

The Duties of the Priest Part 3

The Family as Base Unit of the Church

“26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;”
(Acts 17:26 KJV)

A family is a basic unit of the church and the society. We shall learn here from the lives of families in Genesis, the book of beginnings. From one family of Adam and Eve came many people but only a few pleased God. However, from generation to generation a family who followed God existed, and these early families became the basis for God's Church. Their family and personal lives had instituted God's work and God's plan for the salvation of mankind. Over a period of time, God tremendously expanded a family by His grace and provision. From one righteous family God preserved families for Himself who became His own chosen people. From one Godly family that was raised up with the fear of the Lord, God could build a church with many members. Here are some of those families:

A. The family of Adam: When God created the world, He created man and woman in His own image and entrusted to them the Garden of Eden. But they sinned and the LORD disciplined them and drove them away from His presence. It was not mentioned in the Bible whether Adam and Eve repented or not, but what was mentioned was the part of their life as a family: ***“1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.”*** (Genesis 4:1-2 KJV)

Eve testified that, ***“I have gotten a man from the LORD.”*** So she acknowledged the goodness of the LORD in her life and she named her first born Cain. When they were grown up, both Cain and Abel presented their gifts to God and the Lord accepted Abel's offering but Cain's offering God did not commend. ***“4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”*** (Hebrews 11:4 KJV) As the result of anger and jealousy, Cain killed his brother Abel, a crime that occurred in the midst of the first family on earth. Cain did kill Abel. It was neither mentioned if Adam and Eve disciplined their children, nor whether the children responded to their parent's discipline. ***Until this time, the incident in the family of Adam and Eve has still been repeatedly happening inside the families of believers. Children are fighting and harming each other because of jealousy, and thus giving a bad testimony to the Christian families, to the Church, and to the Lord.***

God later on restored the righteous lineage after the death of Abel. God blessed Adam and Eve with another son: ***“25 And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.”*** (Genesis 4:25 KJV) Seth was the righteous descendant of Adam who carried the Word of truth to the next generation. ***When people increased in number on earth, there were not many righteous men found but God Himself chose few families to be recorded in history.***

B. The Family of Enoch: One remarkable man from Seth's offspring was Enoch. ***“21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: 22 And Enoch walked with God***

after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: 24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” (Genesis 5:21-24 KJV) Enoch walked faithfully with God and lived a life pleasing to Him. His life was a challenge for everyone to walk with God because ***“5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”*** (Hebrews 11:5 KJV) ***God wants you to walk with Him, so when Jesus will come you will be taken with us to meet Jesus in the clouds***

C. The Family of Noah: Another righteous man who reared his family to obey God was Noah. ***“8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. 9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.”*** (Genesis 6:8-10 KJV) Noah and His family, eight in all did excellent work. ***This one family, a church-sized, made a great impact in the world and even to this day.*** Noah led his family in righteousness. He was the priest of his family and together with them he accomplished the building of the ark that saved them through the flood. Noah's Godly character and obedience made God to save them from His wrath when He sent the big flood. ***“7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”*** (Hebrews 11:7 KJV) In holy fear, Noah built the ark and saved his family. As a result, he condemned the world around them, ***“20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”*** (1 Peter 3:20 KJV)

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He cared for his family and lived a righteous life. He diligently followed whatever God had told him to do in building the ark, and in preaching the Word of God to the people around him. Noah lived the Word of God he received in a way that he was able to lead his family to build the ark. Heeding God's warning about the flood was his method to preach God's Word to the people around him. And the Lord used Noah's life testimony against those who did not follow his example. ***“5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;”*** (2 Peter 2:5 KJV) ***In the same way God wants to use you to lead your family in the salvation of God, to set good example to others to follow, to condemn those who refuse to amend their ways, and God will help you in achieving what He asked you to do and will save you from His coming wrath.***

D. The Family of Abram: After the event of the flood, God blessed Noah and his sons. ***“1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.”*** (Genesis 9:1-3 KJV) From the family of Noah, Shem seemed to be the righteous branch, and from his line came Abram and his family whom God called to live according to His will. ***“1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all***

families of the earth be blessed. 4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.” (Genesis 12:1-5 KJV) Abram responded to God’s call and he took his wife, and his nephew Lot, and moved where God told him to go. His wife Sarai was barren yet they became a chosen family, for with God it was possible for Abram who believed to be a father of nations. *“11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.” (Hebrews 11:11-12 KJV)*

