

Exod 05-02-27b

Let's resume our study now in Exodus, where we are focusing on the function of the Levitical priest. You say, well, that was then, this is now, they're Levites, we're not, why do we need to know all of this? The reason is that, as with everything else in the law and in the Old Testament, it sheds light on you and me. We are supposed to be doing this function for ourselves.

There is no part of the Levitical priesthood that does not have an interpretation and application for us. If we arrive at the judgment seat of Christ, and the Lord Jesus looks deep into our eyes and says, Why did you not fulfill the function of your royal priesthood, the one that I died on the cross to give you? What will our response be? I was ignorant, I didn't know how it worked, I didn't understand its function or its purpose or the means, the motive or the opportunity. Why would that be? Because we did not look at the Word of God.

We didn't pay attention to the picture of our priesthood that is presented in the Levitical priesthood in particular, as we see it before us this morning. So this has a bearing. We have the opportunity to grow more fully into our role as the many brethren among whom Jesus is first born.

The Melchizedekian priests among whom the Lord Jesus is High Priest. And it's not just that we can be better priests or that we will know what we are doing. What is the purpose of priesthood? If you just step back and look at the whole thing, what is the purpose of priesthood? What does the word priest mean? Kohen, we talked about it last time.

K-O-H-E-N You've got people in entertainment with this name, Kohen, and elsewhere. But there are famous people with that last name. What does it mean? Well, I've told you many, many times.

You see, you all are going to be the equivalent. You'll be able to go and say, well, I can test out a first-year Hebrew. I already know a bunch of these things.

The O-E-N-fix, O-A-O-A, Kohen. What does that mean? It's an I-N-G word, so there must be a verb, Kohen. And there is a verb, although it doesn't occur in the Bible.

But it basically means to mediate, to priest, to function as a priest, to function as a leader or ruler or teacher in a priestly kind of way. By the way, there is another word in Hebrew related and derived from the same etymology, which is the noun for priesthood. Priest is Kohen.

Priesthood is kahuna. Now, you've heard of the big kahuna? It was a movie in 1999 with Danny DeVito and Kevin Spacey, I think. And, of course, it's a surfing term.

If you grew up in Southern California, you can't help but know about the kahuna. There are all kinds of surf shops up and down the coast of California, and I'm sure in Hawaii and elsewhere. And kahuna is derived from the Polynesian languages that prevailed in Hawaii, among others.

But, interestingly, kahuna means exactly the same thing in the Hawaiian language that it means in Hebrew. It means priest, master, expert, one who functions as a priest or master or expert in a teaching role. The big kahuna is the guy who knows the most about how to pipeline, how to surf the curl, how to hang ten, whatever you want to call it.

And, of course, it goes back. That's sort of a slang usage or a modern usage. It goes back to what it meant when Drake and the other guys showed up in Hawaii, and Queen Liliuokalani and the rest of them were talking all this Hawaiian talk.

One of the first things they figured out is the kahuna is the big cheese. That's the one to talk to. Well, kahuna means exactly the same in Hebrew as it does in the Polynesian family of languages.

It means priest, priesthood. Anyway, a little aside there for you, no charge. So, that's what we're looking at.

We're looking at the kahuna. We're looking at the priesthood. You are the kahuna, and you can say so with confidence in the order of Melchizedek.

Say, don't mess with me, I'm the big kahuna. Well, what were the high priest qualifications? We've already talked about no physical imperfections, visible or otherwise. How can you be offering lambs and other animals that are without spot and without blemish if you yourself are full of spots and blemishes? It doesn't work.

The whole symbolism of the priestly function is that of purity, and it is representative when they look at the priest. They don't see somebody that's got some horrible scar or abnormality because God demands perfection. This is the message.

God demands purity. And when we think about our approach to God, how many Christians today do you see and hear rushing in like a toddler with a leaky diaper, smiling and waving and saying, oh, isn't God great? That's not how God works. Now, Jesus said, Suffer the little ones to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of heaven.

But I'm telling you, the child that he sat on his knee was pure, was clean. He didn't grab one that was all crudded up and needed a change because the whole picture of innocence of a child is purity. We don't hold children accountable for what they don't know how to do, what they haven't learned yet.

