my holy name."** Also, this cake was made with oil, indicative of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Messianic ramifications of all this are hard to miss.

Third, the unleavened wafer (Hebrew: *raqiq*) was derived from the word for "thin" (*raq*) which also (and far more often in scripture) means "only." The *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains* defines it: "only, exclusively, i.e., pertaining to that which is unique and distinctive...implying a restrictiveness of kind, singleness of fact or instance." Once again, if you know what you're looking at, the Messianic implications are blatantly obvious: Yahshua is the way, the truth, and the life—He is the *only* way to the Father.

Moses again did as he was instructed. **"Then he took the fat and the fat tail, all the fat that was on the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; and from the basket of unleavened bread that was before Yahweh he took one unleavened cake, a cake of bread anointed with oil, and one wafer, and put them on the fat and on the right thigh; and he put all these in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them as a wave offering before Yahweh. Then Moses took them from their hands and burned them**

on the altar, on the burnt offering. They were consecration offerings for a sweet aroma. That was an offering made by fire to Yahweh.” (Leviticus 8:25-28) At the risk of pointing out the obvious, Yahweh considers it a “sweet aroma” when we follow His instructions, even if we don’t quite understand all that they mean. It is said that predators can “smell fear.” Our loving God, on the other hand, “smells *trust*,” and He really enjoys it.

- (759) *Perform the second wave offering of consecration.* “Then you shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron’s consecration and wave it as a wave offering before Yahweh; and it shall be your portion. And from the ram of the consecration you shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering which is waved, and the thigh of the heave offering which is raised, of that which is for Aaron and of that which is for his sons. It shall be from the children of Israel for Aaron and his sons by a statute forever. For it is a heave offering; it shall be a heave offering from the children of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, that is, their heave offering to Yahweh.” (Exodus 29:26-28) Not everything “waved” before Yahweh was supposed to be burned on the altar. There was to be a second wave offering of the parts of the ram Aaron and his sons were supposed to eat. These too were dedicated to Yahweh, though they would belong to the priests as their food, and this time, Moses himself was included. The ram’s breast meat belonged to Moses: “And Moses took the breast and waved it as a wave offering before Yahweh. It was Moses’ part of the ram of consecration, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.” (Leviticus 8:29) And the other thigh (the left one) of the ram of consecration was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons.

This procedure should remind us that even the things that are “ours” are of no use to us unless they are dedicated to God’s purpose. Our food should nourish us so we can serve Him and enjoy His company. Our cars, houses, clothing, the tools of our employment, even our “toys,” should honor Him. (In my case, I habitually buy two things for “myself,” books and guitars. Yet if the books didn’t edify me—if they were light fluff that rotted my brain—then they wouldn’t honor Yahweh. And if I couldn’t play music with my brothers and sisters in God’s presence a couple of times a week, my instruments would in my mind degenerate into an expensive and pointless indulgence.)

- (760) *Dress Aaron in the High Priest’s special garments.* “Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle of meeting and wash them with water. You shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.” (Exodus 40:12-13) In the previous chapter (beginning at Precept #734) we explored the special priestly garments as described in the Torah—what they were and what they meant. Here we see the donning of these objects of sartorial significance for the

first time. Note first that the priests had to be clean before the garments could be put on. This is a fundamental cleanliness: Yahshua (whose role is being played by Aaron) was clean by virtue of his sinless life, and we believers (represented by Aaron's sons) become clean through the atoning power of His shed blood. The bronze laver that stood just outside the door of the Tabernacle would enable the priests to wash their hands and feet (symbolizing the daily cleansing of their deeds and walk), but clean hands and feet would be of little use if their bodies were encrusted with the filth of an unredeemed sin nature. Yahshua pointed out this very fact as He washed His disciples' feet on the night He was betrayed. He told Peter, **"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."** (John 13:10) Yahshua's point was that Peter and most of the other disciples were "bathed," that is, their sin had been scrubbed off by their trust in Him. But there was one among them, Judas, who was not clean. Yahshua had washed Judas' hands and feet with the rest of them, but He knew that without first experiencing this fundamental cleansing, Judas would never "minister to Yahweh as priest," no matter how much he thought he knew about Yahshua. Good behavior to an unbeliever is like whitewash on a tomb—it's only a disguise masking the corruption that lies within.

