

The Whitefield Seminary Papers

“Law & Religion Forum”

Volume 2, Apostolate Paper # 46



A HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

“Book of Leviticus—An Essay Towards the Priesthood of All Believers: A Prologue to the New Testament”¹

by

Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, Litt.D., LL.D.

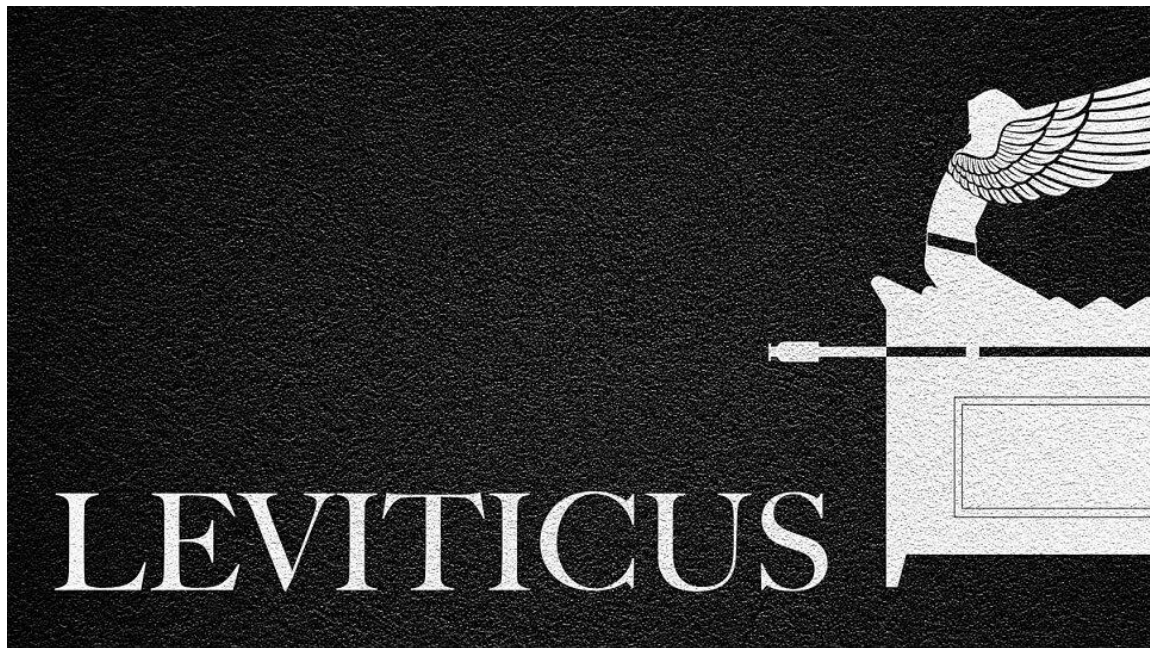
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Table of Contents

Foreword on the Book of Leviticus	4
Introduction	7
Part I	
Chapter 1. Is Christ the Author of Leviticus?	25
Chapter 2. Christ Himself established the Levitical Atonement Laws.....	30
Part II	
Chapter 3. Christ is Symbolically represented in the Levitical sacrifices and offerings	36
Chapter 4. Only priests ate the Meat and Food from the Altar Sacrifices	44
Part III	
Chapter 5. Christ converted the Levitical Priesthood into an Egalitarian Brotherhood.....	46
Chapter 6. Priests and Levites as Lawyers and Judges in Ancient Israel	56
Part IV	
Chapter 7. The Law of Moses (i.e., Holiness) is upheld in Christ.....	66
Chapter 8. The Christian does not Lower the book of Leviticus' Holiness Standards	68
Conclusion.....	72

Appendix

Appendix A. "Of Philo of Alexandria: A First-Century Jewish View of the Godhead"	73
Appendix B. "Of Messianic Judaism: A Theological View of the Godhead"	78
Appendix C. "Of the Protestant Reformation and the New Testament Priesthood"	80
Appendix D. "Of Altars and Sacrifices of the Patriarchs and the Passover"	92
Appendix E. "Of the Father as 'Priest of the Family'"	103
Appendix F. "Of Slavery and the Black Slave as 'Priest of the Family'"	108
Appendix G. "Of the Consecration of Holy Women"	116
Appendix H. "Of John Knox and the Scottish Presbyterians"	126

FOREWORD

The book of Leviticus is God's holiness guidebook to ancient Israel. It was designed to provide the basic procedures for maintaining God's covenant with ancient Israel through a battery of sacerdotal laws regarding atonement. The chief administrators of these laws were from the tribe of Levi (i.e., the priests and the Levites) whom God selected because of their special obedience.

The Law of Moses mandated that these battery of atonement laws, which are mentioned in Leviticus, be carried out in a special, consecrated place called the tabernacle; and, later, they were to be performed the Temple at Jerusalem. But after the Second Temple was decimated in 70 A.D., Rabbinic Judaism replaced these "temple" sacrifices with special "synagogue" worship, and it did so without priests and Levites and the administration of the Levitical atonement laws.

The Jews still hold that those old, ancient atonement laws within the book of Leviticus are still operable. However, since the Second Temple was decimated, the Jewish faithful now prescribe alternative liturgical methods in order to honor both the LORD God as well as the spirit, if not the procedure, of the Levitical laws.

Coincidentally, the new Christian religion of the first century followed a similar path as Rabbinical Judaism but for different reasons. To the new Christian faithful considered the battery of Levitical laws to have been "a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ."³ They believed that all of the Levitical atonement laws were symbolically replaced by the "Lord's Supper." And because the Christian faithful considered themselves to be a "common priesthood of all believers," they also believed that they had inherited the priestly status of the ancient priests and Levites from the Old Testament.

The Christians also believed that Christ, as High Priest, was the author of the both the Old and the New Testaments; and He was also the author and finisher of the atonement laws mentioned in the book of Leviticus. For this reason, the Christians believed that *all* of the sacrifices and symbols in the book of Leviticus point to Jesus Christ: his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and eternal High Priesthood.

³ Galatians 3: 24.

Now the priesthood which Christ founded was unique, because *all* of the born-again, redeemed Christian faithful— and not just a select few clergypersons— were made “Levitical priests” or “spiritual Jews” in the same way in which the tribe of Levi and (or) the firstborn sons of Israel were *set apart* for special service to the LORD.⁴

Just as the ancient Levitical priests ate from the burnt offerings and the other food sacrifices that were presented in the tabernacle, so too did the Christians eat the bread and drink the wine of the Lord’s Supper, which symbolized the final, ultimate atonement sacrifice.

Just as the ancient Levites were set apart for special priestly service to the nation of Israel; so, too, have Christians been set apart for special priestly service to *all the nations of the world*. Even to this day, Judaism is provincial (i.e., the Jews); Christianity is global (i.e., the Gentiles).⁵

The Christian common priesthood and (or) the church of Jesus Christ was early and largely fiercely democratic and egalitarian.⁶ This “democratic, egalitarian” tendency within the Church had, of course, an *indirect* but potent influence upon secular institutions— i.e., the Church became the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.”⁷

⁴ Revelation 1: 5-6 (“Jesus Christ... hath made us kings and priests unto God”); 1 Peter 2: 9 (“ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation”).

⁵ Genesis 18: 18-19 (“Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and **all the nations of the earth** shall be blessed in him... he will command his children... and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment...”) Isaiah 49: 6-7 (NIV)(“I will also make you **a light for the Gentiles**, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”); Isaiah 51: 4 (NIV)(“The law will go out from me; my justice will become **a light to nations**”); Isaiah 55:4 (NIV) (“Surely you will summon nations you know not, and **nations that do not know you will hasten to you**, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.”)

⁶ Jeremiah 31: 33 – 34 (“... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their heart.... And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour... for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them....”); Hebrews 8: 10-11 (“... I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts.... And they shall not teach every man his neighbor... for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”); 1 Peter 5: 5 (“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder... [f]eed the flock of God which is among you... [n]either as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.... [A]ll of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”)

⁷ Matthew 5:13-14.