And so, except you become as one of these, you're not going to be able to function. Well, innocence, they put a picture of a child in the dictionary next to innocence, don't they, so to speak. I mean, we assume children to be innocent and not guilty and laden with, and freighted with this sort of impurity.

Well, the idea is we ought to know. It's one of the first things we learn. Change of mind, away from works of death, faith toward God, washings.

Washings is one of the first things we learn when you go there to Hebrews chapter 6. So, that's what we're looking at. The high priest has to represent purity. No issue in terms of whatever scars and bumps and bruises and breaks and I'm always reminded in this regard of the white cat that Patty had when we got married and that poor guy, as time went along, kept losing more and more of his body parts.

You know, something would go wrong and they'd chop it out and something else would go wrong and they'd cut it off. And if the end of his tail got infected, chop it off. You know, the plumbing wasn't working right, chop it out.

Sex change operation. I mean, the poor guy, by the time he got to the end of his life, there was hardly anything left of him. And, you know, you can fill in your own Monty Python-esque pictures of knights trying to defend things.

But the whole idea is that the picture is completeness, wholeness, perfection, ability to function. That's the picture. And the physical in the Old Testament represents the spiritual in the New.

You and I have no excuse for hopping in before God on one leg. You and I have no excuse for coming before God impure, unclean, unsprinkled, unwashed. We know better.

We've got an entire Bible telling us that God has made the clothing of salvation and righteousness available. All you have to do is put on the new man. Put on the new man.

Present yourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This is your reasonable service, Romans 12, 1 and 2. Holy and acceptable. It's your reasonable service.

It's a doable thing. It's not hard. So, when this priesthood was initiated, you have the design.

You have the outline, the pattern. You have the clothing designated and the qualifications designated. When you get to go a chapter forward in Exodus, chapter 29, verse 4. Once this is done, Aaron separates from his sons in verse 5 of chapter 29.

Take the garments, put the tunic on Aaron, the robe of the ephod, the ephod and the breastplate. Gird him with the intricately woven band of the ephod. You shall put the turban on his head.

Put the holy crown on the turban. What does the holy crown say? Holy to the Lord. Who reads that sign? God.

Right? That's from his perspective. Take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him. Then you shall bring his sons and put tunics on them.

Is this accidental? The order? High priest first, then the sons. The Lord Jesus Christ is our high priest first, then us. Gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons.

Put the hats on them. The priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute. So you shall

consecrate Aaron and his sons.

How many times did Moses do this? Echad. In Hebrew. Once.

One time. In Arabic it's wahad. Their languages are so similar.

When I learned the numbers in Arabic when I was over there doing artillery. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. What does that sound like? Wahad is the same as echad.

One. Numero uno. Aleph.

One time Moses consecrates the high priest. One time he soaps them down. He washes them with water.

I say soap. He cleanses them with water. Moses does that once.

Does he ever do it again? No. Never again. It's a one time commission by Moses.

After that, who purifies the priests? They do it themselves, don't they? They go to the labor. They cleanse themselves. Moses does it once.

They do it ever after. Moses anoints them once and they are a perpetual priesthood. But their daily cleansing is their own responsibility.

It is not difficult to see the application for us, is it? We are saved once. And after that, we acknowledge our sins. And he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

You're saved once. After that, your cleansing, your daily washing, your restoration to purity, your sprinkling of the heart, your cleansing of the body is your responsibility. You don't just lay there and say, well, when is Moses going to come along and sprinkle me and anoint me again? We do it.

It's our job. So, Aaron is arrayed in these beautiful garments. He gets his golden plate.

Holy to the Lord. Holy to Yahweh. This is the signet, the mark of his high priesthood.

It is unique to him. There is only one of these in Israel. There is one mediator between God and men.

The man, Christ Jesus. One holy to the Lord plate. Psalm 133, the psalm after the one we looked at this morning for our Scripture reading, verse 2, once Moses pours the oil on Aaron's head, he's the high priest forever.

When Moses gets around to dedicating the tabernacle, he's going to sprinkle the oil. He dips his fingers in it and just flecks all of the other things, anoints them, commissions them, starts up the function of tabernacle worship. But when it comes to Aaron, he doesn't sprinkle him.

