

Lev. 8:22-30 "The Ram of Ordination"

For the Children: When someone applies for a job, they usually list the things they have studied, their experience and why they would be good at that job. But serving as a deacon or an elder – or a priest in the OT – is quite different. It's not because the man is so good and suitable in himself. He is a sinner. He does not have the strength to serve God. He needs the Lord Jesus to cover his sins and he needs the Holy Spirit to strengthen him for service and to teach him to live in a more holy way. **Questions:** Why was sacrificial blood put on the ear, thumb and big toe – and the special clothes - of the priests? What is a "wave offering" and what does it teach us? Why do we often "lay hands" on a man when he is ordained as an elder or deacon?

Introduction:

First Point: Consecration

- 1) Set Apart: The main idea in the word translated "consecrated" (vss. 18, 30) is that of being set apart. This implies separation from the world and that which is "common" ("profane"); and set apart for holy service to the Holy God. We must be holy because He is holy.
- 2) Sin Atoned: How can sinful men be "holy"? The same question must be asked of priests in the OT (Heb. 5:2-3). The answer is, only in the Lord Jesus Christ. The sin offerings, with the use of blood, the altar; and the "ordination offerings" point to Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. There can be no true entering into the Presence of the Holy God, to serve Him, without atonement for sin by a Substitute. Aaron and sons had to lay their hands on the ordination offering, symbolically transferring their sins to it – so that they could be set apart and ordained.
- 3) From Top to Toe: The placing of sacrificial blood on the right earlobe, thumb and big toe of the priests indicated that the whole person had to be cleansed for whole-person service to the Lord. The sprinkling of blood on the priestly garments (v. 30) indicated that every aspect of their office and work had to be sanctified. The "wave offering" (vss. 27, 29) indicated that God supplied all the priests offered to Him, but He then gave back to them so they could be supported in their duties. It was all due to His grace.
- 4) Anointed: The anointing oil (vss. 30, 12) implied the gift of the Holy Spirit to equip, empower and sanctify them for service. The oil was sprinkled on the men, their garments, the altar and the utensils. The Holy Spirit was needed for all connected to their office, just as Christ's atoning work was needed. We see this in the NT offices as well:

Second Point: Ordination

- 1) The Theological Definition: Ordination, in the theological sense, refers to a solemn ritual in which the church recognizes God's calling, puts a man in possession of his office, and prays for the Spirit's equipping, empowering and sanctifying.
- 2) The Laying on of Hands: In our churches, we often lay hands on the man being ordained for the first time. This was done in some situations in the OT (Num. 8:10, 27:18); but it is frequently mentioned in NT ordination (Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14, 5:22); and in the apostolic bestowal of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost (Acts 8:17-19; 19:6; 2 Tim. 1:6). There the church participates by identifying with the man on whom hands are laid. This also expresses the desire that the Spirit will fill the man – similar to anointing - though there are no longer apostles to "bestow" the Spirit. It is therefore now an optional practice. But having the Spirit indwell the office-bearer, on the ground of Christ's atoning work is not optional for true service to the Lord.
- 3) A Filling: The word "ordination" in vss. 22, 28, 29, is not so much theological as descriptive. It literally means "filling"- as in the filling of priests' hands with fat, entrails from the sacrificial animals; and holy bread. The wave offering, as we have seen, reminds the priests that they have been ordained to an office that they cannot live up to without God supplying all they need – by the work of His Son and Spirit.

Conclusion:

