

The Duties of the Priest Part 17

The Royal Priests Serving in the Church

From the Book of Ezekiel

We continue to review the Scriptures to find out the various aspects of the services and the conditions of the royal priests in God's church.

G) The Lord gave regulations to prophet Ezekiel: *"5 And the LORD said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary. 6 And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations, 7 In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. 8 And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. 9 Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel. 10 And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity. 11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. 12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity. 13 And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. 14 But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein."* (Ezekiel 44:5-14 KJV)

1. No detestable practices: *"6 And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations,"* (Ezekiel 44:6 KJV) * Every one of us before we come to know Christ and give our lives to Him we were part of a certain culture and group of people that lived in particular traditions and practices. * Some of these practices contradicts the Word of God and is incompatible with our new life in Christ, like practices that promote immorality – boyfriend, girlfriend, dating, courting, premarital and live-in relationships which end up in single parenthood, divorce and remarriage, single father or mother marrying not the father nor the mother of her or his child or children. * Other practices are from human pride and the love to show off, like parties and unnecessary celebrations, and some of these are feasts with food offered to idols like birthdays, Christmas, New Year, Valentine, Halloween, Father Day, Mother Day, and the rest of such. * These practices involve also much spending that affects and hinders you from being good stewards of the resources that God has given – money, time, and strength. * Moreover, these practices which are not in accordance with God's Word

become idols that men worship. When people love the world, the material things, and themselves more than God these become the idols that they worship.

The chosen people of God who fell into the same sin were rejected by God: *"33 They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. 34 Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel;"* (2 King 17:33-34 KJV)

* Being a worker and a royal priest you must understand that you cannot go along with the tradition of your own people to please them and at the same time to please God. * Certain practices that you have been doing before you came to Christ, you need to stop otherwise you cannot serve God. * Any step to backtrack into the cultural and the traditional things is an invitation for backsliding. If you are doing the same traditional things the people around you are doing, then you are in sin and you need to fully repent and come back to God. You cannot serve both God and the traditions. If you do not repent and return from those traditions, you will soon pay much, for God has chosen you to serve Him. *"10 And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity."* (Ezekiel 44:10 KJV) Otherwise if you do not repent you will lose your ministry and you will carry all the consequences of your sins. *"12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity."* (Ezekiel 44:12 KJV) Put also in your mind when you continue in your tradition and idol worship then you are causing others to follow your bad example and to sin in doing what you are doing and you will cause them to fall.

2. No ministry for those who are not sanctified: *"7 In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations."* (Ezekiel 44:7 KJV) * The non believers and the new believers may attend the church services but they should not involve in any ministry unless they are sanctified and had set their lives fully to live in holiness for the LORD. * Any ministry should not be given based on talent or physical ability; people's lives and their commitment to God to live in holiness is the essential point that God looks at in those who serve Him. *"9 Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel."* (Ezekiel 44:9 KJV) Many ministries now use people who have talents but they are not focusing on selecting people who live in holiness for the LORD. You may see some church leaders who are allowing people to play instruments, to lead worship, or do any ministry but they are not focusing on checking the commitment of the people to live a holy life. Nevertheless this is not commendable to God and His Church. *"22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."* (1 Timothy 5:22 KJV)

3. No proxy or alternating: *"8 And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves."* (Ezekiel 44:8 KJV) * It is not that God is against delegation of a ministry but the point here is that you need to do your own ministry well and you should not be lazy to attend to your responsibilities. * Otherwise,

if the people you are delegating the ministry to are not yet fully committed to God and not yet efficient to do the work as you do, then it will just result in harm and pain. * As God's chosen servant laziness should be away from your life. ***"58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."*** (1 Corinthians 15:58 KJV)

4. Gradual restoration: * Workers who sinned against the LORD and had gone away or caused others to be away from God, when they repent, they should be restored gradually. Before their full restoration to the ministry, they need to really prove themselves that they have repented. * A good time is needed to restore credibility because of the sin that they have done. ***"11 Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. 12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity. 13 And they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. 14 But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein."*** (Ezekiel 44:11-14 KJV) * They may do some services, less of what they were doing before, but no teaching or preaching ministry should be delegated to them till good period of time has passed and their coming back has proven to bear the fruit of true repentance. * For such workers the first fruit of their repentance should be observed inside their families; how they care and attend to their responsibilities for their spouses and children.

5. Priests worthy of honour: Those who are fully committed to God, to His service and His Word, and are proven for their faithfulness and loyalty to the church are to be given honor and continue to be in the priestly ministries and leadership of the Church: ***"15 But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD: 16 They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge."*** (Ezekiel 44:15-16 KJV) * Those who have been members for a longer period of time and have proven their faithfulness to God, to His Word and to the church especially in times of testing, trials and persecution, they should be honored and be given the privilege to lead a ministry. * Those who never backslide or back off from doing their responsibilities toward God, the church, and their families are the royal priests who are worthy to be in charge and part of the church leadership.

"mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee": The Word of God clearly points that full commitment and observance of duties and responsibilities are expected from among the workers and ministers of the Lord. Thus serving God should not be taken lightly, for no human rules or opinions could replace God's regulations in God's Church. ***"5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."*** (2 Timothy 2:5 KJV)

My dear and beloved: * As people belonging to the royal priestly family, we are the ministers responsible to implement and maintain the sanctuary of God. * We are also accountable to

God for whatever unacceptable sacrifice is offered on His altar. We should not go along the people and celebrate with them their idols and their feasts offered to idols. * Let us therefore lead our family and every person entrusted to us to live in holiness and adopt God's rules in serving Him. We are the chosen people of God and we ought to fulfill our roles as royal priests serving God's Church.