He pours it. He pours the oil on him. There is an abundance, a superfluity of oil on Aaron.

And how many verses can you look at in Isaiah and elsewhere where it talks about the anointed one. The anointing of God is upon me. Jesus himself reads this passage in the synagogue when he says, I'm here to preach the gospel to the poor and so on.

He says, the anointing is upon me. This is the pouring of the oil. There is no lack of oil.

It is poured out. It's not just sprinkled. Psalm 133, 2, it is like the precious oil upon the head running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron running down the edge of his garments.

This is a lot of oil. It's not a little, you know, you see these little anointings. I saw an anointing once.

I can't remember. It was Greek Orthodox or something. Somebody had a little tiny, and you would have thought it was Chanel No.

5 or something. You know, a little drop, and just a little greasy spot on the top of the head. Oh, you're anointed.

This is a big jug of oil, and it's poured. Look at it. Running down the beard.

Aaron didn't cut his beard. He's got this great, you know, just like you see in the movies, big, full beard. Running down the beard.

Running down on the edge of his garments. He's doused. Why is this important? Well, the Holy Spirit is not given by measure.

The Holy Spirit is a limitless source of power. He is the seal upon us of our redemption. He is the seal unto the day of redemption.

He is the mark of God's ownership, and it's not like you've got to look hard, and if you really... Oh, I see. Here's a little greasy spot. You do have the Holy Spirit.

He is poured out. So, you have the anointing of the high priest. Then you have the offering of the sacrifice, beginning in 29.10. You shall also have the bull brought before the tabernacle of meeting.

Aaron and his son shall put their hands on the head of the bull. Now, this is something that the offerers are going to do ever after, right? You come and you bring your sacrifice. You put your hand on the head.

There's this picture of transfer of guilt. I committed the sin. I lay my hand on the head of the bull.

Identification. What does the laying on of hands symbolize, even in the New Testament? Paul tells Timothy, you received your commission as a pastor by the laying on of hands. It's

identification.

The apostles lay hands on you. The elders lay hands on you. Identify with you.

Transfer to you authority and commission and approval. There is deep significance in the laying on of hands. You also have in Isaiah, the hand of the Lord is upon me to preach, commission, authority, transfer of identity in a sense.

Bring before the tabernacle of meeting. Aaron and his son shall put their hands on the head of the bull. Then you shall kill the bull before the Lord by the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

Now, all of you have learned attention to detail in reading the Scriptures, right? How does this bull die, that Aaron and his sons have their hands on its head? How does it die? Who's the priest? Aaron's a high priest. His sons are the priests. They're anointed.

They're cleansed. They're dressed. They're standing there.

They've got their heads on the bull. Who kills the bull? Moses. Moses kills the bull.

How many bulls is Moses going to kill in the future? None. But the first bull, Moses kills. Who is Moses representing in this picture? Who is the true ruler of Israel? God the Father, is he not? As Moses officiates in the commissioning and the sanctifying and the anointing and the offering of sacrifice to get this priesthood started, Moses represents the function of God the Father, doesn't he? Who took the life of the Lord Jesus on the cross? Jesus said, No man takes my life from me.

I give it. Well, He gave it. Who took it? God the Father.

How was that high priestly Melchizedekian identity obtained by the Lord Jesus Christ? It was assigned to Him by God the Father. Who accepted the sacrifice on the part of the Lord Jesus? God the Father. Whose foreordained plan and purpose was fulfilled at the cross? God the Father.

God designates the priests. God sets it up. It is the work of God.

And that's what you see here when Moses slays the bull. It's probably, to my knowledge, it's the last sacrifice Moses ever offers because now you've got Aaron and his sons. Kill the bull before the Lord by the door of the tabernacle meeting.

You shall take, talking to Moses, you shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger and pour all the blood beside the base of the altar. You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and burn them on the altar. But the flesh of the bull with its skin and its offal you shall burn with fire outside the camp.

It is a sin offering. Outside the camp it is a sin offering. Outside the camp it is a sin offering.

What is it that goes outside the camp as a sin offering? The flesh. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He was crucified outside the camp.

