

**God's Unchanging Purpose –
to Have a Kingdom of Priests, a Holy Nation**
(Ex. 19:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Is. 61:6; Rom. 12:1;
Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6)

I. God's plan and calling is irrevocable

(Rom. 11:29; Num. 23:19; Mal. 3:6; Is. 46:9-10; Rev. 1:4, 8)

II. In the beginning, God made man in His image and likeness

(Gen. 1:26a, 27; 5:1; 9:1-6)

A. To express the glory of God (1 Cor. 11:7; 1 Tim. 3:16;

Rom. 3:2; Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3a; Jn. 1:18; 14:9)

B. To have dominion over all His creation (Gen. 1:26; 9:1-2;

Ps. 2:1-9; Ps. 8:3-9; Heb. 2:5-10)

1. God has given Christ dominion, glory, and the kingdom

(Dan. 7:14; Eph. 1:20-23; Rev. 5:5-10)

2. The saints also will inherit the kingdom forever and ever

(Dan. 7:18, 22, 27)

C. By partaking of the tree of life and the water of life

(Gen. 2:9-12; Ps. 46:4; Rev. 22:1-2, 14, 17)

1. Jesus Christ, the Word of God, is the eternal life

(Jn. 1:1, 4; 14-17; 6:27, 35, 40-41, 47-51; 10:10; 14:6)

2. The Spirit of the Lord is the water of life (Jn. 4:10-14;

7:37-39) – the smitten rock (1 Cor. 10:4)

III. God's purpose in bringing His people out of Egypt (Ex. 19:4-6)

A. To make them His special treasure above all people

B. To make them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation

1. He has chosen Zion (the earthly Jerusalem)

a. the city of the great King (Ps. 48:2; Ps. 47)

b. The city of the appointed feasts (Is. 33:20)

2. Appointing Aaron and his sons to minister to Him as
priests (Ex. 28:1; Num. 18:7)

3. Warning to the priests to serve acceptably with honor
and godly fear (Lev. 10:1-2; Heb. 12:28-29)

- C. The vision of the golden lampstand in Zechariah Chapter 4
 - 1. The lampstand – represents the rebuilding of God's house (temple) in Jerusalem by those who returned
 - 2. Led by Zerubbabel and Joshua – representing the kingship and the priesthood
 - 3. Christ, whose name is the "branch" – He is both the King and the Great High Priest (Zech. 6:11-15)

IV. In the age of the New Covenant – the fulfillment of God's plan revealed in the Holy Scriptures

(Col. 2:12-17; Heb. 8:4-5; 10:1)

- A. The coming of the kingdom of the heavens (Mt. 3:2; 4:17)
- B. The church built by Christ is the kingdom of the heavens (Mt. 16:18-19; 18:18)
 - 1. Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God (Heb. 12:22-24, 28-29)
 - a. With Christ as the chief cornerstone (1 Pet. 2:7)
 - b. Rejected by man, but chosen by God and precious (1 Pet. 2:4)
 - 2. Being built up with living transformed stones to a spiritual house, a holy and royal priesthood, a holy nation, a special people and to be the golden lampstands (1 Pet. 2:5-9)
 - a. With Jesus Christ as the glorious, great heavenly High Priest (Heb. 4:14) according to the order of Melchizedek
 - i. King of righteousness and King of peace (Heb. 7:2-3, 16-17, 21, 26-28; Jer. 23:5)
 - ii. Making constant intercession for us before God the Father in the heavens
 - iii. To save us to the uttermost by His life
 - b. As the Son of Man walking in the midst of the golden lampstands (Rev. 1-3)
 - 3. A festal gathering
 - 4. An unshakeable kingdom

- C. In the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:5b-6; 5:10; 2:26-27; 3:21; 12:5; 19:11-16; 20:4, 6; 22:1-5)
 - 1. The consummation of God's plan with man
 - 2. The holy city, New Jerusalem – God's tabernacle with man
 - a. Having the glory of God
 - b. The throne of God and of the Lamb in its center
 - c. With the pure river of water of life and the tree of life
 - 3. His servants will serve Him as priests
 - 4. They shall reign forever and ever

V. The priesthood is God's covenant with Levi (Mal. 2:1-9)

- A. The priesthood is mentioned right after the instructions concerning the tabernacle (Ex. 27-28)
- B. God's covenant with Levi <the priests> must continue
 - 1. A covenant of life and peace
 - 2. Serving acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Mal. 1:6-10; Heb. 12:28; Is. 11:1-5)
 - 3. Perfecting holiness and godliness
 - a. Pursuing peace and holiness (1 Pet. 1:13-17)
 - b. Perfecting holiness in the fear of God – being sanctified completely (Heb. 12:5-11, 14; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 7:1; 1 Th. 5:22-24, 27; Eph. 1:4; 5:25-27; 2 Pet. 3:10-11, 14)
 - 4. Being saved to the uttermost – to full maturity
 - a. By his life (Rom. 5:10; Rom. 8; Eph. 4:12-15; Col. 1:28; Heb. 6:1; Rev. 14:1-5)
 - b. Being conformed and transformed into the glorious image of Jesus Christ (Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:28-30; 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:14-18)
 - 5. The Lord (Who is coming) is like a refiner's fire and launderers' soap (Mal. 3:1-4; Zech. 13:9)

VI. The consecration of the priests (Ex. 28-29; Lev. 8)

- A. The meaning of "consecration"

1. *qâdash* – to set apart <separated, prepared, dedicated, holy> (Ex. 29:1)

2. *millû'* מלא – to fill the hand (Ex. 29:22-24)