In order to trace the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers,” the Appendix to this paper especially focuses on history of this “democratic, egalitarian” tendency within the Church, while highlighting several dissenting movements within the orthodox Early Church (i.e., the Catholic Church during its first three centuries) as well as subsequent dissenting, non-conformist, and Protestant movements.

Indeed, within Reformed theology— which is without question deeply-rooted in the history of British and European Christianity— the rise of the Puritans within the Church of England and on the continent of North America had a powerful global impact upon global constitutional governance, international law, and human rights.⁸

These developments may be described as a reflection two primary Judea-Christian influences. There first is that all men were fundamentally made in the image of God. And the second is that the doctrine on “the priesthood of all believers” meant that *the common man* has a divine right to read the Sacred Scriptures for himself,⁹ and to devise his own method or modes of religious practice; but, yet, all the while, without violating the fundamental rights of his neighbors.

And to Rev. Roger Williams (1603 – 1683) and the Puritan-Baptist sect, which grew out from the Church of England, we ascribe great credit for the further refining this Protestant conception of the “priesthood of all believers.” Accordingly, this paper is especially dedicated to the ***National Primitive Baptist Convention (NPBC)***¹⁰ in the United States of America and to the ***Presbyterian Church of Africa (PC of A)*** in southern Africa.¹¹

⁸ See, generally, William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852), pp. 481- 487; and see, also, Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, NY: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 244- 245; and see Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, La: Quid Pro Books, 2010), pp. 3-27.

⁹ 1 Corinthians 1: 27-28.

¹⁰ National Primitive Baptist Convention (organized 1907), <https://npbcconvention.org/>

¹¹ Presbyterian Church of Africa (organized 1898), <https://www.presbyterianchurchofafrica.co.za/> and <https://pcawcaa.co.za/> .

INTRODUCTION

Now when Christ met with his disciples in the Upper Room in Jerusalem during the Passover feast, he **“took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.”**¹² With this “Lord’s Supper,” Christ substituted and fulfilled all of the atonement laws in the book of Leviticus.

Nevertheless, we Reformed theologians agree with our Jewish brethren that the book of Leviticus’ injunction to be “holy” is still operable and valid. Indeed, indeed, Christ did not come to change or to abrogate the Levitical law of holiness. Rather, the “holiness” provisions in the book of Leviticus are still binding on the Christian faithful.

What these “holiness” provisions entail, Rabbi Arthur Kurzweil thus explains:

Leviticus outlines many of the commandments for men that deal with forbidden sexual relations. It’s forbidden for men to have sexual relations with the following people:

- Parents
- Stepmother
- Sister
- Grandchildren
- Half sister
- Aunt
- Daughter-in-law
- Sister-in-law

¹² Mark 14: 22-24.

This section of the Torah also contains a controversial commandment directed at men: ‘Do not lie with a male as you would with a woman’ (Leviticus 18:22)... Torah commentaries make it relatively clear that this commandment refers specifically to anal intercourse between men....

The book of Leviticus contains some of the most well-known and highly admired commandments that form the basis of civilization. The Torah indicates that observance of these commandments is the basis of a righteous, pure, and holy lifestyle. These commandments include:

- Respect your parents.
- Observe the Sabbath.
- Don’t make idols.
- Don’t steal.
- Don’t lie.
- Pay employees on time.
- Don’t gossip.
- Don’t hate people in your heart.
- Admonish your neighbor.
- Love your neighbor as you love yourself.
- Be honest with your weights and measures.
- Honor the elderly.¹³

Therefore, Reformed theologians, and most orthodox or conservative Jews, aim to achieve the exact same “holiness” standards which are reflected in the book of Leviticus.

Unfortunately, the book of Leviticus has also been misinterpreted as an outdated religious code that is no longer relevant or no longer binding upon present-day Christians or the present-day Church of Jesus Christ.

¹³ Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008), p. 109-110 (paraphrasing Leviticus 19: 1-37 and Leviticus 20: 1-27).

This misrepresentation is understandable, because when many Christians read about all of the burnt sacrifices and other similar practices in the book of Leviticus, the immediate impression is question their relevance to the Christian faith. But Reformed theologians find *Jesus Christ himself* within the Book of Leviticus, even within all of aforementioned burnt sacrifices.

Therefore, in this paper, I shall endeavor to provide a “Christocentric” hermetical analysis to the book of Leviticus; and I shall do so with aid from the great theological mind of Augustine of Hippo, who has thus written:

In the succeeding words, ‘Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel,’ the prophet... intends also that they learn to **interpret the law spiritually**, and **find Christ in it**, by whose judgment that separation between the good and the bad is to be made.¹⁴

We shall begin with my own hypothesis that the tribe of Levi, more than any of the other tribes, prefigured the future Christians; and that Christ’s redemption actually converted redeemed sinners into “spiritual Levites.”

If my hypothesis is correct, then we must ascertain whether the Scripture makes any references to the future, restored Israel (i.e., the church of Jesus Christ) being the spiritual heirs of the “priests and Levites” in the Old Testament.

And so, we must first begin with the following question: **Who were the Levites?**

While attempting to answer this question, I shall begin at chapter 32 of the book of Exodus, when Moses had delayed from coming down from Mount Siani, the Israelites approached Aaron, the priest, and asked him to make them a molten calf,

... and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel.... And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it.... And they rose up early on the morrow,

¹⁴ St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 756.

and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.¹⁵

When Moses returned with the two tables of the Decalogue in his hands, “he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.”¹⁶

This narrative then suggests that, of the tribes of Israel, only the Levites had remained faithful and did not worship the molten calf, to wit: “[t]hen Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD’s side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.”¹⁷

Now, as a reward for their obedience, these Levites “stepped into the shoes”¹⁸ of the consecrated “firstborn” sons whom all of the tribes of ancient Israel were obligated to consecrate as a commemoration of the first Passover.¹⁹

Prior to the LORD God’s setting aside the Levites for this special designation, the entire nation of Israel (i.e., all of the twelve tribes) was to “be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”²⁰

¹⁵ Exodus 32: 1-6.

¹⁶ Exodus 32: 19.

¹⁷ Exodus 32: 26.

¹⁸ Numbers 3: 12-13 (“And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn [being males] that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore **the Levites shall be mine**. Because all the firstborn [males] are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn [males] in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn [males] in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.”) See, also, Numbers 3: 12-13 (NIV)(“ 12 “I have taken the Levites from among the Israelites in place of **the first male offspring** of every Israelite woman. The Levites are mine, 13 for all the firstborn are mine. When I struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, I set apart for myself every firstborn in Israel, whether human or animal. They are to be mine. I am the Lord.”)

¹⁹ See, e.g., Exodus 13: 15 (“And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.”) See, also, Exodus 13:15 (NIV)(“ 15 When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord killed the firstborn of both people and animals in Egypt. This is why I sacrifice to the Lord the **first male offspring** of every womb and redeem each of **my firstborn sons**.”)

²⁰ Exodus 19: 6 (“kingdom of priests, and an holy nation”).

The Levites (i.e., the sons of the tribe of Levi) were set aside for special, consecrated service before the LORD.

As Augustine says, “the tribe of Levi also belonged more to the kingdom of Jerusalem, where was the temple of God whom it served.”²¹

However, the fact that Moses and Aaron were from the tribe of Levi was purely coincidental, and this had no nexus whatsoever to God’s having chosen Aaron to serve as the first high priest. For Aaron has seemingly been assigned this role prior to the crafting of the molten calf and the apostasy of the other eleven tribes of ancient Israel. This means that Aaron’s priesthood was in no way connected to God’s later selection of the Levites for special service in the tabernacle.

The “priest’s office” was formally vested in Aaron and his four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.²²

And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.

And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.

And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats:

And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.²³

Again, the appointment of Aaron and his sons to this priestly office was in no way tied to the fact that God would later select Levites for exclusive temple service. Indeed, Aaron had already attained this high office even before the molten calf was built (Exodus 32).

