

The Most Important Thing

Luke 10:25-37

July 8, 2007

Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?

Memory Verse: He answered: ““Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Luke 10:27

Additional information:

- **Jericho Road** - <http://www.netours.com/jrs/2003/jericho-road.htm>
- Priests - The Hebrews kohen, Gr. hierus, Lat. sacerdos, always denote one who offers sacrifices.

At first every man was his own priest, and presented his own sacrifices before God. Afterwards that office devolved on the head of the family, as in the cases of Noah ([Genesis 8:20](#)), Abraham ([12:7](#); [13:4](#)), Isaac ([26:25](#)), Jacob ([31:54](#)), and Job ([Job 1:5](#)).

The name first occurs as applied to Melchizedek ([Genesis 14:18](#)). Under the Levitical arrangements the office of the priesthood was limited to the tribe of Levi, and to only one family of that tribe, the family of Aaron. Certain laws respecting the qualifications of priests are given in [Leviticus 21:16-23](#). There are ordinances also regarding the priests' dress ([Exodus 28:40-43](#)) and the manner of their consecration to the office ([29:1-37](#)).

Their duties were manifold ([Exodus 27:20](#), 21; [29:38-44](#); [Leviticus 6:12](#); [10:11](#); [24:8](#); [Numbers 10:1-10](#); [Deuteronomy 17:8-13](#); [33:10](#); [Malachi 2:7](#)). They represented the people before God, and offered the various sacrifices prescribed in the law.

In the time of David the priests were divided into twenty-four courses or classes ([1 Chronicles 24:7-18](#)). This number was retained after the Captivity ([Ezra 2:36-39](#); [Nehemiah 7:39-42](#)).

"The priests were not distributed over the country, but lived together in certain cities [forty-eight in number, of which six were cities of refuge, q.v.], which had been assigned to their use. From thence they went up by turns to minister in the temple at Jerusalem. Thus the religious instruction of the people in the country generally was left to the heads of families, until the establishment of synagogues, an event which did not take place till the return from the Captivity, and which was the main source of the freedom from idolatry that became as Marked a feature of the Jewish people thenceforward as its practice had been hitherto their great national sin."

The whole priestly system of the Jews was typical. It was a shadow of which the body is Christ. The priests all prefigured the great Priest who offered "one sacrifice for sins" "once for all" ([Hebrews 10:10](#), 12). There is now no human priesthood. (See Epistle to the Hebrews throughout.) The term "priest" is indeed applied to believers ([1 Peter 2:9](#); [Revelation 1:6](#)), but in these cases it implies no sacerdotal functions. All true believers are now "kings and priests unto God." As priests they have free access into the holiest of all, and offer up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and the sacrifices of grateful service from day to day. **Levites** - A descendant of the tribe of Levi ([Exodus 6:25](#); [Leviticus 25:32](#); [Numbers 35:2](#); [Joshua 21:3](#), 41). This name is, however, generally used as the title of that portion of the tribe which was set apart for the subordinate offices of the sanctuary service ([1 Kings 8:4](#); [Ezra 2:70](#)), as assistants to the priests.

When the Israelites left Egypt, the ancient manner of worship was still observed by them, the eldest son of each house inheriting the priest's office. At Sinai the first change in this ancient practice was made. A hereditary priesthood in the family of Aaron was then instituted (Exodus 28:1). But it was not till that terrible scene in connection with the sin of the golden calf that the tribe of Levi stood apart and began to occupy a distinct position (Exodus 32). The religious primogeniture was then conferred on this tribe, which henceforth was devoted to the service of the sanctuary (Numbers 3:11-13). They were selected for this purpose because of their zeal for the glory of God (Exodus 32:26), and because, as the tribe to which Moses and Aaron belonged, they would naturally stand by the lawgiver in his work.

The Levitical order consisted of all the descendants of Levi's three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; whilst Aaron, Amram's son (Amram, son of Kohath), and his issue constituted the priestly order.

The age and qualification for Levitical service are specified in Numbers 4:3, 23, 30, 39, 43, 47.

They were not included among the armies of Israel (Numbers 1:47; 2:33; 26:62), but were reckoned by themselves. They were the special guardians of the tabernacle (Numbers 1:51; 18:22-24). The Gershonites pitched their tents on the west of the tabernacle (3:23), the Kohathites on the south (3:29), the Merarites on the north (3:35), and the priests on the east (3:38). It was their duty to move the tent and carry the parts of the sacred structure from place to place. They were given to Aaron and his sons the priests to wait upon them and do work for them at the sanctuary services (Numbers 8:19; 18:2-6).

As being wholly consecrated to the service of the Lord, they had no territorial possessions. Jehovah was their inheritance (Numbers 18:20; 26:62; Deuteronomy 10:9; 18:1, 2), and for their support it was ordained that they should receive from the other tribes the tithes of the produce of the land. Forty-eight cities also were assigned to them, thirteen of which were for the priests "to dwell in", i.e., along with their other inhabitants. Along with their dwellings they had "suburbs", i.e., "commons", for their herds and flocks, and also fields and vineyards (Numbers 35:2-5). Nine of these cities were in Judah, three in Naphtali, and four in each of the other tribes (Joshua 21). Six of the Levitical cities were set apart as "cities of refuge" (q.v.). Thus the Levites were scattered among the tribes to keep alive among them the knowledge and service of God.

Samaritans - The name given to the new and mixed inhabitants whom Esarhaddon (B.C. 677), the king of Assyria, brought from Babylon and other places and settled in the cities of Samaria, instead of the original inhabitants whom Sargon (B.C. 721) had removed into captivity (2 Kings 17:24; Comp. Ezra 4:2, 9, 10). These strangers (Comp. Luke 17:18) amalgamated with the Jews still remaining in the land, and gradually abandoned their old idolatry and adopted partly the Jewish religion.

After the return from the Captivity, the Jews in Jerusalem refused to allow them to take part with them in rebuilding the temple, and hence sprang up an open enmity between them. They erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, which was, however, destroyed by a Jewish king (B.C. 130). They then built another at Shechem. The bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans continued in the time of our Lord: the Jews had "no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9; Comp. Luke 9:52, 53). Our Lord was in contempt called "a Samaritan" (John 8:48). Many of the Samaritans early embraced the gospel (John 4:5-42; Acts 8:25; 9:31; 15:3). Of these Samaritans there still remains a small population of about one hundred and sixty, who all reside in Shechem, where they carefully observe the religious customs of their fathers. They are the "smallest and oldest sect in the world."

Study Questions

- 1) Read Luke 10:25-37 two times
- 2) From your own reading, what grabs your attention and speaks to your life?
- 3) What is the difference between a Priest and a Levite?
- 4) The Expert of the Law asked Jesus “Who is my neighbor?” and Jesus answered the question, “What kind of neighbor should I be?” Why do you suppose Jesus answered the second question instead of the first?
- 5) Jesus called the Expert of the Law to “go and show compassion.” There are some people who are naturally compassionate. What about those who aren’t naturally compassionate? How can they show compassion in a heart felt way?
- 6) Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. *Colossians 3:12-14*
 - a) *Personally reflect on how you can clothe yourself with compassion.*
 - b) *Call someone this week and discuss your reflections.*
- 7) No one can compassionately handle every need they see alone. What can we do at GracePointe to “go and show compassion?”