

# Ministering Unto God

Exodus 29:1



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**FOCAL Read Responsively** Exodus 29:1 **And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office ...**

Under the Law, only the family of Levi could serve God in the priest's office, but under the Gospel all of God's people are called to be “**a chosen generation, a royal priesthood**” (1 Peter 2:9) . Though you as a local Church have a Pastor-Teacher who loves you and preaches the Word to you,

**Ephesians 4:11-12** And **{God} personally gave some to be ... pastors and teachers, {12} for the training of the saints in the work of ministry,** to build up the body of Christ <sup>HCSB</sup>

my office exists to **train the saints in the work of the ministry**. Each and every one of you – saved by faith in Christ Jesus – are ministers unto the Lord. In the Church no person is set apart as a Priest over others. **You are a royal priesthood**. Each of you are called to minister unto Him Who loves you and gave Himself for you. The Apostle tells us in another place:

**Romans 12:1-2** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that **ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service. {2} And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of**

**your mind**, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

You are called to be *spiritual priests*. Your High Priest is **Jesus Christ**, and the sacrifice that is placed on the altar of God is **His Precious Blood (Hebrews 7:26-27)**.

Unlike the Levitical Priests of Israel our Great Apostle and High Priest Jesus Christ “**offered up Himself**” as a satisfactory covering for our sins. Jesus Christ is a High Priest after “**the order of Melchizedek**”, an ancient Priesthood that long predated the Levitical Priesthood of Israel. We who belong to Him by faith are His priests, and we willingly serve Him and love Him because He

**Revelation 1:5-6 ... loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, {6} And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

Who are priests before God in the Church Age? The Bible makes it clear that even the youngest among us are priests unto God. The Scripture says that we ...

**1 Peter 2:5 ... as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**

Though we in the Church Age are not Levitical Priests, and though our High Priest is Jesus Christ and not

Aaron, we need to know what God expects of us if we are going to minister to Him. What does the Lord expect of His priests? There are no Biblical precepts set forth to show us how priests after the order of Melchizedek are to serve, but God does tell us what He expected His Levitical priests to do.

What does God expect of those who minister to Him?

### **1. Priests Washed Before They Served God**

As a believer-priest you must first of all *be washed*. We read:

**Exodus 29:4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.**

Our God is pure and holy. In fact, the Bible tells us that He is *thrice holy*:

**Isaiah 6:3 ... Holy, holy, holy, [is] the LORD of hosts: the whole earth [is] full of his glory.**

It was God's desire that His Israel glorify Him in the land, and it is still God's desire that His Church glorify Him today. We have a Gospel message to carry into the whole world. “**Go ye therefore and teach all nations**” (**Matthew 28:19**). Go. Tell. Baptize. Forsake none, for **all nations** must hear. God wants “**all the ends of the earth to see the salvation of God**”. We must go and tell

– but we ourselves must be clean. As we go into the world we will have contact with the unclean thing. Our God tells us:

**Isaiah 52:10-11** The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. {11}

**Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean [thing]; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.**

The believer priest must wash themselves and must be clean when they present the message of God to a lost and dying world. The Lord said “**be ye holy, For I am holy**” (1 Peter 1:16). An unclean vessel cannot serve the Lord. We cannot become like the world and expect to have the power of God flow through our joint ministry. The Psalmist said:

**Psalms 26:6-7** I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD: {7} That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

We cannot do the work of the ministry if our hands are filthy. God would not tolerate filthiness among His Levitical priests, and He will not tolerate it among His Church Age priests.