* Let us ponder on the message that we had received and let us correct ourselves as the Word show us the wrong practices that we should refrain from and the idols that we need to through away and out from our lives. * Let us implement the teaching and the practices that we learn in this message from the Word of God.

Go again through the message and review what you had received; come back to God in repentance and in full willingness to apply all the Godly practices and the principles that we learned from His Word to do the ministry of God in His church.

- Let us refrain from the following sinful practices, boyfriend, girlfriend, dating, courting, premarital and live-in relationships, divorce and remarriage, single father or mother marrying not the father nor the mother of her or his child or children. Parties and unnecessary celebrations, and feasts with food offered to idols like birthdays, Christmas, New Year, Valentine, Halloween, Father Day, Mother Day, and the rest of such.
- Being a worker and a royal priest you must understand that you cannot go along with the tradition of your own people to please them. The practices that you have been doing before you came to Christ, you need to stop because such practices are sins and you need to repent from them, otherwise you cannot serve God, and you will lose your ministry and you will carry all the consequences of your sins.
- When you continue in your tradition and idol worship then you are causing others to follow your bad example and to sin in doing what you are doing and you will cause them to fall.
- You need to do your own ministry well and you should not be lazy to attend to your responsibilities. As God's chosen servant laziness should be away from your life.
- The non believers and the new believers may attend the church services but they should not involve in any ministry unless they are sanctified and had set their lives fully to live in holiness for the LORD.
- Any ministry should not be given based on talent or physical ability; people's lives and their commitment to God to live in holiness is the essential point that God looks at in those who serve Him.
- You cannot delegate the ministry to people who are not yet fully committed to God and not yet efficient to do the work as you do, otherwise it will just result in harm and pain.
- Workers who sinned against the LORD and had gone away or caused others to be away from God, when they repent, they should be restored gradually. Before their full restoration to the ministry, they need to really prove themselves that they have repented. A good time is needed to restore credibility because of the sin that they have done. They may do some services, less of what they were doing before, but no teaching or preaching ministry should be delegated to them till good period of time has passed and their coming back has proven to bear the fruit of true repentance. For such workers the first fruit of their repentance should be observed inside their

families; how they care and attend to their responsibilities for their spouses and children.

- Those who are fully committed to God, to His service and His Word, and are proven for their faithfulness and loyalty to the church are to be given honor and continue to be in the priestly ministries and leadership of the Church.
- Those who have been members for a longer period of time and have proven their faithfulness to God, to His Word and to the church especially in times of testing, trials and persecution, they should be honored and be given the privilege to lead a ministry.
- Those who never backslide or back off from doing their responsibilities toward God, the church, and their families are the royal priests who are worthy to be in charge and part of the church leadership.
- The Word of God clearly points that full commitment and observance of duties and responsibilities are expected from among the workers and ministers of the Lord. Thus serving God should not be taken lightly, for no human rules or opinions could replace God's regulations in God's Church.

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 death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that opened my eyes about the way that I need to serve you in the ministry that you entrust to me. Lord thank you for all the corrections, the rebukes and the admonishments that I received in this message.

Come now to God and confess and renounce all your sins and commit yourself to serve Him. Confess and renounce all the works of the flesh in your life; anger, fighting, hatred, division, telling lies, deceiving, cheating, stealing, gossips, boasting, taking advantage, selfishness, lust of the flesh, immoralities, dating, courting, the practices of boyfriend and girlfriend, worldliness, greed and your love for money and material things. Repent and renounce your celebration of feast offered to idols, like birthdays, Christmas, New Year, Valentine, Halloween, Father Day, Mother Day, and the rest of such. Confess and renounce all your corruption, flattering people, the fear of man, compromising with people and allowing them to do their sinful practices. Confess and renounce your yoke with non believers, with friends and in bondage with the Media, News and games. Confess and renounce your bad stewardship, wasting your resources, non willingness to give to God, and your non willingness to serve God according to His Word and suffer for Him. Lord forgive me, I repent from the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to apply the principles that I learned today in this message and to start to serve you based on your Word and the instruction that I received in this message. Lord I commit myself to do my responsibility well, to throw the following idols and sinful practices _____. Lord I commit myself not to allow non believers to involve in the ministry, and not to use talents and physical abilities without holiness in the people's life to appoint workers. Lord continue to give me wisdom and direct me how to serve you faithfully according to your Word and commands. Lord I commit myself to implement all the discipline and the teaching I received in this message in the life of my ministry and the

church that you placed me in. Lord, I commit myself to reach new people and preach the gospel and your Word to them.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who had repented and committed their lives to serve you according to your will and the Word we received in this message. Lord protect them and provide for them so they will continue to serve you.

Lord bless us as your church as we commit ourselves to implement all the teaching and the discipline that we received in this message. Lord I pray for holiness in the life of all the workers of the church and that they will be willingly throwing all the idols and the worthless traditional practices that they inherited from their culture. Lord we pray for revival in our midst that people will respond to your Word and come back to you and serve you wholeheartedly. Lord refills us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts so that we continue to serve you. Lord we commit ourselves to evangelize and make new disciples, train new workers and plant more 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 you 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 17. The Royal Priests Serving in the Church. From the Book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel 44:5-16. 2 King 17:33-34. 1 Timothy 5:22. 1 Corinthians 15:58. 2 Timothy 2:5.

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