
LEVITICUS 8:1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Moses is commanded to consecrate Aaron and his sons, Lev 8:1-3. Moses convenes the congregation; washes, clothes, and anoints Aaron, Lev 8:4-12. He also clothes Aaron's sons, Lev 8:13. Offers a bullock for them as a sin-offering, Lev 8:14-17. And a ram for a burnt-offering, Lev 8:18-21. And another ram for a consecration-offering, Lev 8:22-24. The fat, with cakes of unleavened bread, and the right shoulder of the ram, he offers as a wave-offering, and afterwards burns, Lev 8:25-28. The breast, which was the part of Moses, he also waves, Lev 8:29. And sprinkles oil and blood upon Aaron and his sons, Lev 8:30. The flesh of the consecration ram is to be boiled and eaten at the door of the tabernacle, Lev 8:31, Lev 8:32. Moses commands Aaron and his sons to abide seven days at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, which they do accordingly, Lev 8:33-36.

LEVITICUS 8:2 "Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and the bull of the sin offering, and the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread;

Verse 2

Take Aaron and his sons - The whole subject of this chapter has been anticipated in the notes, Exo 28:1 (note), etc., and Exo 29:1 (note), etc., in which all the sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies have been explained in considerable detail; and to those notes the reader is referred. It is only necessary to observe that Aaron and his sons were not anointed until now. Before, the thing was commanded; now, first performed.

LEVITICUS 8:3 and assemble all the congregation at the door of the Tent of Meeting."

LEVITICUS 8:4 Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the congregation was assembled at the door of the Tent of Meeting.

LEVITICUS 8:5 Moses said to the congregation, "This is the thing which the LORD has commanded to be done."

LEVITICUS 8:6 Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.

LEVITICUS 8:7 He put the coat on him, tied the sash on him, clothed him with the robe, put the ephod on him, and he tied the skilfully woven band of the ephod on him, and fastened it to him with it.

LEVITICUS 8:8 He placed the breastplate on him; and in the breastplate he put the Urim and the Thummim.

Verse 8

He put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim - The Urim and Thummim are here supposed to be something different from the breastplate itself. See Clarke's note on Exo 28:15, See Clarke's note on Exo 28:16, See Clarke's note on Exo 28:30.

LEVITICUS 8:9 He set the turban on his head; and on the turban, in front, he set the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Verse 9

And he put the mitre - See Clarke's note on Exo 28:36.

LEVITICUS 8:10 Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and sanctified them.

LEVITICUS 8:11 He sprinkled it on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its vessels, and the basin and its base, to sanctify them.

LEVITICUS 8:12 He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.

LEVITICUS 8:13 Moses brought Aaron's sons, and clothed them with coats, and tied sashes on them, and put headbands on them; as the LORD commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 8:14 He brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering.

Verse 14

The bullock for the sin-offering - This was offered each day during the seven days of consecration. See Exo 29:36.

LEVITICUS 8:15 He killed it; and Moses took the blood, and put it around on the horns of the altar with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured out the blood at the base of the altar, and sanctified it, to make atonement for it.

LEVITICUS 8:16 He took all the fat that was on the innards, and the cover of the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat; and Moses burned it on the altar.

LEVITICUS 8:17 But the bull, and its skin, and its flesh, and its dung, he burned with fire outside the camp; as the LORD commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 8:18 He presented the ram of the burnt offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram.

LEVITICUS 8:19 He killed it; and Moses sprinkled the blood around on the altar.

LEVITICUS 8:20 He cut the ram into its pieces; and Moses burned the head, and the pieces, and the fat.

LEVITICUS 8:21 He washed the innards and the legs with water; and Moses burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt offering for a pleasant aroma. It was an offering made by fire to the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 8:22 He presented the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram.

LEVITICUS 8:23 He killed it; and Moses took some of its blood, and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot.