²¹ St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 606.

²² Exodus 28: 1-43; Exodus 29: 1- 46; Exodus 30: 1- 38.

²³ Exodus 40: 12-15.

As previously mentioned, the LORD God devoted the Levites for service to the tabernacle and, later, to the First and Second Temple, after they were deemed to be obedient through refusing to worship the molten calf.

These Levites were presented “before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him,”²⁴ viz.:

But the Levites after the tribe of their fathers were not numbered among them.

For the LORD had spoken unto Moses, saying,

Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel:

But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle.

And when the tabernacle setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.

But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.

And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they.²⁵

Now the **tribe of Levi** was divided into three subgroups (representing lineal descendants of Levi’s three sons) namely: **Kohath**, **Gershon**, and **Merari**. The

²⁴ Numbers 3: 6.

²⁵ Numbers 1: 47 – 54.

lineal descendants from these three sons of Levi were assigned responsibilities and duties within the tabernacle or temple ministry.²⁶

From these accounts, we find that the Aaronic priesthood *was all male*, and that the LORD God's tabernacle or temple ministers, who were taken from the "firstborn sons" of the Levites, were also *all male*. Thus, in the Old Testament Church (i.e., the tabernacle, the First and Second Temple), by statute commemorating the First Passover, all of the religious ministers (i.e., the priests and the Levites) were males.

Stated differently, the Levitical priesthood (i.e., the priests and the Levites) were *all males*.

In addition, the Levitical priesthood was also a state-sponsored or government-sponsored institution— i.e., it constituted a "High Church" function that was thoroughly integrated into the affairs of ancient Israel's civil polity. Howsoever modern theologians and constitutional lawyers might insist upon the separation of church and state, the ancient Israelites (and apparently through the LORD God's commandments to Moses) believed that the official state function required priestly sacrifice and service. Hence, the office of the priesthood, the tabernacle, and the temple were thoroughly woven into the constitution of the nation-state of ancient Israel.

Under this theocracy, each of the other eleven tribes of Israel essentially paid taxes— through tithes and offerings— to support the Levitical priesthood's administration of the tabernacle or temple.

As an official state or governmental "temple," the Levitical priests and Levites served as judges, temple officials, and administrators of the laws of ancient Israel.²⁷

²⁶ Numbers 4: 1- 49.

²⁷ See, e.g., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Levite> stating:

Because the priestly functions of the Levites evidently changed during the course of centuries, historians are still unable to explain satisfactorily such problems as the relationship that existed between the Levites and the members of the priesthood, who were descendants of Aaron, himself a descendant of Levi. The priests of Aaron clearly acquired sole right to the Jewish priesthood. Those who performed subordinate services associated with public worship were known as

The book of Leviticus recounts the liturgical methods— i.e., the burnt sacrifices, the peace offerings, the atonements, etc.—with which the Children of Israel fulfilled their priestly calling as “**a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.**”²⁸

Therefore, Israel’s chief religious ministers were **the priests and the Levites**— all *firstborn* males—whom the LORD God himself established for service to himself.

Notably, in the New Testament, reference is also made to the church of Jesus Christ as being “**a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.**”²⁹

In Catholic, Reformed, and Protestant theology, the burnt sacrifices, the peace offerings, the atonements, etc., which are described in the book of Leviticus, are said to have been replaced with the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ:

But Christ being come an **high priest** of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect **tabernacle, not made with hands**, that is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.³⁰

Moreover, in Catholic, Protestant, and Reformed theology, the office of the High Priest, which used to belong to Aaron, was *mutated* into the eternal High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, to wit:

Levites. In this capacity, the Levites were musicians, gate keepers, guardians, Temple officials, judges, and craftsmen.

In modern synagogue practice, a Levite is called upon to bless the reading of the second portion of the Law during a service.

²⁸ Exodus 19: 6.

²⁹ 1 Peter 2: 9.

³⁰ Hebrews 9: 12- 13.

“[T]his man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood....”³¹

“Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.”³²

Therefore, according to Catholic, Protestant, and Reformed theology, the sanctuary, temple, or tabernacle of the Old Testament are thus no longer necessary and have thus been duly abolished. The offices of the priesthood and of Levitical ministers have likewise been abolished.

In the Christian religion, there is a new and eternal high priest; namely, the man, Christ Jesus. And there is a new tabernacle; namely, a tabernacle that is heavenly and not made with human hands, to wit:

We have such an high priest, who is set **on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty** in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the **true tabernacle**, which the Lord pitched, and not man.³³

Accordingly, the Protestant and Reformed Christian churches have sought to build *no new Temples or Tabernacles*—the First and the Second Temple having been destroyed, they are not be replaced.

According to Protestant and Reformed theology, the new “temple” which Christ “rebuilt in three days” was the resurrection of his body—his holy, catholic church.³⁴ Amen.

Therefore, under Christ’s New Covenant, the human body, which is “the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you”³⁵ became the new “temple” for both Jew and Gentile.

³¹ Hebrews 7: 24.

³² Hebrews 7: 26 (NIV).

³³ Hebrews 8: 1-2.

³⁴ John 2:19.

³⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:19.

The Apostle Peter has amply described the church of Jesus Christ as a “**royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.**”³⁶

And the Apostle Paul has amply described the church of Jesus Christ as a diverse, egalitarian body of members stating:

Now you are the **body of Christ**, and each one of you is a part of it.

And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.

Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way.³⁷

So we, being many, are **one body in Christ**, and every one members one of another.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

³⁶ 1 Peter 2: 9.

³⁷ 1 Corinthians 12: 27 – 31.

Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.³⁸

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and **appoint [i.e., “ordain” (KJV)] elders in every town**, as I directed you.

An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.

Since an **overseer [i.e., “bishop” (KJV)]** manages God’s household, he must be blameless— not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.

Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.³⁹

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

³⁸ Romans 12: 3 – 9.

³⁹ Titus 1: 5-9 (NIV).

The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself **a peculiar people**, zealous of good works.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Titus 2: 1-14 (KJV).

Therefore, according to Protestant and Reformed theology, under this New Covenant, the church of Jesus Christ is an egalitarian and democratic ecclesiology body of the Christian faithful:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.⁴¹

In Reformed theology, the “priests and the Levites” of the Old Testament prefigure (i.e., point us toward) the Christian believers (i.e., the churches of Jesus Christ). For this reason, Augustine of Hippo has written:

[P]riests and Levites are now chosen, not from a certain family and blood, as was originally the rule in the priesthood according to the order of Aaron, but **as befits the new testament**, under which Christ is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, in consideration of the merit which is bestowed upon each man by divine grace. And these priests are not to be judged by their mere title, which is often borne by unworthy men, but by that **holiness** which is not common to good men and bad.⁴²

⁴¹ Hebrews 8: 8- 11 (paraphrasing Jeremiah 31: 34).

⁴² St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, p. 746.

And this assessment from Augustine was based upon the book of Malachi, wherein the prophet writes:

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD **an offering in righteousness**. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.⁴³

And thus where the prophet Malachi speaks of a reformed and purified “sons of Levi,”⁴⁴ Augustine of Hippo writes:

By the sons of Levi and Judah and Jerusalem we ought to understand the Church herself, gathered not from the Hebrews only, but from other nations as well; nor such a Church as she now is... but as she shall then be, purged by the last judgment as a threshing-floor by a winnowing wind....⁴⁵

Augustine goes on to explain that the sacrifices of the high priest and the priests in the book of Leviticus were “not in righteousness but in sins... so much so that even the priest himself... was accustomed to offer... first for his own sins, and then for the sins of his people.”⁴⁶ Of these remedial Levitical practices, the Apostle Paul has also compared to that of a “school master to bring us unto Christ.”⁴⁷

We Christians, then, are “**spiritual priests and Levites**” who no longer offer the “sacrifices in sin” but rather we offer “**sacrifices in righteousness**.”⁴⁸

In other word, the **redeemed Christians**, who has received the Holy Ghost and who has lived by faith, have become the **new priests** and **new Levites** who

⁴³ Malachi 3: 3-4.