Note also that Aaron did not dress himself in the priestly garments. Moses (who, you'll recall, was playing the role of Yahweh in this vignette) placed the clothing of consecration upon his brother. This is more significant than it may appear at first glance. It means that Yahshua, who is a diminished human manifestation of Yahweh Himself, did not *in His humanity* take for Himself the role of our redeemer and savior. Rather, being found as a Man among men, He humbled Himself and accepted the role assigned to Him by the Father. The odd idea held by so many, that "Jesus" was a teacher of innovative moral principles who started one of the world's great religions and got himself crucified for his trouble, might have been pictured by Aaron taking the priestly garments and putting them on himself. But that's not what God instructed: Moses was to clothe Aaron; and Aaron, for his part, was to obediently accept the burden they represented.

- (761) *Dress Aaron's sons in their special priestly garments. And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*" (Exodus 40:14-15) In the same way, Moses was to place the tunics of ministry upon the sons of Aaron—they were not to don the garments themselves. That means, in symbolic terms, that it is Yahweh who calls us to His service: we do not

call ourselves. Our anointing—our consecration and dedication as sons and followers of our great High Priest Yahshua—is done at Yahweh’s discretion, not our own. At first glance, this sounds suspiciously like we are predestined to salvation (or conversely, to some other end), and that our free will has nothing to do with our destiny. But that’s neither what I’m saying nor what the scriptures teach. We who are believers *are* predestined to something, but it isn’t our salvation. Since this is an important and often misunderstood principle, please indulge me as I chase the rabbit.

Perhaps the strongest passage “supporting” the predestination, or “Calvinist,” position is in the introduction to Paul’s letter to the believers at Ephesus: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”** (Ephesians 1:3-5) That’s all one sentence, demonstrating what I’ve always thought: eloquence in Koine Greek makes for incomprehensible English. So let’s break this down into its component parts.

First, consider who Paul is talking to. The “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” is Yahweh. So when He refers to *our* Lord—Yahshua the Messiah—and when he says God has “blessed *us*,” he is establishing that his audience is comprised *exclusively* of believers. He’s not talking to (or about) mankind in general. It’s important to understand that. Paul begins by thanking Yahweh for the heavenly blessings we derive from His Messiah, Yahshua. Calvinists read the phrase “He chose us in Him” as “He chose us *to be* in Him,” but we’ve just established that he’s talking exclusively to believers; so it actually means, “He chose us *who are* in Him” to receive something. *When* did he choose us? “Before the foundation of the world,” that is, before we were here—before mankind even walked the earth. This argues strongly that Paul is describing a foundational principle, not God’s dealings with individual souls who didn’t exist as yet. By the way, the clause makes no sense unless you remove the comma after “world” (which isn’t there in the Greek text anyway). I’d read it, **“Even before the foundation of the world, He chose those of us who are in Him to be holy and without blame...”** The point isn’t that He chose us to be saved—it’s that He ordained that we who *are* saved were to have a particular spiritual destiny.

And what is this destiny that Yahweh chose for us believers? It has two parts. First, that we would be holy (that is, set apart from the world) and blameless before Him. We believers get so used to the whole package of our salvation that we don't often comprehend that this destiny is by no means automatic or inevitable. It didn't have to be like this. Yahweh (theoretically) could simply have chosen to "live with" our sin, to peacefully co-exist, to let bygones be bygones. Of course, since *He* is holy, that would have meant He couldn't have had a close personal relationship with us (not in His undiminished form, at least), for His very presence would have destroyed us in our sinful state, like light annihilates the darkness. So Yahweh predestined those of us who trust in Him to become blameless. Our sins aren't forgiven—they're *paid for!* Big difference.