Right? Two parts of the sacrifice. Part of it inside the camp at the door of the tabernacle. Part of it outside the camp burned with fire.

What does burning with fire represent always in scripture? Judgment. Divine judgment. Part of the sacrifice is holy and acceptable and goes up at the door of the tabernacle in the presence of God.

Part of it is burned outside the camp as a sin offering. Highly significant. You can sit and meditate on that for a long time.

The comparison. The direct foreshadowing of what is going to take place at the cross. But the flesh of the bull with its skin and its offal you shall burn with fire outside the camp.

It is a sin offering. You shall also take one ram and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram and you shall kill the ram. Now, we started out with a bull.

Now we have a ram. Why the two different animals? Why not in reverse order? What is the symbolism of bull versus ram? You remember the faces of the cherubim? What are they? Face of a lion? Face of a bull? Face of a man? Face of an eagle, right? Is there any ram's face in there? There isn't. Why? There is a bull face.

Why? What is the symbolism of the ox who pulls the plow, who pulls the carts, who does the heaviest work? The heaviest work in Israel that a man can't do is done by what? The ox. He pulls the cart. What's bigger than an ox in the economy of Israel? This is the John Deere tractor of the ancient world, isn't it? That's where you get your heavy lifting, your heavy pulling, your heaviest jobs are done.

He's a picture of strength. He's a picture of strength. What is the symbolism of the ram? One of the first places in the Bible that you even see a ram.

Abraham up on top of what will be Mount Zion. Isaac on the altar. The knife is raised.

God stops him. What happens next? There is a ram caught with its horns in the thicket and that becomes the sacrifice. What is the picture of the ram? Substitution.

Substitution. Strength is the bull. Substitution is the ram.

Very clear picture for those in the ancient world. Very clear picture for us. So the first sacrifice is pictured in the bull.

It is the strength. It is the flesh, that muscle that makes things happen. That goes on the altar.

That is burned outside the camp. The blood is at the altar. The life of the flesh is in the blood.

But the flesh, the muscle, the strength, burned outside the camp as an offering. How much human strength is involved in salvation? Zero. God judges human effort.

It is consumed. It is burned with fire outside the camp. It is not the flesh.

It is not the body. It is not humanity in its strength that accomplishes salvation. It is the life.

It is the blood. It is the acceptable sacrifice inside the camp at the door of the altar. So the second sacrifice then is the ram.

Aaron and his sons first identify with the bull. It is not my strength that makes me a great priest. It is not my human effort that makes my priesthood function.

That gets carried out and burned. Secondly, in order for me to function as a priest, somebody has to be my substitute. Someone has to take my place.

And the idea is substitution. Take one ram. Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram.

By the way, you remember the... well, I'll talk about that later. You shall kill the ram and you shall take its blood and sprinkle it all around on the altar. Then you shall cut the ram in pieces, wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and with its head, and you shall burn the whole ram on the altar.

How much of the ram is taken outside the camp? This is what I started to say and I realize I need to read you the passage first and then tell you what it means. Burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord.

It is a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord. Now the work of Christ is pictured entirely in the ram. All of that is acceptable to God.

It's all burned right there on the altar before the Lord. It is a sweet aroma. Now, I don't know if you've ever smelled burning flesh, burning hair, burning wool.

What's a ram covered with? Does it say skin the ram? Just chop them up and put them on. Have you smelled burning wool? How good does that smell? To God, it is a sweet aroma. Have you ever come back because you forgot something was in the oven and the roast is shriveled to a tiny... That's never happened in our house, of course, but I have heard that food can burn on a stove or in an oven.

How good does that smell? How good does that smell? Well, you know, burning flesh, burning hair, burning wool is offensive to human nostrils. This passage says it is a sweet aroma to the Lord. A sweet aroma.

It has nothing to do with the physical sensation of smell, does it? It has everything to do with the acceptability of the sacrifice. And because of that substitutionary sacrifice and the laying on

of hands of Aaron and his sons, they are now acceptable. They are now qualified.

Human strength burned outside the camp. Work of the substitutionary sacrifice is complete and acceptable in God's sight. Anything imperfect, anything impure, anything unacceptable has been transferred by the laying on of hands and up it goes in smoke.