⁴⁴ Malachi 3: 3.

⁴⁵ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, p. 753.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. p. 754.

⁴⁷ Galatians 3: 24

⁴⁸ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, pp. 753-756.

offer “**sacrifices in righteousness**”—thus presenting their very bodies as a living sacrifice.⁴⁹

SACRIFICES IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

“The Parable of the Good Samaritan”

Luke 10: 25-37

²⁵ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

²⁶ He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

²⁷ And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

²⁸ And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

²⁹ But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

³⁰ And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

³¹ And by chance there came down a certain **priest** that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

³² And likewise a **Levite**, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

³³ But a **certain Samaritan**, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

⁴⁹ Romans 12: 1-21 (“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.... Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”)

³⁴ And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

³⁵ And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

³⁶ Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

³⁷ And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

The old Levitical sacrifices of atonement, which we find in the book of Leviticus, have now become the *ministerial gifts*⁵⁰ and *daily sacrifices* (i.e., righteous living) of the Christians.

Present-day Christians, who stepped into the shoes of the Levites, offer “**sacrifices in righteousness**” through divine grace. Therefore, unlike the Levites (and Hebrews) who presented sacrifices of animals and plants, Christians present “**sacrifices in righteousness.**”

Notably, Christian “sacrifice” is not the sacraments of baptism, or the Eucharist (i.e., the Lord’s Supper), or church attendance, or tithing, or holding church offices— but, rather, the “**sacrifice in righteousness**” is a total life commitment to “holiness” or “holy living,” and to doing “justice and judgment”⁵¹ in the earth.

⁵⁰ Romans 12: 4- 8.

⁵¹ See, e.g., Genesis 18: 18-19, stating:

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, **to do justice and judgment**; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

See, also, St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, pp. 577 – 578, stating:

Now, he does **judgment and justice** who live aright. But he live aright who yields obedience to God when He commands. ‘The end of the commandment,’ that is, to which the commandment

The Protestant and Reformed Christian priesthood is, therefore, both “secular” and “sacerdotal.”⁵²

And this “secular” priesthood is especially manifest in professional services of lawyers, judges, and civil magistrates—who administer law and government.⁵³

In Reformed theology, the “**sacrifices in righteousness**” encompasses not simply the “priestly” function of pastors or clergymen but rather it also encompasses the whole gamut of the human endeavor.⁵⁴ “The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so.”⁵⁵

has reference, ‘is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.’ Moreover, this ‘charity,’ as the Apostle John testifies, ‘is of God.’ Therefore **to do justice and judgment** is of God.

But what is ‘in the midst of the earth?’ ... Therefore, ‘in the midst of the earth,’ that is, while our soul is shut up in this earthly body, **judgment and justice** are to be done, which shall be profitable for us hereafter, when ‘every one shall receive according to that he hath done in the body, whether good or bad.’

In the same way we may suitably understand what we read in the psalm, ‘But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth;’ so that the Lord Jesus may be understood to be our God who is before the worlds, because by Him the worlds were made, working our salvation in the midst of the earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt in an earthly body.

⁵² Protestant Reformer Martin Luther (1483- 1546) has stated:

Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate(1520)(stating, “the temporal authorities are baptized with the same baptism and have the same faith and Gospel as we, we must grant that they are priests and bishops, and count their office one which has a proper and a useful place in the Christian community.”)

Temporal Authority: To What Extent it should be Obeyed (1523)(stating, “[h]ere you inquire further, whether constables, hangmen, jurists, lawyers, and others of similar function can also be Christians and in a state of salvation. Answer: If the governing authority and its sword are a divine service, as was proved above, then everything that is essential for the authority's bearing of the sword must also be divine service.”)

⁵³ Ibid. And see, also, John Calvin’s *Commentaries* (Genesis 18: 18-19).

⁵⁴ See, generally, Max Weber, *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, NY: Vigeo Press, 2017).

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 129.

In Reformed theology, the secular ministry is therefore an important and vital function; because the entire nation state, or body politic, is under a covenantal relationship to the Almighty God. In this sense, Puritan or Reformed political doctrine is no different than that of the Old Testament covenant given to ancient Israel.⁵⁶

The Christian asceticism wrought by the Protestant and Reformed Christians elevated the “priesthood of all believers” doctrine into the Puritan covenant theology and the Puritan constitutional law of colonial New England; and this Puritan political ideology laid the foundation of political democratic government of our postmodern world.⁵⁷

For, indeed, it is the book of Leviticus that informs us of the fundamental nature of Christ’s New Testament priests who have many gifts and therefore many functions, while all comprising one sacred body. For some time now, since at least 2019, just before commencing my research with Whitefield Theological Seminary in 2020, I have grappled with the true nature of the New Testament’s officers and the formal qualifications for its pastors (e.g., master of divinity degrees, etc.). For indeed there are some wise and mighty men—such as Paul of Tarsus, Augustine of Hippo, Francis of Assisi, and William Penn—who have been called to the ministry; however, “not many wise men *after the flesh*, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen *the foolish things* of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen *the weak things* of the world to confound the things which are mighty... and things which are despised, hath God chosen....”⁵⁸

And if the Apostle Paul’s words be true, then we must rightfully conclude that the true, authentic, and ordained Christian leadership is very egalitarian, spiritually-anointed, talent-based, and amorphous—i.e., a “common priesthood of all believers.”

⁵⁶ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, La: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

⁵⁷ See, generally, William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852); and see, also, Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, NY: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 244- 245.

⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 1: 26-28.

PART ONE

Chapter One

“Book of Leviticus: Is Christ the Author of Leviticus?”

In order to give the Book of Leviticus a “Christocentric” interpretation, we should first off consider *whether Christ himself is its author*.

This we may consider by asking whether the author of Leviticus actually recorded the words of Christ in phrases such as, “*Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....*”

In other words, where “the LORD spoke,” may we rightfully conclude that it is Christ himself doing the speaking?

According to Reformed theology, whenever God commands Moses and Aaron in the Book of Leviticus, we are to fully understand that it is *Jesus Christ himself*— i.e., the “word of the God”⁵⁹— who is doing the speaking and the commanding.⁶⁰ This is because Christ himself is included within Godhead in the Old Testament.

In order to fully conceptualize Christ as a member of this Godhead, and as being fully inclusive within the biblical words “LORD” and “LORD God,” we may also consider other *biblical figures of speech* utilized describe God’s verbal instructions or actions in the Old Testament.

⁵⁹ John 1: 1-3 (“1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”)

⁶⁰ See, also, St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 645 (“For by consulting the Gospel we learn that Christ is Truth.”); Saint Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 48 (“Your law is the truth and you are truth.”).

The Lord God's actions, or verbal instructions, is often described as an "Angel of the LORD."

In this "Angel of the LORD," who speaks and acts for the LORD God, we can clearly see an image of Christ (or the justification for the theological idea that this angel is Jesus Christ himself who is doing the speaking or the acting), viz.:

- the "angel and pillar of the cloud"(Exodus 14: 19-20);
- the "Angel" of the LORD God ("YVVH")(Exodus 23: 20-23); and,
- "an angel of the LORD" (Judges 2: 1-4), etc.

And this angel is often depicted as no ordinary angel but as the LORD God himself, in terms of how the instructions are given in "the first person." See, e.g., Judges 2: 1-4 (KJV).

Hence, throughout the Old Testament, the "Angel" of the LORD and the "atonement" afforded in the various liturgical sacrifices (e.g., as set forth in the Book of Leviticus) is Christ himself.

A. Holy Trinity: The Plural Nature of the Godhead

Therefore, when we read the Book of Leviticus, as well as any book in the Old Testament, we must always keep in mind that the LORD or the LORD God is, in truth, a Godhead which includes "the word," who is the man Christ Jesus.

In other words, the "LORD" or the "LORD God," as used in the Old Testament automatically includes Christ, who is the second person in this divine Godhead.

