

NEW TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD

Aaron and his sons typify Christ and believers of the Church Age. Aaron is a type of Christ as our High Priest. Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7) but he executes His priestly office after the pattern of Aaron (Heb. 9). See Genesis 14:18-20 (verse 18). Aaron's sons are a type of believer-priests of the Church Age (Rev. 1:6; cp. 1 Peter 2:9).

New Testament Priesthood

1. Until the law was given, the head of each family was the family priest. (Genesis 8:20; 26:25; 31:54)
2. When the law was proposed, the promise to perfect obedience was that Israel should be unto God “a kingdom of priests” (Ex. 19:6); but Israel violated the law, and God shut up the priestly office to the Aaronic family, appointing the tribe of Levi to minister to Israel, thus constituting the typical priesthood (Ex. 28:1).
3. In the Church Age, all Christians are unconditionally constituted a “kingdom of priests” (verse 9; Rev. 1:6), the distinction which Israel failed to achieve by works. The priesthood of the Christian is, therefore, a birthright, just as every descendant of Aaron was born to the priesthood (Hebrews 5:1).
4. The chief privilege of a priest is access to God. Under the law the high priest only could enter “the holiest of all”, and that but once a year (Heb. 9:7); but when Christ died, the veil, a type of Christ's human body (Heb. 10:20), was rent, so now the believer-priests, equally with Christ the High Priest, have access to God in the holiest (Heb. 10:19-22). The High Priest is corporeally there (Hebrews 4:14-16; 9:24; 10:19-22).
5. In the exercise of his office the New Testament believer-priest is:
 - a. a sacrificer who offers a four-fold sacrifice:
 - * his own living body (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6; James 1:27; 1 John 3:16);
 - * praise to God, “the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name,” to be offered continually (Heb. 13:15; cp. Ex. 25:22, “I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat”);
 - * his substance (Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:6, 10; Titus 3:14; Hebrews 3:2; 16:3; John 5 - 8); and
 - * his service, i.e., “to do good” (Hebrews 13:16).
 - b. The New Testament priest is also an intercessor (Col. 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:1).