B. The holy priestly garments – for glory and beauty

1. To put off the old man and to put on the new man, Christ (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:21-24ff.; Col. 3:10-12ff.; Is. 61:10; Job 29:14; Ps. 132:9; Rev. 19:8)

2. The holy garments for Aaron (the high priest) – a type of Christ as the heavenly great High Priest (Ex. 28:2-39)

3. For the sons of Aaron – type of all of us as priests (Heb. 2:13, 17; Is. 8:18) – the garments are simpler – coats, girdles, hats, and trousers, all of fine linen (Ex. 28:40-43)

4. That they do not incur iniquity and die (see also: Mt. 22:12-13)

C. The ceremony of consecration (Ex. 29; Lev. 8)

1. The priests must first be washed with water

2. One young bull for sin offering – a strong sin offering

3. Two rams without blemish; one for a burnt offering, the other one for consecration

4. Unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil

5. For seven days (Ex. 29:35; Lev. 8:33-35)

VII. The ministry of the priests (Ezek. 44:17-31)

A. The requirement to put on the priestly garments (Heb. 10:19-23)

B. Bringing the best of the offerings to God (Mal. 1:8; Lev. 22:19-25; Deut. 15:21)

C. Priests are the messengers of the Lord of Hosts (Is. 6:1-8; Mal. 2:6-7)

1. The lips of a priest should keep knowledge

2. The law of truth must be in his mouth

3. No injustice should be found on his lips

4. He must walk with God in peace and equity
 5. And turn many away from iniquity
 6. They should be ministers of the New Covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3 & 4)
- D. The priest should not shave his head nor let his hair grow long, but keep his hair well-trimmed
 - E. No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court
 - F. Concerning the marriage of the priests (Ezek. 44:22)
 - G. In controversy they shall judge according to God's judgment
 - H. They shall not be defiled by death (see Num. 19)
 - I. God will be their inheritance
 - J. They will eat from the offerings and every dedicated thing in Israel – they should not eat anything that died naturally or was torn by wild beasts

VIII. The most precious service of the priest as portrayed in the case of Zadok (Ezek. 44:15-17)

- A. Those who remain faithful to Him in contrast to those who were unfaithful (Ezek. 44:12-13; 22:26; e.g. Eliakim and Shebna in Is. 22:15-17, 19-24)
- B. Coming near to God to minister to Him in His presence
 1. To come near His table to offer to Him the fat and the blood (Lev. 3:16-17; Ezek. 41:22; 44:7; Mal. 1:7)
 2. Being faithful in all of God's house (Heb. 3:1-6)
- C. Keeping charge of all the holy things in the sanctuary: in the holy place and the most holy place (Ezek. 44:13)

IX. The ashes of the red heifer (Num. 19) – the unique process of purification for uncleanness (defilement) incurred by touching death (a dead body)

- A. Death is the worst of all defilement (Rom. 5-8; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 26; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19; Heb. 9:13-14; Rev. 3:1-6) - See pts. VII-H & J
- B. The background of Num. 19
 1. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num. 16)

2. Aaron's rod that budded (Ex. 7:12; Num. 17:6-10)
- C. The sacrifice of the red heifer:
 1. Bring a red heifer without blemish or defect, on which a yoke has never come (Num. 19:2)
 - a. A heifer is female – bringing forth life (like the name Eve in Gen. 3:20)
 - i. Different from the bull (male) of the sin offering
 - ii. The red heifer is also referred to as an “offering for sin” (Num. 19:9) because sin is closely related to death (Rom. 5:12; 6:23a)
 - b. Young and perfect, and has never been under a yoke (Lev. 22:19-20; Num. 19:2)
 - c. Fully bright red in color – not signifying the cleansing blood, but the fulness of life, fresh and vigorous (Lev. 17:14)
 - d. A perfect type of Jesus
- D. Eleazer the priest must take the heifer “outside the camp” and it must be slaughtered before him – another sign pointing to Jesus being sacrificed as the red heifer (Heb. 13:12; Num. 19:3)
 1. He must sprinkle the blood seven times toward the front of the tabernacle of meeting (v. 4)
 2. The heifer must be totally burned before him: skin, flesh, blood, with her dung (v. 5)
 3. Cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet must be cast into the midst of the fire burning the heifer * (v. 6)
- E. Eleazer the priest, the one who burns the heifer, and the one who gathers the ashes, shall wash their clothes in water, bathe in water, and shall be unclean until evening (vv. 7-10)
- F. The ashes of the heifer shall be stored outside the camp in a clean place (v. 9)
- G. Any person who touches a dead body shall be unclean seven days (v. 11)

1. He shall purify himself with the water of purification on the third and on the seventh day; then he will be clean (v. 12)
2. If not, he will remain unclean and be cut off from Israel (v. 13)

H. Various laws and statutes regarding the purification process (vv. 14-22)

X. The signs of the times announcing God's judgment

(Mt. 16:3)

A. In heaven

1. Judgment on Egypt (Ezek. 32:7-8)
2. Judgment on Babylon (Is. 13:10)
3. Judgment on Nineveh (Am. 8:9 – Amos being a contemporary of Jonah)
4. During the crucifixion of Jesus (Lk. 23:44-45a)
5. At the opening of the 6th seal (Rev. 6:12-13)
6. During the great day of God's wrath and Armageddon (Joel 2:10; 3:15; Mt. 24:29-31; Mk. 13:24-25; Lk. 21:25-28)

B. In Israel – the red heifer (Num. 19:2)

C. In world politics – the end of democracy (Dan. 2:41-45; 2 Thess. 2:1-12)

*Cedar wood (juniper) – the resin is a preservative against decay; scarlet – the bright red color is associated with life, vitality and health; hyssop – used for cleansing, known by the ancients for treatment of leprosy (Lev. 14:6-7).