For instance, in the Book of Genesis, we find the "LORD" being described as a "plural" Godhead, with the word "Us," to wit:

- **Genesis 1:26** ("Then God said, 'Let *Us* make man in Our image...")
- **Genesis 3:22** ("Then the LORD God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of *Us*....'")

- **Genesis 11:7** (“Come, let *Us* go down and there confuse their language....”)

Who is included in the word “Us” in these passages?

In Reformed theology, we believe the word “Us” in mean that there is a Holy Trinity: God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost.

God, the Son, is, of course, the “word” of God, or the *logos* of God.⁶¹

In ancient Hebrew and Jewish though, philosophy, and theology, the concept of the “word” can be traced to the Torah, where in the Book of Deuteronomy the Prophet Moses makes a clear reference to the *logos* or “word of God.”⁶²

For instance, Moses himself says in the Book of Deuteronomy [**Deuteronomy 30:14**], “[b]ut the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.”

What did Moses mean by his usage of “the word” other than the *logos*, or law of God? The Apostle Paul gives us a clear answer in his Epistle to the Romans, where in interpreted the “word” which Moses uses in Deuteronomy 30:14, stating:

5 Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.”

6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring **Christ** down)

⁶¹ See, e.g., Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2007), p. 309 (“For Christians, the Messiah was the historical Jesus, who was also identified with the Logos of Greek philosophy....”); and p. 289 (“It was this intellectual element in Plato’s religion that led Christians—notably the author of Saint John’s Gospel—to identify Christ with the Logos. Logos should be translated ‘reason’ in this connection.”). See, also, John 1:1 (“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”) See, also, John 17:17 (“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”) See, also, St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 645 (“For by consulting the Gospel we learn that Christ is Truth.”); Saint Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 48 (“Your law is the truth and you are truth.”).

⁶² See, also, **Appendix A**, “A Theological View from Philo of Alexandria (20 AD – 40 BC)” and **Appendix B**, “A Theological View from Messianic Judaism.”

7 “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’” (that is, to bring **Christ** up from the dead).

8 But what does it say? “**The word** is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim:

9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

The Apostle Paul’s association of Jesus Christ as being “the word” of God was later re-affirmed in the Gospel of Saint John [John 1:1-3, 14] namely:

1 In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God.

2 He was with God in the beginning.

3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made....

14 **The Word became flesh** and made his dwelling among us.

Hence, the Law of Moses already contained a notion of the *logos*, or “the word,” of God [see, e.g., Deuteronomy 30:14], and we find this theological concept fully developed in the Hellenistic Judaism of Philo of Alexandria as well.⁶³

Both the Torah and the historical Book of Judges contains references to an “angel of the LORD” that speaks to the Children of Israel (and who is ostensibly the “word of God.”)

The Apostles Paul and John identify Jesus Christ as being the same “word” of God who is referenced in Genesis 1: 26, 3:22, and 11:7; and in Deuteronomy 30:14.

B. When the LORD God Speaks, It is Christ doing the Speaking

⁶³ **Appendix A**, “A Theological View from Philo of Alexandria (20 AD – 40 BC).”

From this sampling of divine Scripture, we see plainly that “the word” who spoke to Moses and Aaron in the Book of Leviticus was none other than Jesus Christ himself.

In other words, according to Reformed theology, when God commanded Moses and the prophets in the Old Testament, we are to fully understand that it is Christ himself who is doing the speaking and the commanding.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ See, also, **Appendix A**, “A Theological View from Philo of Alexandria (20 AD – 40 BC)” and **Appendix B**, “A Theological View from Messianic Judaism.”

Chapter Two

“Book of Leviticus: Christ Himself Established the Levitical Atonement Laws”

Having thus established that, in the Book of Leviticus, where the LORD God speaks, and commands Moses and Aaron to establish the priesthood from the sons of the tribe of Levi; to set up various forms of atonement (i.e., burnt offerings, grain offerings, etc.) on behalf of individual Israelites and for the entire nation of Israel; and to adhere to various statutes, laws, and judgments,⁶⁵ we are to understand that **it is Jesus Christ himself** doing the speaking and the commanding.

For this perspective, we may now easily deduce that the atonement sacrifices in the Book of Leviticus are the same “signs” or “sacraments” that is represented in the Lord’s Supper-- they point to the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Book of Leviticus (Christ speaks for “the LORD”)

In this sense, the primary author of the Book of Leviticus is Jesus Christ himself— the incorporeal (Old Testament) and the incarnate (New Testament) Word of God:

Leviticus	God’s Word Speaks to Moses	God’s Word is “Christ” himself
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⁶⁵ Individual atonement is linked to national atonement, and both forms of atonement are functions of public policy. For example, atonement provisions are made for “[i]f the anointed priest sins,” Lev. 4:4; “if the whole congregation of Israel sins,” Lev. 4:13; “[w]hen a ruler has sinned,” Lev. 4:22; and “if anyone of the common people sins,” Lev. 4:27.

Lev. 1:1	“Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 4:1	“Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 5:14	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 6:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 6:8	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 6: 19	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].

Lev. 6:24	“Also the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 7:22	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 7:28	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 8:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 11:1	“Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 12:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 13:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 14:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses.

		[Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 15:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 16:1	“Now the LORD spoke to Moses”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 16:2	“And the LORD said to Moses....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 17:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 18:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 19:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 20:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].

Lev. 21:1	“And the LORD said to Moses....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 22:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 23:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 24:1	“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 25:1	“And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].
Lev. 27:1	“Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying....”	Christ Himself is speaking to Moses. [Same References as above in Part I].

Since, in the Book of Leviticus, it is Jesus Christ himself speaking and commanding to Moses and Aaron to establish the laws of the burnt sacrifices and

offerings, we are to interpret these Levitical “**statutes, judgements, and laws**”⁶⁶ **as being** the very commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ himself (i.e., incarnate Word).⁶⁷

In fact, Jesus Christ himself affirms and reaffirms, in the Gospel of St. Luke [Luke 16: 29-31], that his teachings and the Law of Moses are one and the same divine Law, stating:

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him, **If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.**

And, again, in the Gospel of St. Matthew [Matthew 5:17], Christ again makes the same reaffirmation, stating: “**Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.**”

⁶⁶ **Leviticus 26:46** (“These are the statutes and judgments and laws which the LORD made between Himself and the children of Israel n Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses”); **Matthew 5:17** (“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”)

⁶⁷ “Who is the Heir of Divine Things,” *The Works of Philo* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., LLC, 1993), pp. 293, 296.

PART TWO

Chapter Three

“Book of Leviticus: Christ is Symbolically represented in the Levitical Sacrifices and Offerings”

Now, where Christ says that he had come “to... fulfill” both “the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 5:17), we Reformed theologians believe that the word “fulfill” means that, in part, Christ came to fulfill the atonement laws in the Book of Leviticus.

That is to say, Christ came to *substitute himself* for the burnt sacrifices and other offerings that were authorized and commanded in the Book of Leviticus.

What this means is that the “substance” of the Old Testament religion was not changed—but only the “method and procedure” for carrying out the Old Testament religion were changed, through Christ’s New Covenant.

Here, I must re-emphasize and repeat: the Old Testament religion—its central duty of holiness, etc.—is still the same eternal, unchanged religion of the Christ faith.

The Lord’s Supper commemorates the Book of Leviticus—its burnt offerings, its blood and animal sacrifices, its first-fruit and grain offerings, etc.

Animal Sacrifices (Book of Leviticus) = The Lord’s Supper (New Testament)

All of these “sacraments”—whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament—point to the same divine redemption that is contained in Christ’s crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. Christ is indeed the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

In this sense, the Old Testament atonement rituals contained within the Book of Leviticus are “sacraments” that point to Jesus Christ’s future sacrifice on the cross.

“The law [of Moses] is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices [in the Law of Moses] repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.”⁶⁸

“Priestly Atonement” in the Book of Leviticus is the equivalent of the **“Lord’s Supper” in the New Testament**: both are signs or symbols of Christ’s crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection.