The second part of the believer's pre-determined destiny is our adoption as children into Yahweh's family. Again, there's no particular reason God *had to* do this as part of our salvation "package." It wasn't inevitable, or even particularly logical. My wife and I adopted nine of our eleven children. It would have been possible, I suppose, to simply raise them on a "foster" basis. We could have given them a good home, kept a roof over their heads and clothes on their backs, been nice to them—even *loved* them—and on their eighteenth birthdays, wished them well and sent them on their way. But we didn't do that. We *adopted* them—they became, legally and permanently, our family members with all the rights and privileges that entails. They are my *heirs*, just like their two home-made brothers. (Okay, so there's not much to inherit, but the principle's still valid.) Yahweh *predestined* this same kind of adoption to those of us who would trust in Him—a legally binding, permanent covenant. Why did He do this? The answer's right there in the text, though again, the comma is in the wrong place: it's *love*—not ours, but His. "...**We should be holy and without blame before Him, in love having predestined us to adoption...**"

Finally, He did these things "according to the good pleasure of His will." In other words, He did them because He wanted to. Seems obvious, but it's not. Yahweh doesn't do everything He'd like to. For example, He is not willing that any should perish; He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. And yet He lets us all choose our own fate—even death. He won't choose our destiny for us unless we have already chosen to love Him. Paul then says that it is God's grace that has made us "accepted." It's nothing we did (other than choosing to be His children). Further, this acceptance by Yahweh is "in the Beloved," that is, it comes through what "the Beloved" (Yahshua) did—not through our own good behavior, alms, penance, or sacrifice.

So when Moses placed the white linen tunics upon the freshly washed priests, it was a picture of Yahweh giving us two things we couldn't get for ourselves: blamelessness—imputed righteousness, allowing us to stand in the very presence of God, and adoption into Yahweh's family—or as Moses put it, **“anointing [as] an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.”**

(762) *Pass down the High Priest's garments from generation to generation. “And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them. That son who becomes priest in his place shall put them on for seven days, when he enters the tabernacle of meeting to minister in the holy place.”* (Exodus 29:29-30) As far as the Torah was concerned, there was always supposed to be a High Priest in Israel. And the special garments he was to wear in the execution of his office, garments laden with such prophetic and doctrinal significance, were to be passed down and worn by each succeeding generation. Yahweh, of course, knew that the priesthood (and nation) of Israel would eventually become so corrupt it would have to be removed from the Land. And His whole plan was based on the fact that His Messiah would one day fulfill every detail of the High Priest's sartorial symbolism—rendering it for all intents and purposes beside the point, like a road map to a destination you've already reached. But there is a very good reason this precept was given.

That reason is latent in the timing: each new High Priest, as he was inaugurated into the office his father had filled, was to wear the holy garments for *seven days*. We're going to see this same time frame appear in the next few precepts, and its significance (I hope) will be blatantly obvious by the time we've covered Precept #765. For now, however, let us merely note what the purpose of wearing the holy garments was supposed to be: the new High Priest was **“to be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them.”** “Anointed” is the Hebrew word *mashach* or *masah*, from which we derive “Messiah.” It literally means, “to rub with oil,” but often takes on the added connotation of consecrating its object. The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* notes, “There is a fourfold theological significance of *masah*. First, to anoint an individual or an object indicated an authorized separation for God's service.... *Masah*, while representing a position of honor, also represents increased responsibility.... Secondly, though the agent might be the priest or prophet, writers speak of anointed ones as those whom the Lord anointed. Such language underscores that it is God who is the authorizing agent; that the anointed is inviolable; and that the anointed one is to be held in special regard. Thirdly, one may infer that divine enablement was understood as accompanying *masah* Finally, in the form *masiah*, *masah* was associated with the coming

promised deliverer, Jesus.” All these things were true of the High Priest: he was separated (made holy) for Yahweh’s service, and enabled by Yahweh Himself to symbolize the coming Messiah.