While Abram and Sarai were blessed with material possessions in the land where God called them to live, they found themselves with a problem. They did not have children so Sarai resorted to the option of giving her maidservant Hagar to Abram to bear a child and raise a family out of her. *“4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. 5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.” (Genesis 16:4-5 KJV)* Sleeping with another woman even with the wife’s consent is the same as adultery that brings grief to the family. **God created only one Eve for Adam and that first principle of God did not change. Second marriage, second wife, second partner, second family, or divorce and remarriage all are forms of adultery therefore don’t do such evil.** When Hagar became pregnant, troubles started in the family of Abram. After the delivery of Ishmael, the problem extended further and until this day, the descendants of Ishmael have been persecuting the descendants of Isaac, the promised son to Abram and Sarai. This was what the angel of the Lord spoke to Hagar about Ishmael while she was pregnant with him: *“11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” (Genesis 16:11-12 KJV)* Until this day, the non-believers among the descendants of Ishmael have been persecuting the followers of Jesus Christ. Although Abram obeyed God when the Lord commanded him to send Hagar away with her son Ishmael, the detrimental effect of doing things against God’s Word was passed on to his descendants, even to his children’s children in the faith. Surely if only Abraham had been aware of the fact that the bad effect of his relationship with Hagar continues until this day unto God’s church, he would not have done it. Yet God fulfilled what He spoke about him: *“18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” (Genesis 18:18-19 KJV)* Finally, Sarah bore a child and delivered Isaac in Abraham’s ripe old age. **Therefore you need to obey God and not to do your own. God wants you to trust Him for at the appointed time He will come and bless you.** Abraham raised up his son in the fear of the Lord, and Isaac grew with the same faith as his father. *“21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it*

was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.” (James 2:21-23 KJV) The Lord tested Abraham’s faith when God commanded him to offer his one and only beloved son, Isaac. Both the father and the son willingly obeyed God. *“9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.” (Genesis 22:9-10 KJV)* Up to this point both were willing to abide with God’s command and that gave a clear picture of righteousness among the people around them and to the world till this day. **Therefore and in the same way God wants you to obey Him, hearken to His voice, and submit fully to Him and train yourself and your family that whatever He will request from you then you need to give to Him.**

E. The Family of Lot: Abraham’s nephew, Lot, also came out with him from Haran but after the Lord had blessed them both, there was some quarrel and misunderstanding between Lot’s and Abraham’s menservants which ended up in their separation. But Lot made a wrong choice to dwell in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because that place was full of evil and he put himself and his family in danger. *“29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.” (Genesis 19:29 KJV)* Running away for their lives, Lot was determined to follow the Lord’s instruction. He was not influenced by the lifestyle of the people in Sodom and Gomorrah. But Lot’s wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Lot settled and lived the rest of His life in the mountains. *“30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. 31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. 33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. 34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. 35 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. 36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. 37 And the first born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.” (Genesis 19:30-38 KJV)* Lot and his two daughters were saved from the catastrophe, but another shameful thing happened in the family of Lot due to being drunk with wine, incest, and lust to bear children. The act of immorality adopted from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had disfigured and damaged the image of God in the family of Lot. These were the outcomes of bad influence and lack of Godly discipline in the life of his daughters. On the contrary, Lot was brought up with father Abraham, and he remained a righteous man as mentioned in the writing of Peter: *“6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)” (2 Peter 2:6-8 KJV)* **Therefore, move early out from the bad atmospheres**

and the wicked places so your family and children may not be affected and got infected and fall into sin.