It is sweet to the Lord. You shall also take the other ram, verse 19, Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram. You shall kill the ram, take some of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.

You shall take some of the blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron. Let's talk about this blood that comes from the slain ram, the second ram. Now, why two rams? These rams seem to be identical, don't they? There's no distinction.

There's not one white ram and one black ram. They are two rams. It reminds us of the birds that are involved in the purification of the leper in Leviticus 14.

You have two birds. You break them open. You take the blood of the one that you have broken open, the one bird, and it drops into a bowl of living water.

And that mixture of blood and water, you dip the second living bird into and you turn him loose. And they are, in essence, the same bird. This is a bird that has died.

The bird that is alive is identified with the first bird by the blood, and yet he lives. It's a picture of death and resurrection. It's, in essence, two birds representing a single bird.

You can't actually kill the bird and have it be raised every time a leper is cleansed. So this is a picture. It's a picture of a bird that sacrifices its life and yet it lives.

Here you have a ram that is slain and offered as an acceptable sacrifice to God. Then you have the second ram whose blood is used for identification, for sanctification, for purification, and an ongoing reminder. So that blood that comes directly from the ram, notice where the blood comes from here.

In verse 20, You shall kill the ram, take some of its blood, and put it on the ear, the thumb, and the big toe. This comes straight from the ram. Earlobe, thumb, and toe.

We've talked about this in times past. It's not difficult to figure out what this is talking about. Blood of sacrifice purifies.

So we're purifying the ear. Why are we purifying the ear? To be an effective priest, to be a functional priest, to be an acceptable priest, your ear has to be sanctified. This is what do I listen to.

Conceivably, you could make the same point by putting it in their eyes. But for practical

reasons, this doesn't work too well. You can't splatter their eyes with blood.

So you put it on the ear. This is an intake gate. This is one of our major gates of intake, is the ear.

So what is the picture? A priest must be careful about what he hears, about what he listens to. What do you accept as reality? What do you accept as fact? What do you accept as a valid premise in life? What do you allow yourself to listen to? Blood on the earlobe. It better be sanctified.

Don't pollute your ear that has been sanctified with the blood of sacrifice. Blood on the thumb. Your hand is pretty well useless without the thumb.

Remember the whole thing where the king was going to cut off the thumbs and the toes? Back in the days of Saul, over across the river, they came appealing to Saul for help. The guy says he's going to gouge out our eyes, he's going to cut off our thumbs, he's going to cut off our toe. And ultimately, this king who did that ends up having that fate himself.

Your hand doesn't function without a thumb. This is supposedly the opposing thumb. It's one of the things that distinguishes man and the evolutionary model made us what we are today is that we accidentally got a thumb.

Why sanctify the thumb? It represents the hand, which represents what you do. What comes into your soul ought to be sanctified. Don't take in things that are not pure.

Don't listen to impurity. Do not walk in the way of the ungodly or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of the scornful. Ungodliness, sin, and scorn are attitudes that you absorb from material.

It doesn't mean that you've got to stop your ears any time you hear somebody saying unholy. It means don't accept it. Don't take it in and treat it as fact.

Don't make it an object of faith. Don't make it a premise for your thinking. Incorporate it as a part of your worldview.

What you take in is sanctified. Your thumb is what you do. This is application.

This is how I operate in the world. I take in what is pure and I do what is pure. My hand has been sanctified.

I touch not the unclean thing. And then the toe is my walk. Peripateo is the word that's used over in Ephesians for our walk.

Walk worthy of the Lord. My feet are washed. My feet are sanctified.

So this is the dipping of the blood. It comes directly from the ram. So the idea is because of the

sacrifice these things ought to be pure.

When I think about why should I pay attention to what I listen to or what I do or how I walk in life I look at the cross. I look at the sacrifice of Christ. Now, verse 21 this same blood has been put on the altar.

Right? Up in verse 19 Take the other ram. Aaron and his sons put their heads on the head. You shall kill the ram.

Take some of its blood. Put on the tip of the right ear, thumb of the right hand, big toe of the right foot and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. It's the same blood that goes in two directions.