“Consecrated” is the Hebrew verb *male’*. It means to fill, accomplish, be satisfied or complete. Thus to “consecrate” someone (in this context) is literally to fill them up (i.e., their *neshamah*, as in Proverbs 20:27—“**The spirit [or breath: *neshamah*] of a man is the lamp of Yahweh, searching all the inner depths of his heart.**”), to make them spiritually complete or whole. Only Yahweh’s Holy Spirit is capable of doing that. Being “consecrated” has nothing whatsoever to do with being religious, pious, solemn, respectable, or well-behaved. It means “Spirit-filled.”

- (763) *Consecrate the priests in the Tabernacle for seven days. “And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, ‘Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket of consecration offerings, as I commanded, saying, “Aaron and his sons shall eat it.” What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. And you shall not go outside the door of the tabernacle of meeting for seven days, until the days of your consecration are ended. For seven days he shall consecrate you. As he has done this day, so Yahweh has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. Therefore you shall stay at the door of the tabernacle of meeting day and night for seven days, and keep the charge of Yahweh, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded.’ So Aaron and his sons did all the things that Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses.”* (Leviticus 8:31-36) What Aaron and his sons were to do is clear enough from the text. *Why* is not so obvious. Between this passage and the parallel text in Exodus 29, Yahweh says no fewer than six times that the consecration process is to take seven days. **“For seven days he shall consecrate you.”** This time period, of course, is one of the oft-recurring metaphorical themes of scripture: the creation week that ends with a day of rest, the work week that ends with a Sabbath rest, the Sabbatical cycle of seven years, ending again with a year of rest for the land. We have come to recognize this theme as a timeline. Yahweh is telling us His plan for the time of mortal mankind upon the earth: six thousand years of “working it out,” followed by the final Millennium, a day of spiritual rest under the perfect earthly reign of the Messiah, King Yahshua. The formula is given to us in both Psalm 90:4 and II Peter 3:8—one day in God’s plan is equivalent to one thousand years.

Here, though, we see the seven-day period not as the familiar six-plus-one scenario, but as a whole, reminding us of the definition of “to consecrate” (*male’*—to make someone spiritually complete) that we encountered in the previous precept. Let us review the symbols that are in

play here: Aaron, dressed in the High Priestly garments, represents the work of Yahshua the Messiah. His sons, dressed in their clean white linen tunics, represent us who follow Him, the world's believers, whose sins are covered by the garments of light Yahweh provides. And the Tabernacle indicates the Plan of God for our redemption, focused on the sacrifice of Christ and our response to it.

Here, then, is what's being said: The work of Yahshua our redeemer as revealed in the Plan of God will be "consecrated," filled up and made complete, over the entire seven-thousand-year course of fallen man. As long as mortals—people with Adam's sin nature—walk the earth, the effect of the finished work of Yahshua will be an ongoing reality. It matters not on which side of Calvary a person is (or was): the basis of salvation is always the same. The sacrificial blood of God's sacrifice is what cleanses us and atones for our sin, whether looking forward to it or back upon it. Our trusting response to that sacrifice is what defines us as believers. The principle was introduced even before Adam and Chavvah (Eve) left the Garden (Genesis 3:21), and it will continue until the last mortal makes his eternal choice at the end of the Millennium. A more complete explanation of how it all works can be found in the final three chapters (28-30) of *Future History*.

- (764) *Consecrate the altar for seven days along with the priests. "Thus you shall do to Aaron and his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. Seven days you shall consecrate them. And you shall offer a bull every day as a sin offering for atonement. You shall cleanse the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to sanctify it. Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and sanctify it. And the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar must be holy."* (Exodus 29:35-37) The consecration procedure continues. While Aaron and his sons were fulfilling their seven days within the Sanctuary, Moses (still playing the symbolic role of God) was to continue his part by "cleansing," and "making atonement for" the altar. He was to do this by offering up one bull each day for the seven-day period of consecration. Bulls, if you'll recall, indicate falsehood—especially the religious deceptions of man. The sacrifice of a bull indicated the symbolic slaying of the world's approach to its "gods"—appeasement, alms, penance, and self-centered sacrifice. All that's left is Yahweh's way: grace through faith in God's sacrifice. A bull a day for seven days tells us that the consecration—the spiritual "filling-up"—of God's people would entail constant battle with falsehood for the entire seven-thousand-year tenure of fallen man upon the earth—starting with the serpent in the Garden of Eden and ending with the final deception of Satan at the close of the seventh Millennium—"Magog II," as it's alluded to in Revelation 20:7-9.