Verse 23

Put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, etc. - See this significant ceremony explained in the note on Exo 29:20 (note). Calmet remarks that the consecration of the high priest among the Romans bore a considerable resemblance to the consecration of the Jewish high priest. "The Roman priest, clothed with a garment of silk, his head covered with a crown of gold adorned with sacred ribbons, was conducted into a subterranean place, over which there was a floor of planks pierced through with many holes. On this floor they sacrificed a bullock, whose blood was freely poured out on the planks or floor, which running through the holes fell upon the priest, who stood under to receive this sacred aspersion, and who, in order to be completely covered with the blood, took care to present the whole of his body, his clothes, face, eyes, nose, lips, and even his tongue, to receive the drops of blood falling through the pierced floor above. Being completely covered with this sanguineous shower, he ascended from his subterranean place, and was acknowledged and adored by the people as Pontifex Maximus, or supreme high priest." These rites, which bear a striking allusion to those used in the consecration of Aaron, and from which they were probably borrowed, and disguised by the introduction of their own superstitions, are particularly described by Aurelius Prudentius, in his poem entitled *Romani Martyris Supplicium*, from which I shall select those verses, the subject of which is given above, as the passage is curious, and the work not common.

"Summus sacerdos nempe sub terram scrobe
Acta in profundum consecrandus mergitur,
Mire infulatus, festa vittis tempora
Nectens, corona tum repexus aurea,
Cinctu Gabino sericam fultus togam.
Tabulis superne strata texunt pulpita,
Rimosa rari pegmatis compagibus,
Scindunt subinde vel terebrant aream,
Crebroque lignum perforant acumine,
Pateat minutis ut frequens hiatibus -
Hic ut statuta est immolanda bellua,
Pectus sacrata dividunt venabulo,
Eructat amplum volnus undam sanguinis - etc.
Tum per frequentes mille rimarum vias
Illapsus imber, tabidum rorem pluit,
Defossus intus quem sacerdos excipit,
Guttas ad omnes turpe subjectans caput,

Et veste et omni putrefactus corpore:
 Quin os supinat, obvias offert genas
 Supponit aures, labra, nares objicit,
 Oculos et ipsos perluit liquoribus,
 Nec jam palato parcit, et linguam rigat,
 Donec cruorem totus atrum combibat -
 Procedit inde pontifex vlsu horridus - etc.
 Omnes salutant atque adorant eminus,
 Vilis quod illum sanguls, et bos mortuus
 Foedis latentem sub cavernis laverint."

Of these lines the reader will not be displeased to find the following poetical version: -

"For when, with sacred pomp and solemn state,
 Their great high priest the Romans consecrate,
 His silken vest in Gabine cincture bound,
 A festal fillet twines his temples round:
 And, while aloft the gorgeous mitre shines,
 His awful brow a golden crown confines.
 In a deep dyke, for mystic ritual made,
 He stands, surrounded with terrific shade.
 High o'er his holy head a stage they place,
 Adorn with paintings, and with statues grace;
 Then with keen piercers perforate the floor,
 Till thronging apertures admit no more.
 Thither the victim ox is now convey'd,
 To glut the vengeance of the thirsty blade.
 The sacred spear his sturdy throat divides,
 Down, instant streaming, gush the gory tides,
 Through countless crevices the gaping wood
 Distils corrupted dew and smoking blood;
 Drop after drop, in swift succession shed,
 Falls on the holy pontiff's mitred head;
 While, to imbibe the sanctifying power,
 His outspread garments drink the crimson shower;
 Then on his back in reeking streams he lies,
 And laves in livid blood his lips and eyes;
 Bares every limb, exposes every pore,
 To catch the virtue of the streaming gore;
 With open mouth expects the falling flood,
 Moistens his palate and his tongue with blood;
 Extends his ears to meet the sanguine rain,
 Nor lets a single drop descend in vain.
 Then from the gloomy cave comes forth to light,
 Bathed in black blood, and horrible to sight! -
 By the vile torrent, and the victim slain,
 In the dark cavern cleansed from mortal stain,
 Their priest, enveloped in atoning gore,
 With trembling awe surrounding throngs adore."