Part of it goes on the priests. Part of it goes on the altar. Then he says take some of the blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and on his garments on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him.

He and his garments shall be hallowed and his sons and his sons' garments with him. Why not the same source of blood that sanctified the ear and the thumb and the toe? This blood has gone on the altar. Now it comes off the altar is mixed with anointing oil and is sprinkled.

What does this represent? We think our way through it. Well, first of all, it has been on the altar which means it is identified with sacrifice with acceptability. The altar achieves acceptability.

It is the place of sacrifice. This blood has been there. It comes off the altar and gets mixed with anointing oil.

So, this is a sanctified calling. This is a sanctified commissioning. This is looking at the sacrifice not from the standpoint of propitiation, not from the standpoint of now I have been made acceptable by a substitutionary sacrifice, but because of that sacrifice, what is the result? Based on that, you look at it directly when you daub the ear, the thumb and the toe.

But you look at it in terms of how does my priesthood function? This is the effect on me. I myself have to be pure in what I hear, what I do and how I walk. That's me personally.

That's my ear, that's my thumb, that's my foot. I have my ear, my thumb and my foot no matter what I'm doing. I might be in the tabernacle precincts.

I might be at home. All of my life, anything pertaining to my life, when I'm at home in my tent with my family, when I'm out in the market buying groceries, when I am doing whatever Levites do when they're not officiating, I still have the sanctified ear, thumb and toe. But when you take the blood off the altar which belongs to the tabernacle, you mix it with the anointing oil that commissions me to function in the tabernacle, and you sprinkle it on my garments which I wear when I am working in the tabernacle, this is a little bit different thing, isn't it? It's not just me personally.

This is my official function as a priest that is now in view. And the same sacrifice that makes me personally accountable for holiness makes me professionally accountable for holiness in the function of my priesthood. You see the difference? Anointing oil, garments, altar is all different than earlobe, thumb and toe, right? One is personal and individual.

The other is my office, the function of my priesthood. So that's why you have this second sprinkling and anointing. Remember the tabernacle gets sprinkled and not doused? The individual has the oil poured on his head, but the function of priesthood in a secondary way is sprinkled.

So are the priests as priests, their garments as priestly garments, sprinkled. It's a secondary kind of commissioning. It doesn't seem to be as deep, as dousing as the individual thing.

It's me first, then my function. I am doused. My function is sprinkled, right? What does Jesus say in the upper room when He's washing the disciples' feet and He gets to Peter? Peter says, Oh Lord, you're not going to wash my feet.

Jesus says, If I don't wash your feet, you have no meros with me. No portion with me. Peter says, Well, if it's a matter of the meros, then give me a bath.

Douse me. Jesus says, You don't need a dousing. You've already been doused.

You need a sprinkling. You need a partial cleansing. And as I do for you, you should do for one another.

There's a difference in a bath and a light washing, washing of the feet. In the same way, there's a difference in the commissioning that takes place at salvation when we are anointed with the Holy Spirit and we enter into the royal priesthood and the sprinkling, which is an ongoing necessity for cleansing and qualification for function. That's what's in view here.

Take this blood that is on the altar and the anointing oil. Sprinkle it on Aaron on his garments, his sons on their garments. He and his garments shall be hallowed, his sons and his sons' garments with him.

These are the garments of priesthood. You are a holy people. You are a holy priesthood.

They are not synonymous. Also, verse 22, take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, two kidneys and the fat on them, the right thigh, for it is a ram of consecration, one loaf of bread, one cake made with oil, one wafer from the basket of the unleavened bread that is before the Lord. And you shall put these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and you shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord.

You shall receive them back from their hands and burn them on the altar as a burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before the Lord. It is an offering made by fire to the Lord. What is going on with

that? Well, let's break it down.

Take it one element at a time. Take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, and the right thigh. All of these are fat elements.

What is fat? What does fat represent? If you're having a really, really bad year in an agricultural economy, how much fat is there going to be on your rams? It's going to be like going down here to Kroger. The only thing you can buy anymore in the butcher area of the grocery is lean meat. You go down there and you say, I want to get me a nice big rib eye.

I want to grill it. I want it to have flavor. I want it to be dripping with that wonderful goodness that comes from the fat that surrounds.