Moses was also to “sanctify” the altar by “anointing” it. This was done with the special (and symbolically significant) oil of anointing we explored in Mitzvah #436. There we saw that the oil (as revealed by its ingredients) represents “the Messiah, Yahshua, whose Spirit-filled life was the epitome of love, the standard of holiness, and sweet salvation achieved through bitter suffering.” **“Also Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the laver and its base, to consecrate them. And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him.”** (Leviticus 8:10-12) Everything within the Tabernacle courtyard was anointed.

“Everything” *includes* the High Priest himself. This reminds me of Psalm 133: **“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion. For there Yahweh commanded the blessing—Life forevermore.”** Considering how many features of the Tabernacle unmistakably depict all of God’s people—the Ekklesia of Yahshua *and* the nation of Israel—dwelling together side by side in unity (see chapter 4 of this volume), the symbolism of Aaron’s anointing is a stunning indictment of both a “Christianity” that is for the most part antagonistic (or is that envious?) toward Israel and an Orthodox Judaism that resents us who embrace *their* Yahshua as *our* Messiah. Yahweh longs for our unity, and He will see our relationship as “good and pleasant” in the end. But alas, that day is not yet here.

- (765) *Prepare for Yahweh to appear on the eighth day.* **“It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. And he said to Aaron, ‘Take for yourself a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before Yahweh. And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering, also a bull and a ram as peace offerings, to sacrifice before Yahweh, and a grain offering mixed with oil; for today Yahweh will appear to you.’”** (Leviticus 9:1-4) This took place on the “eighth day,” that is, after the seven days of priestly consecration had been completed (prophetic of the seven-thousand year tenure of sin-natured man upon the earth, if I’m seeing this correctly). Slightly dissimilar instructions were given to the newly consecrated priests and the Elders of Israel. Both groups were to provide sin offerings (*chata’t*), and burnt offerings (*olah*), but the animals specified differed. As we saw in *The Owner’s Manual*, chapter 12, the first seven chapters of Leviticus outline several basic types of offerings to be made to Yahweh in

the Tabernacle. Those directives are being followed here: the *chata't*, or sin offering, of the priests was to be a young bull (signifying repentance from false teaching); and that of the elders was to be a kid, a young male goat (indicating acknowledgment of their sin). The *olah*, or burnt offerings, varied as well. The priests were to bring a ram (a male sheep with horns, prophetic of the authority of the Lamb of God, the Messiah), and the elders were to bring a calf (speaking of service) and a lamb (indicating innocence). The *olah*, you'll recall, was to be completely consumed on the altar, a picture of total commitment and dedication. It was made as an act of homage to Yahweh.

In addition, the elders of Israel were to bring peace offerings (*selem*), a bull and a ram, as expressions of thanksgiving and to demonstrate their devotion to Yahweh. Also, a *minha*, or grain offering was offered, an acknowledgement of God's provision in this world—as always, mixed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. **“So they brought what Moses commanded before the tabernacle of meeting. And all the congregation drew near and stood before Yahweh. Then Moses said, ‘This is the thing which Yahweh commanded you to do, and the glory of Yahweh will appear to you.’ And Moses said to Aaron, ‘Go to the altar, offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people. Offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, as Yahweh commanded.”** (Leviticus 9:5-7) Atonement—the symbolic result of the *olah* and *chata't* offerings—was necessary because of what had been revealed in verse 4: **“Today Yahweh will appear to you.”** Yahweh is holy. The Israelites could not be in His presence and survive the encounter unless they had been cleansed and sanctified. God's instructions said this was to be achieved by the shedding of innocent blood. But why would Yahweh institute such a convoluted and counterintuitive procedure? Anyone can see that the shedding of the blood of animals *in itself* does nothing to effect our innocence. How can God say it renders us temporarily “holy” in His eyes?