F. The family of Isaac: Abraham lived 175 years and saw the family of his son Isaac. After the death of Sarah, Abraham ordered for Isaac not to go back to the country of Haran to get a wife. Instead he advised his servant that the woman for Isaac, should be willing to leave her father's house and go to where God had placed Isaac: ***“6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. 7 The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that swore unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. 8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.” (Genesis 24:6-8 KJV)*** The servant who had the faith in the Lord God of his master Abraham left for the mission to get a wife for Isaac, and the Lord made a way and sent a suitable wife, Rebekah to Isaac. ***“67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.” (Genesis 24:67 KJV)*** Rebekah was barren but Isaac prayed for her and they became the parents of twin boys, Esau and Jacob. Surely Isaac and Rebekah taught their boys about the ways of the Lord especially in building up families. But Esau who was the eldest later married two Hittite women and that grieved the parents: ***“34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: 35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.” (Genesis 26:34-35 KJV)*** ***“46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?” (Genesis 27:46 KJV)*** **Marrying a non-believer or a wife who is not God's choice is against God's will, because God's purpose about marriage is to bring up Godly offspring. God wanted to preserve a generation to honor Him and to become His people and church.** But Esau grieved God. He sold his birthright to Jacob just for a meal because he was hungry. He married women who did not know God. Esau dishonored the Lord and did not repent of his sin and disobedience. The result was neither he nor his descendants followed God. ***“15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” (Hebrews 12:15-17 KJV)*** **Therefore take warning from the message and do not abuse the grace of God and sin against Him because at the end you and your descendents will be taken away far from God.**

My Dear and Beloved: As we are challenged to build up Godly families, let us be motivated and learn the good things from the families that we discussed and expounded in this message and refrain from doing the same mistakes and the shortcoming that they were passed through as Adam and Eve did. Let us marry what God had prepared for us as Isaac did, and let us build our children and raise them in the fear of God. Let us walk with God as Enoch did, and let us do what he instructed us to as Noah did in building the ark, saved his family and condemned the world of the wicked. Let us wait upon God and avoid doing our own, and let us shun the idea of second marriages as Abram did for whatever reason while the first spouse is still alive. Let us avoid living in dangerous places as Lot did and caused him a heavy price and let us avoid marrying non believers as Esau did.

We become righteous by the blood of Jesus. Therefore let us commit ourselves to continue to live in holiness and to fulfill God's will and purpose. Let us work with God to build up His church, leading our families our children in the fear of Him teaching them His Word and continue in doing such until Christ will come to take us with Him to Heaven. **Let us pray**

My Prayer: Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word that showed me the various good examples of the families in the Bible and the good things that I learned from them and what I need to refrain from. Lord thank you for all the reminders and the warnings I received in this message for my own good.

Come now to God and confess your sins. Confess and renounce your disobedience to God's commands, your stubbornness, delayed obedience, and doing your own will and plan. Confess and renounce your wrong principles in initiating marriages built not on the Word of God but on worldly principles and emotions. Confess your lack of fear of God, non willingness to wait upon God's choice in your life, your bad stewardship and you lack of reading of God's Word and prayer. Confess and renounce your worldliness, your love for the world, your yoke and wasting time with non believers and friends, and in bondage with the Media, News and games. Confess and renounce your bad example and your non willingness to serve God and doing the good works that He prepared in advance for you to do. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to live in the fear of yours, to walk faithfully with you and to build the very thing that you wants me to build and follow carefully your instructions. Lord I commit myself not to do my own but to wait upon you. Lord give me faith, patience and perseverance until you come and bless me and fulfill your promises to me.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins, and committed themselves to follow the teaching of your Word and follow the good examples of the Godly families that we learn from the Scripture. Lord provide for them and sustain them to be good examples for others to follow.

Lord, bless us as your church as we commit ourselves to continue to teach our members and workers your Word and to implement them in their lives and the lives of their families. Lord aid us to overcome all the struggles that we are facing. Lord we ask you to refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

The Duties of the Priest Part 3. The Family as Base Unit of the Church. Acts 17:26. Genesis 4:1-2. Hebrews 11:4. Genesis 4:25. Genesis 5:21-24. Hebrews 11:5. Genesis 6:8-10. Hebrews 11:7. 1 Peter 3:20. 2 Peter 2:5. Genesis 9:1-3. Genesis 12:1-5. Hebrews 11:11-12. Genesis 16:4-5. Genesis 16:11-12. Genesis 18:18-19. James 2:21-23. Genesis 22:9-10. Genesis 19:29. 2 Peter 2:6-8. Genesis 24: 6-8, 67. Genesis 27:46. Hebrews 12:15-17.

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