And of course, you know, it's unhealthy as all get-outs. You can stop your heart in no time. But if you want a good tasting steak, it needs marbling.

If you want a good roast, it needs marbling for the flavor. If you want to eat healthy, you have to forego the flavor and say, well, I'm going to eat this and be a good steward of my body. And that's great.

But my point here is, fat represents prosperity. Fat represents blessing. I will give to you of the fat of the land.

This is my cup runneth over. Goodness and mercy follow me all the days of my life. My cup runs over.

I've got a super abundance. I've got enough to keep me healthy and I've got enough to get fat. It's a picture.

It's not a health recommendation. It's a picture. Fat in that picture is good.

It is abundance. It is a sign of blessing from God that your stock and your flocks and herds are fat. They have more than enough to eat.

More than is probably good for them or good for you. Fat all over the place. Fat, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the fatty lobe attached to the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them.

The kidneys, in the King James translated, the reins is the seat of emotion in ancient thinking. Emotion in a good sense. Emotion in the sense of appreciation.

You look at a beautiful sunset, sometimes you can almost bring tears to your eyes. You look and appreciate what God has done. God is good.

It's like when you're in uniform and you hear the national anthem and the colors go by. You swell with appreciation. It is something that happens inside you.

That's what the kidneys represent and the fat that surrounds them. This is appreciation and understanding of the goodness of God, the superfluous blessing that he heaps upon us. The fat, the best.

Also, this has an idea of the very best. This is the best of the sacrifice. The fat tail, it's hard for us to understand, but this is sort of like the brisket or the delectable portion.

The most coveted part if you were going to have a meal. These are the parts that have the flavor. These are the parts that you don't necessarily eat the kidneys.

But the fat, the fatty tail and the right thigh, which is a representation both of the strength of the animal and a really good cut of meat. With a loaf of bread, a cake made with oil and a wafer from the basket of unleavened bread that is before the Lord, what does the unleavened bread represent? Unleavened. No sin.

It's all perfect and acceptable. This is not flesh that's burned outside the camp. This is flesh that is acceptable.

This is unleavened. The bread, Jesus said, the bread represents my flesh. Take, eat.

This is my body which is broken for you. But it's a perfect body. It's an unleavened body.

It's holy and acceptable to God. All of this is taken. This is God's meal.

This is God's meal. This is the table setting for God. He gets the best.

He gets the fat. He gets the fatty tail. He gets the right thigh.

Aaron and his priests wave this before Him. How do you offer a first fruit sacrifice? Wave it before the Lord. It is the best.

I will not give my sickly animal to the Lord. I give Him the best. I don't bring the lame and the blind.

I bring the best. David says, I'm not going to bring that to God which costs me nothing. It is the best.

That's what God deserves, is the best. This is God's table setting. This is God's portion.

Moses brings it together. He hands it to Aaron and the priests. They wave it before the Lord.

He brings it back. And it's sent to God. It's like one of those tubes at the bank.

You get the little thing. You put your stuff in it. Put it in there.

Push the button. The door closes. Up it goes.

And over to the bank teller. Well, the altar is our end of that tube. And the other end is in

heaven.

And when you put something on the altar and burn it with fire, up the tube it goes. And God opens it at the other end. So you prepare God's meal.

You wave it before Him and demonstrate that it is acceptable and that you have been obedient. Then you put it in there and you push the button. And up it goes.

And smoke. Holy and acceptable to the Lord. Offering made by fire.

Well, what's the point here? This is God's portion. As soon as you are made acceptable, as soon as you are sanctified, the first thing you do is render to God the things that are God's. It is the best.

This is fascinating to look back upon when you get to the story of Saul and his commissioning as king of Israel. What does Samuel do with Saul when he comes to the city? Are we done? He gives him the portion of the sacrifice that belongs to God to see what he will do with it. Saul just chows down.

This is what we don't want to do. This is a bad foot to step onto if you are beginning your service before the Lord. Well, this is what we are going to have to close for this morning.

But there is plenty to think about, isn't there? Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the privilege of studying your Word together. We ask that God the Holy Spirit will illuminate us, help us to see the application of these truths in the function of our own priesthood before you.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.