Hence, when present-day Christians administer the sign or sacrament of the Last Supper (i.e., the Bread and the Wine), they commemorate **the past crucifixion, death, and resurrection of the Messiah.**”

Likewise, the Book of Leviticus’s several atonement rituals point to Jesus Christ’s *future* sacrifice, *future* crucifixion on the cross, *future* death, *future* burial, and *future* resurrection.

For this reason, the ancient Israelites submitted their various offerings to the Priests before the Tabernacle and (or) the First or Second Temple—in anticipate of the *future* redemption from the LORD God.

When ancient Israelites did this, they were exercising a redemptive faith in a *future* Messiah or Christ; their Levitical sacrifices constituting the same “sacrament” as is contained in our present-day “sacrament” of the wine and bread of The Lord’s Supper.

The nexus between these two theological systems—i.e., the animal sacrifices in the Old Testament and the Lord’s Supper in the New Testament— are explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews. See, e.g., Hebrews, Chapter Nine, stating:

⁶⁸ Hebrew 10: 1 (NIV).

The Blood of Christ

11 But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.

12 He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.

14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

The same LORD God (YHVH), the same atonement (act of repentance within the soul, heart), and the same salvation (i.e., reconciliation or rejoining to God) are involved here: in both the Old Covenant and in the New Covenant, it is Jesus Christ who gives and commands the “Atonement Law.”

The Old Covenant: Atonement Law	The New Covenant: Atonement Law
<u>Old Ceremonial Law:</u> An Offering to the Lord; Atonement For Sin. Leviticus 1: 1- 17	<u>New Ceremonial Law:</u> Offerings to the Lord; Atonement. Mark 14: 22-24:

<p>Burnt Offerings⁶⁹</p> <p>Leviticus 2: 1- 16</p> <p>Grain and First Fruit Offerings⁷⁰</p> <p>Leviticus 3: 1- 17</p> <p>Peace Offerings⁷¹</p>	<p>"Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body.' And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, 'This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.'"</p> <p>Christ himself is the offering</p>
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⁶⁹ See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008), p. 103, stating:

In the book of Leviticus, the most common sacrifice or offering is the olah (oh-la; burnt offering), which symbolically represented one's complete devotion to and submission to God (Leviticus 1: 1-17). The root of the word 'olah' means 'ascension.'

Burnt offerings consisted of different kinds of animals; the choice of animal was based on what a person could afford. The person's first choice, according to the Torah, would be a fine bull, cow, sheep, or goat. But if he couldn't afford such an animal, a bird (such as a pigeon or a turtledove) was used. If the person wasn't able to afford any animal, a meal offering was permissible.

⁷⁰ See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, p. 103, stating:

A meal offering is known for korban mincha (core-bahn min-kha)(Leviticus 2: 1-3). The meal offering was supposed to be made of the finest flour available mixed with oil and frankincense, but it was an inexpensive offering used by those who were too poor to use more expensive items such as animals. Because grain is the basic ingredient for prepared food, it's the sustainer of life.... The person making the sacrifice gave the korban mincha to a priest who took a part of it and burnt it on the altar. The rest was available to be eaten by the priests. Various types of meal offerings are detailed in Leviticus, including

- Baked offering
- Pan (fried) offering
- Deep-fried offering
- Grain offering using the first reaping

⁷¹ See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, p. 104, stating:

A peace offering (Leviticus 3: 1-17) is an expression of gratitude to God. It's an offering of thankfulness for all that God has given and gratitude for God's generosity. In Hebrew, a peace offering was known as zebch sh'lamim... or simply sh'lamin, which is connected to the Hebrew word 'shalom,' which means meaning 'peace' or 'whole.' According to the Torah, people offered peace offerings after surviving life-threatening situations or fulfilling vows. Peace offerings had nothing to do with sins or regret. The objects of peace offerings included

Leviticus 4: 1- 35

Offerings of Young Bulls and a Kid of Goats

Leviticus 5: 1- 19

Trespass Offerings- A ram without blemish

- Concealing the Truth
- False witness
- Touching unclean things

Leviticus 6: 6- 30

- Trespass Offering
- Burnt Offering
- Meat Offering
- Sin Offering⁷²

-
- Cattle
 - Sheep
 - Goats
 -

As with other sacrifices, the animal was cooked. A portion was eaten by the person making the offering, a portion was eaten by the priests, and a portion was burned.

⁷² See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah, supra*, p. 104, stating:

A sin offering serves as an expression of regret for a sin. This kind of sacrifice, called chatat (khah-tat), was only appropriate for a sin that was unintentional. One of the Hebrew words for 'sin' is chayt (khayt) which actually means 'to miss the mark.'

- The sin offering made by a High Priest who sinned was a young bull.
- The sin offering made by a community that sinned was a young bull.
- The sin offering made by a king who sinned was an unblemished male goat.
- The sin offering made by commoner who sinned was an unblemished female goat.

Leviticus 7: 1- 38

- Trespass Offering⁷³
- Burnt Offering
- Meat Offering
- Sin Offering
- Peace Offering

Leviticus 8: 1- 36

- Consecrations of Aaron and his sons as Priests

Leviticus 9: 1- 24

- Sin offering
- Burnt offering
- Peace offering
- Wave offering⁷⁴

Leviticus 10: 12- 20

- Wave offering

⁷³ See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah, supra*, p. 104, stating:

A guilt [or trespass] offering, known as an asham (ah-shahm), is an offering to atone for possible sins. When a person thought that perhaps he or she had sinned but wasn't completely sure, he or she made a guilt offering. A guilt offering was also made when knowledge of a past sin was later realized. The Torah requires a variety of items for the sacrifice depending upon what the person could afford (Leviticus 5: 1-13). The wealthiest people offered a female sheep or goat. If that couldn't be afforded, the other choices were two turtledoves, two common doves, and, for the poorest people, a portion of wheat meal.

⁷⁴ The "Wave Offering" served this purpose. "A wave offering was a portion of a sacrifice presented to God, then released by God for the use of those involved in the sacrifice. The meat fed the families of the priests. The Levites served first the tabernacle and then the temple, fulfilling the obligation of the rest of the Israelites. Both were God's provision for those who sacrificed themselves in service to Him."
<https://www.gotquestions.org/wave-offering.html>.

Leviticus 16: 1- 34

- Holy Garments for the Priesthood
- Atonement for the entire Congregation of Israel
- One Goat to be Sacrificed; the Scapecoat (the goat on which the lot fell) to be let loose into the wilderness
- Sin offering for the nation of Israel; their uncleanness; their transgressions
- **Yom Kippur:** Seventh Month of the year: national **Atonement** (“And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.”)⁷⁵

⁷⁵ See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah, supra*, p. 109, stating:

One of the most well-known Jewish holy days is Yom Kippur (yome kee-poor), also known as the Day of Atonement. In the Torah, this holy day is discussed in the book of Leviticus (as well as in other places). For example, permission is given to the High Priest alone to enter the Holy of Holies, the most sacred place in physical space, and to pray to God on behalf of the people. Leviticus 15: 1-34 provides some of the details of the Yom Kippur Service as performed in the Tabernacle, including the sacred vestments required of the High Priest as well as special Yom Kippur sacrifices and rituals made on behalf of the community. The hope on Yom Kippur is that the rituals and offerings symbolize the personal repentance and purification on the part of all the people.

Leviticus 17: 1- 16

- Strict requirement: the offerings must be brought to the tabernacle “to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD.”
- “To that end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD.” V. 5.
- Instructions not to “eat blood.” For blood “is the life of all flesh.” V. 11, 14.

For it is in this sense that the Old Testament Church of the ancient Hebrews or Israelites was just as “Christian” as the New Testament Church of the Gentiles.

Jesus Christ authorized and commanded the sacraments contained in the Book of Leviticus.

With full authority from the LORD God, as demonstrated through his miracles and parables, Jesus Christ was authorized to change and to substitute the Levitical commandments in the Old Testament, with his “New Covenant,” which is to be commemorated from time to time with the sacrament of The Lord’s Supper.

