

## Liturgy in the Kingdom of God.

Heb 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Heb 8:2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Heb 8:3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

Heb 8:4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

Heb 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Heb 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Luk 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

Luk 1:6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Luk 1:7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

Luk 1:8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

Luk 1:9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

Luk 1:10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Luk 1:11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Luk 1:23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

Act 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Act 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

In the Greek texts of the above, forms of the word leitourgias are used, which are translated in the English as minister, ministration and ministry. Although liturgy is now used in English in a newer sense of religious rite and ritual, at the time of writing the above the word meant to be engaged in public service, performing a particular function in the service of the people, especially in relation to God.

As a member of the priestly family, Zacharias was in the appointed place, at the appointed time, performing his appointed task, to God for the people of God.

In the course of this a messenger from God came and gave him a prophecy concerning the role of his yet to be born son, John.

In the Kingdom of heaven Jesus has obtained a greater ministry, service for the people of God, than the first high priest had.

At Antioch, those with the Holy Spirit appointed offices of prophet and teacher were offering their service to the Lord, with fasting, when the Holy Spirit give instruction and prophecy concerning Barnabas and Saul.

Please don't take this as a formula, but there are lessons we can learn from the above.

Firstly; office, public service to God on behalf of the people of God, is an ongoing feature of the Kingdom of heaven. Jesus of Nazareth being the great, eternal High Priest and those appointed by the Holy Spirit, in the place appointed by the Holy Spirit, at the time appointed by the Holy Spirit.

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Just as the priest Zacharias was at his appointed place, at his appointed time, performing his appointed duty to God for the people, so Jesus is at His appointed place, at the right hand of the Father, in this, the acceptable time, performing His office of mediator to the Father on our behalf. In similar fashion, the prophets and teachers in Antioch were in the presence of God, on behalf of the people of God, performing their particular service.

We can learn that in the Kingdom there is order and purpose.

Every one born into the Kingdom through repentance and faith the Lord Jesus Christ is ordained, appointed, a royal priest to God.

Not freelance, self-employed 'mystics'.

Not mere consumers of religious 'treats',

A child of the King has duties and responsibilities as well as immense privileges, grace and liberty. 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light'.

Those in Antioch turned up for duty. They devoted themselves to the Lord's service.

If we will take our duty seriously, and wait upon the Lord, prepared to serve the people of God in whatever service is appointed to us by the Holy Spirit, who knows what greater works we shall do?

Faith in the Lord Jesus is an action, not a 'position'.

Fasting means letting some things go in order to devote time to waiting upon the Lord.

Casual just won't do it. We can however be earnest and relaxed in Jesus!

Have we been robbed of a vision of 'the prize'?

Are we sleeping in comfort instead of rising while it is yet dark?

Satan sings us soothing lullabies (some with good ol' gospel tunes) and tucks us up.

Awake o Zion, come, cloth yourself in strength.

If we draw near to God, He will surely draw near to us.

Jer 30:19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

Jer 30:20 Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.

Jer 30:21 And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD.

Jer 30:22 And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

We are a most highly privileged people, the redeemed of the Lord.

Let's not be robbed of the opportunity we have, today, if we hear His voice, to take up our priesthood and live in His presence, in His service.

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