

An Unworthy Priest

"Have your brother Aaron, with his sons, come to you from the Israelites to serve Me as priest- Aaron, his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. Make holy garments for your brother Aaron, for glory and beauty. You are to instruct all the skilled craftsmen, whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom, to make Aaron's garments for consecrating him to serve Me as priest." – Exodus 28:1-3 HCSB

Frankly, I have a problem with Aaron. I don't understand why God chose him to be a priest. Yes, I know that he had the same lineage as his worship-team-leading sister Miriam and his illustrious brother Moses.¹ I also know that he married well, having wed Elisheba², the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nashon who both ended up being in the Messianic line.³ He acted as Moses' spokesperson,⁴ and along with Hur supported his brother's arms in the battle against the Amalekites.⁵

But he fell with the people into idolatry, forming a golden calf as an object of worship.⁶ He gossiped and murmured against the chosen leader of the people out of jealousy.⁷ He lost his sons to drunken disrespect of the Lord's ministry and was forbidden to mourn when God killed them for it.⁸ He dishonored the Lord when he and Moses allowed their prideful anger to lead them into disobedience⁹ and as a result of his lack of faith was not allowed to enter the Promised Land.¹⁰

Am I any better? I am so sinful that my greatest works are no better than filthy rags compared to His power and holiness.¹¹ My most profound thoughts, my most insightful wisdom is foolishness compared to His omniscience.¹² I can't even stop doing the things I know are wrong; and the things I know are right often don't seem to make it to the top of my priorities.¹³

And yet, like Aaron, God has graciously chosen to make me a priest.¹⁴ He has chosen to consecrate me in spite of my flaws.¹⁵ As Aaron often served as a judge in Moses' absence,¹⁶ and was called to the foot of Mount Sinai with the elders to hear from the Lord,¹⁷ so God in His condescension has allowed me to not only serve as an elder of His church but to one day judge angels!¹⁸

None of us are any better than Aaron, and it is only God's mercy that allows us to be of any use. We must never dismissingly look down on another human being thinking we are better than they. *"There but for the grace of God go we."* Even if we serve God faithfully, our past should cause us to recognize that we are yet unworthy servants, unworthy priests.¹⁹

Instead, we should simply renew our zeal for our gracious Lord and humbly rededicate ourselves to doing our best for Him however limited that may be.

¹ Exodus 6:16-20; Numbers 26:59-60; Joshua 21:4, 10; 1 Chronicles 6:2-3

² Exodus 6:23

³ Matthew 1:4; Luke 3:33

⁴ Exodus 4:14-16, 27-31; 7:1-2, 6-7

⁵ Exodus 17:10-13

⁶ Exodus 32; Deuteronomy 9:7-21; Acts 7:40-41

⁷ Numbers 12:1

⁸ Leviticus 10:6, 19

⁹ Numbers 20: 12, 23-29

¹⁰ Deuteronomy 32:51-52

¹¹ Isaiah 64:6

¹² Isaiah 55:8-9

¹³ Romans 7:14-25

¹⁴ Exodus 28:1; 29:9; Numbers 17; 18:1; Psalm 99:6; Hebrews 5:4 cp 1 Peter 2:9-10

¹⁵ Exodus 28; 29; Leviticus 8 cp Romans 6:13, 16, 19; 12:1; 2 Corinthians 8:5

¹⁶ Exodus 24:13-14

¹⁷ Exodus 19:24; 24:1, 9-10

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 6:3

¹⁹ Luke 17:7-10