For this reason, a correct and more accurate reading of the Book of Leviticus is not to conceptualize the “liturgical practices” in Leviticus as having been abolished, but rather as having been “substituted” or “changed” to the sacrament of “The Lord’s Supper.”

Chapter Four

“Book of Leviticus: Only Priests ate the Meat and Food from the Altar Sacrifices”

When the LORD God commanded Moses to promulgate the law of the **various animal sacrifices** and to **institute priesthood of Aaron**, we are to understand that it is Jesus Christ himself who makes those commands, as if to say, **“Do this as a sign or sacrament of the future crucifixion, death, and resurrection of the Messiah.”**

Now when the burnt sacrifices were made, they were utilized to feed and support the priests and their immediate family members—only the priests were authorized to eat from these holy offerings.⁷⁶

For, indeed, under the law governing the Levitical priesthood, only the priests were allowed to eat from the sacrifice of the various atonement offerings. See, e.g., Exodus 29: 33 (“And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy.”).

Likewise, the Christian who takes of the Lord’s Supper is stepping into the role of a Levitical priest—for only a priestly person may eat of atonement offering, that is, the body and blood of Christ Jesus.

For it is in this sense that all Christians together constitute a priestly nation. See, e.g., 1 Peter 2: 9 (“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people....”); Revelation 1: 5-6 (“... Jesus Christ... hath made us

⁷⁶ A portion of animal sacrifices were set aside for the priests and their families for consumption, whereas it was unlawful for others to eat that same sacred food. The “Wave Offering” served this purpose. “A wave offering was a portion of a sacrifice presented to God, then released by God for the use of those involved in the sacrifice. **The meat fed the families of the priests.** The Levites served first the tabernacle and then the temple, fulfilling the obligation of the rest of the Israelites. Both were God’s provision for those who sacrificed themselves in service to Him.” <https://www.gotquestions.org/wave-offering.html>.

See, also, See, e.g., Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah, supra*, p. 103 (“In some cases, part of the sacrifice was eaten by the priests who performed the ritual sacrifices on behalf of others.”) and p. 104 (“The rest was available to be eaten by the priests.”)

kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”)

From this theological doctrine, and from the example of the priesthood in Leviticus, we may rightfully conclude that all Christians have inherited the status of the Levitical priests before God.

Indeed, as Christians, we are all Levites and the priestly sons of Aaron.

PART THREE

Chapter Five

“Book of Leviticus: Christ Converted the Levitical Priesthood into An Egalitarian Brotherhood”

Since all Christians are “Levites” and the “priestly sons of Aaron,” the controversial theological problem within the Western Church—and, indeed, in all orthodox Christianity—is whether there is a valid distinction between Christian “clergy” and Christian “laity.”

A. “The Medieval Superstition Problem”

One of the most controversial features of the Christian religion is whether its ecclesiastical administrators (i.e., deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, popes, etc.) who have been “ordained” through the “ceremonial laying on of hands,”⁷⁷ and authorized to administer the sacraments, are also “priests” or “*clergy*,” who are distinct or distinguishable from *laity*.”

In Reformed theology, there are no “priesthood” within the Christian religion, because all born-again, redeemed Christians are “priests” and belong to a “priesthood of all believers.”

Technically, this is also the same theology of the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian churches that utilizes the episcopal form of government.

The Roman Catholic Defense of the Priesthood

CHALLENGE

“Catholic ministers should not be called priests. All Christians are priests. Peter says his readers are ‘a royal priesthood, a holy nation’ (1 Pet. 2:9).”

DEFENSE

⁷⁷ See, e.g., William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, pp. 350- 355.

Christians are priests, but Scripture indicates that there is also a special, ministerial priesthood.

The Church agrees that, by baptism, Christians have a share in Christ's priesthood (CCC 1141, 1268, 1546; cf. 1174, 1322). This is commonly referred to as "the common priesthood of all the faithful" (CCC 1535). However, certain members of the faithful are ordained to a greater participation in Christ's priesthood by the sacrament of holy orders. This is known as the ministerial priesthood (CCC 1547). Christ—the source of the common and ministerial priesthoods—is our high priest (CCC 1544). The Church thus understands there to be a threefold structure: the common priesthood of all, the ministerial priesthood of the ordained, and the high priesthood of Christ.

This is what we see in the New Testament. The common priesthood is referred to in 1 Peter 2:9. The ministerial priesthood is referred to in **Romans 15:16**,⁷⁸ where Paul speaks of how he is a minister of Christ "in the priestly service of the gospel of God." The ministerial priesthood is also referred to in passages that speak of ordained Church leaders known as "elders" (Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14). Finally, the high priesthood of Christ is referred to in passages such as Hebrews 3:1, 4:14–15, 5:5, 6:20, and 9:11.⁷⁹

Thus, I think both Protestants and Catholics agree: *all Christians belong to a royal priesthood and constitute a "priestly" nation.*

That the title of the "ordained" ministry may rightfully be called "priest" can be confusing, given the Medieval history of dividing Christians into two categories: "laity" and "clergy" – such a division easily devolves into the notion that the "laity" are no longer "priests."

⁷⁸ Romans 15: 16 (KJV: "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."); (NIV: "... to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me **the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God**, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."); (American Standard Version: "that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the [a]Gentiles, [b]ministering the [c]gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit."); (Contemporary English Version: "He chose me to be a servant of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles and **to do the work of a priest** in the service of his good news. God did this so that the Holy Spirit could make the Gentiles into a holy offering, pleasing to him.")

⁷⁹ <https://www.catholic.com/audio/ddp/the-priesthood-of-all-believers>

Partly for this reason and to rectify this problem, the Protestant and Reformed movements were initiated during the 16th century in Europe.

The Protestant Reformers argued that the predominant priestly offices within Roman Catholicism, the Church of England, and other related Episcopal denominations, *were wrongfully modeled* after the Aaronic or Levitical priesthoods, which Christ summarily abolished.

As a consequence, writes Rev. William Goodell, “*arrogant pretensions and spiritual despotisms*” throughout Christendom were the sad result, viz:

Fanciful Imitation of Judaism

The doctrine that the ministers of the Christian Church were the **successors of the Jewish priesthood**, which, if not originated in the second century, was then most successfully inculcated by the clergy, contributed, materially, to the great work of corrupting the churches.

If the clergy were the successors of the Jewish priests, why, then, of course, a resemblance between the two was to be looked for. The bishops, or presiding elders, were made to answer to the high priest, the presbyters or elders to the priests, and the deacons to the Levites. ‘This idea,’ says Mosheim, ‘being once introduced and approved, drew after it many other errors.’ Among which was, that it gave an official elevation and sacredness to the clergy, which Christ never authorized.’ (Punchard, p. 22).⁸⁰

Now to understand the Reformed or Protestant point of view, a knowledge of the ancient Jewish synagogue and the history of the Early Church is necessary.⁸¹

⁸⁰ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, p. 455.

⁸¹ The term “Early Church” denotes the first four centuries of the Church. To understand the theology of the Protestant Reformers and their hermeneutical methods, it is important to understand that the Protestant Reformers accepted only four of the first nineteen ecumenical councils¹⁸ which the global (i.e., holy, catholic, apostolic, and ecumenical) Christian Church had held up to through the early sixteenth-century, as follows:

1. First Council of Nicaea in 325,
2. First Council of Constantinople in 381
3. Council of Ephesus in 431
4. Council of Chalcedon in 451

According to Rev. Goodell's thesis in *The Democracy of Christianity*, the Early Church was fiercely egalitarian and democratic,⁸² and it remained as such during its first three centuries of existence.⁸³

But then during about the second century, corruption began to set in the Early Church.⁸⁴ One aspect of that corruption came in the form of modeling the Christian presbytery after the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood.⁸⁵

Christian bishops were correlated to the High Priest Aaron; Christian priests were correlated to Aaron's sons who were Levitical priests; and Christian deacons were correlated to the Levites who were servants of the Tabernacle or Temple.⁸⁶

The Protestant Reformers also adopted the first three major creeds (i.e., the "Ecumenical Creeds") of the Christian Church—the Nicene Creed of 325 A.D.; the Apostle's Creed of 341 AD.; and the Athanasian Creed of 4th Century, B.C. — which were promulgated during the period of the first four ecumenical councils, up through the beginning of the fifth century, A.D. The sixteenth-century Protestant Reformers thus rejected the other remaining fifteen ecumenical councils—from the Second Council of Constantinople up through the Council of Trent.