The answer is easy enough to see this side of Calvary: the shed blood of innocent animals in the Old Covenant predicted the sacrifice of The Innocent Man, Yahweh's Messiah. Although we now know what it meant, that *still* doesn't explain how the death of one can bestow life upon another. There is no logical, causal reason why this should be so. We must consider the nature of life itself, for this whole sacrifice scenario purports to be a case of the Giver of Life choosing to bestow it upon people who trust Him enough to do what He asks. If the Giver of Life is blind chance (which is taught as if it were established fact in our schools today), then there is absolutely no reason to do anything “he” says: there are no moral absolutes and no real rules of conduct other than “Don't get caught.”

There is no good or evil, but merely convenient or inconvenient, pleasurable or painful.

If, on the other hand, the Giver of Life is a conscious, eternally living, creative being, then He has the right (not to mention the intrinsic ability) to *assign* life to whomever He wants. And when He says (as He has here in the Torah) that He will preserve the lives of those who are sanctified through sacrifices of His design, we are presented with a choice: we can either believe Him or not. Most of us would agree that life is a good thing—preserving life is to be preferred to the alternative if at all possible. So if we reject Yahweh’s sacrifice scenario, the culmination of which is the death and resurrection of Yahshua the Messiah, we are simply saying that we follow something we consider to be a higher authority, whether religious teachers who disagree with God (even if they’re not overtly “religious”), our own animal instincts, or blind chance. In the end, it’s a question of who we trust, who we deem the highest authority in our lives.

“Aaron therefore went to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. Then the sons of Aaron brought the blood to him. And he dipped his finger in the blood, put it on the horns of the altar, and poured the blood at the base of the altar. But the fat, the kidneys, and the fatty lobe from the liver of the sin offering he burned on the altar, as Yahweh had commanded Moses. The flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp.” (Leviticus 9:8-11) Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel were convinced that Yahweh was indeed the highest authority there was. So without really comprehending what it all meant, they trustingly did as He had instructed. **“And he killed the burnt offering; and Aaron’s sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar. Then they presented the burnt offering to him, with its pieces and head, and he burned them on the altar. And he washed the entrails and the legs, and burned them with the burnt offering on the altar. Then he brought the people’s offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and killed it and offered it for sin, like the first one. And he brought the burnt offering and offered it according to the prescribed manner. Then he brought the grain offering, took a handful of it, and burned it on the altar, besides the burnt sacrifice of the morning.”** (Leviticus 9:12-17)

Every detail, every component of God’s complicated instruction, was carried out just as Yahweh had ordained. **“He also killed the bull and the ram as sacrifices of peace offerings, which were for the people. And Aaron’s sons presented to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar, and the fat from the bull and the ram—the fatty tail, what covers the entrails and the kidneys, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver; and they put the fat on the breasts. Then he burned the fat on the altar; but the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved as a**

wave offering before Yahweh, as Moses had commanded.” (Leviticus 9:18-21)

We have discussed each of these symbolic elements in their turn in the previous pages. Note once again that no one was a passive bystander in this process. Everyone had a role to play, telling us something of the spiritual dynamic of the salvation process. Moses played the part of Yahweh, directing the players in this drama, overseeing its “production.” Aaron the High Priest played the role of the coming Messiah, anointed for his role as intercessor for the people. During the seven days of the priestly consecration process, Moses had slain the sacrifices; but here Aaron is seen killing the animals himself—a subtle indication that the Messiah (as God incarnate) would offer *Himself* as the necessary sacrifice. On the eighth day the necessary but often confusing distinction between Yahweh and His Messiah—between glorious God and the humble Son of Man—begins to blur, until we finally comprehend that they are indeed One and the same: a spiritual unity.