Prudentius was born about the middle of the fourth century, and was no doubt intimately acquainted with the circumstances he describes.

LEVITICUS 8:24 He brought Aaron's sons; and Moses put some of the blood on the tip of their right ear, and on the thumb of their right hand, and on the great toe of their right foot; and Moses sprinkled the blood around on the altar.

LEVITICUS 8:25 He took the fat, and the fat tail, and all the fat that was on the innards, and the cover of the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right thigh;

LEVITICUS 8:26 and out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat, and on the right thigh.

LEVITICUS 8:27 He put all these in Aaron's hands and in his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the LORD.

Verse 27

And waved them for a wave-offering - See the nature of this and the heave-offering in the note on Exo 29:27 (note).

LEVITICUS 8:28 Moses took them from their hands, and burned them on the altar on the burnt offering. They were a consecration for a pleasant aroma. It was an offering made by fire to the LORD.

LEVITICUS 8:29 Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the LORD. It was Moses' portion of the ram of consecration, as the LORD commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 8:30 Moses took some of the anointing oil, and some of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, and on his sons, and on his sons' garments with him, and sanctified Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

Verse 30

And Moses took - the blood - and sprinkled it upon Aaron, etc. - Thus we find that the high priest himself must be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice; and our blessed Lord, of whom Aaron was a type, was sprinkled with his own blood.

1. In his agony in the garden.
 2. In his being crowned with thorns.
 3. In the piercing of his hands and his feet. And,
 4. In his side being pierced with the spear. All these were so many acts of atonement performed by the high priest.
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LEVITICUS 8:31 Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, "Boil the flesh at the door of the Tent of Meeting, and there eat it and the bread that is in the basket of consecration, as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it.'

LEVITICUS 8:32 What remains of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire.

LEVITICUS 8:33 You shall not go out from the door of the Tent of Meeting seven days, until the days of your consecration are fulfilled: for he shall consecrate you seven days.

Verse 33

For seven days shall he consecrate you - This number was the number of perfection among the Hebrews; and the seven days' consecration implied a perfect and full consecration to the sacerdotal office. See Clarke's note on Exo 29:30.

LEVITICUS 8:34 What has been done this day, so the LORD has commanded to do, to make atonement for you.

LEVITICUS 8:35 You shall stay at the door of the Tent of Meeting day and night seven days, and keep the LORD's command, that you don't die: for so I am commanded."

LEVITICUS 8:36 Aaron and his sons did all the things which the LORD commanded by Moses.

Verse 36

So Aaron and his sons did - This chapter shows the exact fulfillment of the commands delivered to Moses, Exodus 29; and consequently the complete preparation of Aaron and his sons to fill the awfully important office of priests and mediators between God and Israel, to offer sacrifices and make atonement for the sins of the people. "Thus," says Mr. Ainsworth, "the covenant of the priesthood was confirmed unto the tribe of Levi in Aaron and his sons, which covenant was life and peace, Mal 2:5. But these are made priests without an oath; also, there were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; and they served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, offering gifts and sacrifices which could not make him who did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience; for they were carnal ordinances imposed upon them till the time of reformation, that is, until the time of Christ, who was made a priest of God with an oath, and made surety of a better covenant established on better promises. And because he continueth for ever, he hath a priesthood which passeth not from one to another, and is a minister of the true tabernacle, which God pitched and not man. Not by the blood of bulls and of goats, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having found everlasting redemption for us; and is therefore able to save to the uttermost them who come unto God through him, as he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Taken in reference to his priesthood and sacrifice, all these rites and ceremonies are significant and edifying, but taken out of his relation, they would be as absurd and nugatory as the consecration of the Roman Pontifex Maximus, mentioned above by Prudentius.