First, have you **been washed by the Holy Spirit of God**? Can you remember the day that you called upon the Name of Jesus to be saved? The Old Testament priest could not *work his way* into that office. You had to be **born a Levite, born of the lineage of Aaron** if you were to be a priest. The same is true for the New Testament believer-priest. The Bible says:

**Titus 3:5-7** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; {6} Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; {7} That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

There is a **washing of regeneration**, a washing of New Life that only comes on those who have called upon the Name of Jesus. Unless you have called out, *repenting* of your sinful life and **believing** that Jesus Christ died and rose again *for you*, then you have not been washed. This is a washing that God the Holy Spirit must – and will – do, if you would but believe on Jesus. Men are always trying to improve on God's methods and God's decrees, but their attempts are always futile. The Lord has said that “**it pleased [the Father] that in {Jesus} should all fullness dwell, and that Jesus alone has made peace through the blood of His cross**” (Colossians 1:19-20). The Pharisees commanded the early Church “**not to**

**speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18)** , yet they continued to proclaim His Name. It is **“at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11)**. God has presented us a means of salvation, and that means is to call upon the Name of Jesus Christ believing so as to be saved. Salvation is a *supernatural washing* by God over His priests.

A terrible blasphemy that has entered God's Church in recent times is that God *saves you in your sins*. No, dear ones, absolutely not! There are some that say that God saves a *practicing homosexual, or a practicing adulterer*. Absolutely not! The Scripture tells us that God saves us from being

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ... fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, {10} Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. {11} And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**

This is *past tense*. The text says **“such were some of you”**. Priests are washed, cleansed by God so they can serve God. You may want to serve God but you cannot

do so until you are born again of the Spirit, cleansed by His Blood. If you have not been renewed by the Spirit of God, **new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)** then you cannot minister unto the Lord. God does not call blind to serve as guides to the blind, nor does He set dead men up to share the Gospel with those who are spiritually dead. The Psalmist said:

**Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ then you approach God as one who has been washed by God Himself. What does the Scripture promise? If you have called upon Jesus to be your Savior then your sins have been cast away.

**Psalms 103:11-12 For as the heaven is high above the earth, [so] great is his mercy toward them that fear him. {12} As far as the east is from the west, [so] far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**

God's mercy is deeper than the heavens are high. God has removed our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west. How far is that? It is an infinite straight line where neither end ever meets. This is how washed those who are in Christ are.

Yet we continue to walk in this world. And as we walk

our feet often get dirty once more. Therefore **we must daily cleanse ourselves from all sin**. Jesus taught His disciples to pray:

**Matthew 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

Though we must *never* condone sin, we as God's believer-priests frequently fail our High Priest. If this were not true, then Jesus would not have told us to pray this way. Our first washing – the **washing of regeneration** – removed all sin from us as an offense before **God as Judge**. Our subsequent washings – the **washing of confession** – gives us daily cleansing in the sight of **God as our Father**. The Scripture says:

**1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. {8} If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. {9} If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

The Lord tells His believer-priests **“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Romans 6:22)**. Before you were dead in trespasses

and in sins, **but now** you are freed from that. **The Blood of Jesus Christ our Savior keeps on cleansing us from sin**. Before this world was your home, and you were in tune with the Wicked One. **But now** you belong to God, and are **strangers and pilgrims upon this earth (1 Peter 2:11)**. Before, just like the Prodigal son, it was normal for you to wallow in the pig pen, eating the husks that the hogs wouldn't eat (**Luke 15:16**). **But now** you have come to your senses, and flee from the devil and back to the waiting arms of your Heavenly Father. The Father saith:

**Luke 15:23-24 ... bring hither the fatted calf, and kill [it]; and let us eat, and be merry: {24} For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.** And they began to be merry.

Oh my Beloved, what a joy it is to be a priest in the service of the Lord! If you will serve the Lord you need to hate sin as much as God hates it. You can only draw near to the thrice Holy God if you have **“a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water”**. If we are to provoke one another, do not provoke one another to sin but to love. **“Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”**. Those who are washed serve the Lord *together*, **“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]”**. (Hebrews 10:22-25)

## 2. The Priests Are Also Clothed and Anointed

The Bible tells us that the Levitical priests were dressed differently than the rest of Israel. What does the Scripture say?