Aaron’s sons—his followers, prophetic of the household of faith—were actively involved in the process. The passage mentions three times that Aaron’s sons “presented the blood to him,” but this obscures the true meaning of the text. The word translated “presented” is actually *matsa*, meaning to find, discover, secure, obtain, or acquire. Aaron’s sons (read: us) *found and obtained* the blood, which was “poured out at the base of the altar” and “sprinkled all around the altar” by Aaron (read: Christ) in order to make atonement for it. The altar (Hebrew: *mizbeach*—literally, the place of sacrifice) is in this context metaphorical of the earth—the place to which Yahshua came to “give his life as a ransom for many.” Taking this train of thought to the end of the line, then, we observe the following. We as “sons of Aaron” (whose name means Light Bringer) have found and obtained the blood (in which is life) of Christ, which He poured out upon the earth to sanctify it and all who live upon it. Conversely, those who are not sons of the Light Bringer have not discovered, secured, or acquired this blood (i.e., *life*), even though it was shed on their behalf as well, being citizens of the earth.

Speaking of the “citizens of the earth,” two more groups of participants are mentioned in the sacrificial scenario: the elders of Israel, and their people—the children of Israel. The elders serve as representatives for the people: it is they who have the responsibility of truthfully communicating what is happening to those who depend upon them for leadership. Metaphorically, then, I believe Israel and its elders play the role of the world at large—those for whom the blood of the sacrifice was shed, those who have the potential for responding to the love of Yahweh. These are the objects of Yahshua’s Great Commission, the

lost world He came to save. The key to this group is their promise, their potential. But note that their knowledge base rests largely in the hands of their “elders,” those who sit in positions of leadership over them, capable of directing them either toward the truth or into error. Woe to the “elder” who seduces his people into falsehood. Yahshua (in John 8:44) called such people “murderers.”

But the people *were* blessed—the sacrifices *were* made on their behalf. **“Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people.”** So far, what they’ve been doing could be taken for mere religious observance, like a Muslim Imam circumambulating the Ka’aba or the Pope sprinkling holy water over the crowds gathered in St. Peter’s square. All sorts of strange rites are performed in the name of religion. How are we to tell which ones are *bona fide* and which ones are bogus? How is offering sheep, goats, and bulls to Yahweh any different than spinning a prayer wheel to Shiva in Tibet? Do we have to take the priests’ word for it? No. In His own time and in His own way, the true God responds: **“Then the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”** (Leviticus 9:22-23)

Yahweh does not perform cheap parlor tricks, you understand. We can’t summon up “the glory of Yahweh” to wow the sheeple by slaughtering a few goats and splattering their blood around the place in the prescribed manner. But when our hearts are right before Him, Yahweh shows us His glory. Today His glory is revealed subtly and quietly to His children, for we live within an evil society. But the day is coming—and *soon*—when **“The Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.”** (Matthew 16:27) The day approaches when **“You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”** (Mark 14:62) **“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.”** (Revelation 1:7) Yahweh responds to us and reveals Himself to us because *He can*. False gods and figments of the religious imagination cannot.

One loose end remains to be tied up. What does “the eighth day” signify? If my observation is valid that the seven days of priestly consecration represent mankind’s seven thousand year tenure upon the earth, then the eighth day can mean only one thing: the eternal state. This thought is confirmed by the promise of Leviticus 9:4, **“Today Yahweh will**

appear to you,” and further validated by the fulfillment of that promise: **“Then the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before Yahweh.”** (Leviticus 9:24) As we have seen, the artificial but necessary distinction between Yahweh and His Messiah will begin to blur somewhat during His glorious Millennial reign, and I believe it will disappear altogether as we segue into eternity—now clothed in our immortal bodies. As Paul put it, **“Each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.... Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”** (I Corinthians 15:23-28) It’s not that there are two (or three, if you count the Spirit) “Gods” who operate under a hierarchy of descending authority. It’s that in the eternal state, when the believers have at last been given their immortal, spiritual bodies (described later in the same chapter), the separate, diminished manifestation of Yahweh’s human form will no longer have any practical use: we will finally be able to dwell with Yahweh in His undiminished glory, for we will have been consecrated, perfected, and made whole. We at last shall see God as He intended, and know Him as we are known. Until then, however, our instruction is to “prepare for Yahweh to appear on the eighth day.”