**Exodus 29:5, 8** And **thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: ... {8}** And **thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them.**

The priests were not allowed to wear the garments that they wore prior to their calling of the Lord. They put on what was provided for them, nothing more and nothing less. These **garments were provided for them**. Our righteousness is not our own, but it is the **imputed righteousness that comes to us by faith in Jesus**. Like Abraham of old we can say **that we believed God, and our faith was imputed to us as righteousness (Romans 4:22)**. When the believer-priest is clothed in the righteousness of Christ he or she must remember that we *must remember to praise Him and to serve Him*. The priest was not garbed to serve himself, but to serve the Lord Who loved him and gave Himself for him. We must always reject our own clothing, reject *self righteousness*. God said of those who forgot their righteousness was from Him and Him alone. We do not want to stand in the place of fallen Israel, of whom God said:

**Isaiah 65:2-6** **I have spread out my hands all**

**the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way [that was] not good, after their own thoughts; {3} A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; {4} Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable [things is in] their vessels; {5} Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These [are] a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day. {6} Behold, [it is] written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom**

The Child of God clothed in the righteousness of Christ should feel a solemn awe of what God has done for him. You stand on holy ground. Not because this particular place is any more full of God than another, but because God has clothed you in righteousness to serve Him. We also read:

**FOCAL** **Exodus 29:7** Then shalt **thou take the anointing oil, and pour [it] upon his head, and anoint him.**

The anointing oil was poured on the High Priest, and the

other priests were considered anointed because of him. throughout Scripture the **oil** represented the work of the Holy Spirit of God. **Adam Clarke** states:

**“It appears, from Isaiah 61:1, that anointing with oil, in consecrating a person to any important office, whether civil or religious, was considered as an emblem of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. This ceremony was used on three occasions, viz., the installation of prophets, priests, and kings, into their respective offices. But why should such an anointing be deemed necessary? Because the common sense of men taught them that all good, whether spiritual or secular, must come from God”**

The High Priest was anointed with oil to set him apart and signify that the Spirit of God must rest on him and, in turn, on the other Levitical Priests. We have no less promise in the Priesthood of Melchizedek. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our High Priest, and was anointed with the Spirit of God as He performed His earthly ministries. Jesus quoted **Isaiah 61:1**, relating it to Himself in:

**Luke 4:18-21 The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, {19} To**

**preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ... {21} And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, **our High Priest**, served out His time on this earth under the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Our High Priest **has given unto us the Holy Spirit** to empower us, to guide us, to lead us as we minister unto God. We cannot serve God in our own garments of righteousness, nor can we serve Him in our own power. The Spirit of God is upon all who believe. You who believe have been given the Spirit of Promise, the **Comforter**, so that you can serve Him and minister to God in all power.

We who are believer priests are to **walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:1), mind the things of the Spirit (Romans 8:5). The Spirit of God dwells in and on every Christian (Romans 8:9), and works through you (Romans 8:11) for the glory of God.** This is the Spirit of Adoption, the Holy Spirit, promised by our High Priest and upon each and every one of us. **If you have not the Spirit of God you are none of His. And if you are saved you have the Spirit of God.**

Therefore we minister unto God in the clothing and the anointing that He has provided us. We praise Him. We magnify His Name. We worship our Lord by rejecting sin and embracing His power:

**Ephesians 5:18-21 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with**

**the Spirit; {19} Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; {20} Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; {21} Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.**

Priests minister to the Lord together. God is too mighty to be served by little people with little love. Our mighty God expects us as His priests to minister to Him wearing the righteousness He has given us, obeying the Word He has set before us, and doing so in His power – not ours – that His Name might be glorified in all the earth.

### **3. Finally, Priests Minister TO THE LORD**

**FOCAL** Exodus 29:1 And **this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office ...**

The priest of God is set apart or **hallowed** to serve the Lord. In our day we have the tendency to think of Church as the building and the people as *customers*. This isn't right! The people are not *customers* – but if they are saved by faith in Christ the people *are* the Church. **Upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18)**. The Church – a body of Believer-Priests – exists to minister

to God. Not to be ministered to – but to *minister to God*. This is His Will, His calling to us. We minister to God by praising His Holy Name. We minister to God by heeding His Word and doing as He calls us to do. We minister to God by focusing on pleasing Him, not ourselves, but Him. We minister to God by obeying Him. Jesus said:

**Luke 6:46-49 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? {47} Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: {48} He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. {49} But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.**

Are you serving Him? If so, you are founded on the Rock that is Christ. Are you ministering to God? May God touch your hearts with His Word.