CONSECRATING THE SANCTUARY

- (766) *Offer daily sacrifices to continually consecrate the Tabernacle.* **“Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. With the one lamb shall be one-tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering. And the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; and you shall offer with it the grain offering and the drink offering, as in the morning, for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh.”** (Exodus 29:38-41) We encountered this same precept back in Mitzvah #536, where we saw it from the point of view of Numbers 28:2-8. As usual, a skeptic would see this as a colossal waste of resources, the worst sort of religious pointlessness—if, that is, Yahweh didn’t have something really important to say through it. I mean, on an annual basis, this adds up to 730 lambs, 180 gallons of wine, 47 bushels of fine flour, and another 180 gallons of olive oil—all either up in smoke (these were burnt offerings, *olah*, to be completely consumed) or poured out onto the ground. This was enough to feed all the poor people in Israel for months! What was God *thinkin’*?

He was “thinking” that He’d rather feed the whole world for eternity. (And besides, He’d already taken care of the poor through the law of the tithe.) The symbols employed here, if followed to their proper conclusion, would have ramifications far beyond temporal hunger or thirst. Yahweh explains, sort of: **“This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before Yahweh, where I will meet you to speak with you. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory. So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests. I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Yahweh their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I am Yahweh their God.”** (Exodus 29:42-46)

Let’s review the symbols one by one. The lambs, of course, are predictive of “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” that is, Yahshua. But why are there two of them? There was only one Messiah. The answer, I think, is in the timing: the lambs were to be offered in the morning and at twilight—at the beginning and the end of each day. From the dawn of man’s sinful state until the death of death at the end of the Millennium, there is only one solution to his fatal conundrum: How could he regain the fellowship with Yahweh that he’d lost in the Garden? Only through the sacrifice of God’s Innocent One. It’s no accident that Yahshua described Himself in Revelation 1:8, **“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”** Nor should we find it strange that Yahweh described Himself in the very same terms: **“Who has performed and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, Yahweh, am the first; and with the last I am He.”** (Isaiah 41:4) With the sacrifice of two lambs, at morning and twilight of every day, Yahweh is identifying the coming Messiah with Himself: they are One.

The grain offering (*minha*) that was to accompany each burnt offering was to be of fine flour—the useless chaff had been removed—permeated with olive oil, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The oil is specifically said to have been “pressed,” that is, obtained from the olives through their being crushed. Together, the picture is that of the provision of our spiritual sustenance through milling and pressing—the removal of our worthlessness and the indwelling of God’s Spirit in our lives through the brutal sacrifice of Yahshua. We’ve seen these metaphors many times by now; they should come as no surprise. Note that the amount of oil used was to be equal to the amount of wine in the drink offering (*nesek*). This should be a not-so-subtle reminder that the blood sacrifice of Christ and

the coming of the Holy Spirit to dwell within us are linked—they are spiritually equivalent.

And what was the point of all this? As Yahweh put it, **“So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar.”** The Tabernacle, as we have seen, is an elaborate metaphor for the Plan of God for our redemption, centered upon the Messiah and encompassing our response to His love. The altar is the place of sacrifice, the place to which God would come to offer Himself up on our behalf: it represents the world and its inhabitants, the place that **“God so loved...that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** (John 3:16) And what does it mean to “consecrate” something? This is our old friend *qadash*, meaning to sanctify, to make holy, to set apart. Once again we see that if the symbols are valid, then God’s message is stunningly significant—the most fundamentally, viscerally important thing in the entire world—but if they aren’t, the whole thing is a pointless waste, a costly fraud. So which is it? What do you think?