For this reason, the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which had been held in response to the work and doctrines held by Martin Luther and other Reformers, was designed to formulate a response to the Protestant Reformation, which the Roman Catholics called the "Counter-Reformation." It thus should here be noted that the Protestant Reformers largely embraced only the imminent Western and Eastern Catholic divines who lived before the year 500 A.D.—men such as Jerome, Augustine, Theodore of Mopsuesitia and John Chrysostom— after which period (i.e., the fifth century, A.D.), according to the Protestant Reformers, the Western and Eastern Churches had spiraled out of control, and fallen into a downward spiritual decline of doctrinal heresy and internal corruption. The Protestant Reformers thus sought to extract the historical ancient church of the first five centuries A.D., from the grip of teachings of the Medieval papists. The last ecumenical council which the Protestant churches embraced was the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D. (Although Henry VIII's Church of England did not make so clean a break from Roman Catholic rituals and practices as did the Lutherans and the Calvinists.)

⁸² Rev. William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, pp. 419 – 435.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 455 ("... and the beginnings of diocesan episcopacy proper (at Alexandria only, anno 260, or perhaps somewhat earlier. The date of the metropolitan authority, resulting from the synods, is not definitely fixed.")

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 455- 457 ("Fanciful Immitation of Judaism" and "Arrogant Pretensions and Spiritual Despotisms of this Period").

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 455.

According to Rev. Goodell, many Protestant Reformers held that this new conception of the Catholic priesthood eventually corrupted the true nature of “priesthood of all believers,” to wit:

[T]he principle of autocracy and **the usages of hierarchal and priestly domination** have been an element of corruption in the church, a mildew upon her good fruits, **an incubus** upon her bosom, a cancer upon her vitals, from the second century to the present hour.⁸⁷

Superstition was rapidly utilized to increase priestly and episcopal authority and power.⁸⁸ The title and function of “bishop” were greatly exaggerated:

[t]he original equality of the elders (presbyters, pastors, or bishops) of the New Testament churches had now given place... to the supremacy of him who now arrogated to himself, exclusively, the title of bishop, and exercised dominion over a plurality of presbyters, deacons, and various newly-invented grades of officers under him.⁸⁹

The provincial synods arrogated power in an archbishop or patriarch and usurped local church authority and integrity of the local elders.⁹⁰

Now, according to Rev. Goodell, the seeds of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation were formed as early as the 2nd century, around the year 200 A.D., when the influential theologian-lawyer Tertullian resigned from the Catholic Church in protest of the aforementioned structural and ecclesiastical modifications to church governance.⁹¹ Around the year 251 A.D., a Roman Catholic priest named Novatian then led his “Protestant” succession from the Church. According

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 468.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 445, 457.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 447.

⁹⁰ See, e.g., <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/provincial-synod/> (“A provincial synod is a group of church officials that meet to discuss and resolve issues related to a specific province or region. The term ‘synod’ comes from the Greek word *synodos*, which means ‘assembly.’”)

⁹¹ Rev. William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, p. 464 (“Even Tertullian himself, who seems to have held a high rank among the ‘Christian fathers,’ quitted the church for these reasons, about the year 200, or a half a century before there was any organized body of dissenters.”)

to Rev. Goodell, Novatian’s grievances against the Catholic Church echoed those of Luther and Calvin, many centuries later.⁹²

Hence, the second-century Novatianists were the “first Puritans.”⁹³ According to Rev. Goodell, the Novatianists “continued, under various names, down to the times of the Lutheran Reformation. The enemies of the dissenters, in every age, have called them by the names of their prominent men in a given generation or province, or by other terms of reproach.... [I]t is evident that the separation commencing with Novatian, and on substantially the same grounds, has been continued ever since. The Novatianists were stigmatized as puritans.”⁹⁴

The desire to restore the primitive Church—the “authentic” Christian faith of the first century—had always been present within early development of the Catholic faith.

Throughout the centuries, this “Puritan” movement arose and died down, and oftentimes its leaders—such as Novatian himself—were executed.

“[T]he Protestant Reformation, or, quite as properly, the Puritan Secession, commenced with Novatian, A.D. 251, and under the various names of Donatists, Aerians, Paulicians, Albigenses, Waldenses, Vaudois, Lollards, &c., &c., has continued down to our own times. Varieties are indeed to be recognized among these, and greater or less departures from the corruptions and usurpations of the Catholic or general Church.”⁹⁵ See, Appendix A, “Protestant Movements in the Universal Church since the Second Century, A.D.”

Hence, the Reformed theological ecclesiastical and belief system is quite similar to that of the Orthodox or traditionalist Jews, namely,

⁹² Ibid., pp. 463 – 466.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 466.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 467.

‘Moses received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets transmitted it to the men of the Great Assembly.

‘They say three things: Be patient in doing justice; raise many students; and make a fence round the Torah.’⁹⁶

Moses received the Torah at Sinai and gave it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders....⁹⁷

Whereas the first-century Jewish synagogues were ruled by a plurality of elders, so too were the first-century Jewish churches. See, e.g., 1 Tim. 4:14, stating: “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the **presbytery**.”

To this very point, Rev. William Goodell has written in *The Democracy of Christianity* that:

The word presbyter is of Greek origin, and signifies the same thing as elder. The presbytery of a church could be nothing distinct from the plurality of elders in a church, nor hold any other powers than those of an elder.... The word *pastor* occurs but once in the New Testament. ‘He gave some pastors and teachers.’ (Eph. Iv). The Old Testament prophets used the term as applied to religious teachers, and were themselves called pastors.... The word *bishop*, designating the same office, originally signified an inspector, a superintendent, or overseer. Here, likewise, the mere *name* does not define the nature or the degree of the superintendency.⁹⁸

Thus, in the Early Church there were no such distinctions as “clergy” and “laity.”⁹⁹ See, also, 1 Peter 5: 1-5, stating:

⁹⁶ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People* (New York, N.Y.: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2024), p. 23 (citing Mishnah Avot 1:1).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁹⁸ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, *supra*, pp. 317 – 318.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

‘God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble.’

Furthermore, while commenting on this passage in 1 Peter 5, Rev. Goodell has observed in *The Democracy of Christianity* that “[w]hatever may be included, the paragraph just quoted from Peter informs us, in one particular, what was not included. They were not to ‘lord it over God’s heritage,’ or the body of Christian believers.”¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, Rev. Goodell goes on to point out that these elders were organized around democratic and egalitarian principles, stating:

It may be admitted that the Elders or Sanhedrim, of later times, usurped ecclesiastical authority, and were clothed, by their heathen monarchs, with certain political or judicial functions, being held responsible for the loyalty of the people. The elders in the local synagogues presided as presidents, but were not exclusively priests, and held no monopoly of exhortation, preaching, or rituals.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 321.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

The Aaronic priests within the Book of Leviticus were certainly men who constituted the “elder” class within ancient Israel.

These Aaronic priests shared many governance responsibilities, such as serving as judges in cooperation with the regular judges of ancient Israel.

However, the “elders” or “presbyters” of ancient Israel were not called “priests,” because they were not the lineal descendants of Aaron and his sons.¹⁰²

Since the “presbyters” who took over leadership in the Early Church were not the lineal descendants of Aaron, none of them were considered to be “priests” in the New Testament— they were “elders” or “presbyters.”

Rather, the Christian “presbyter” emerged from that class of men within ancient Israel who were the natural fathers or “heads of the families,” just as Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob and his twelve sons were the “elders” and (or) the heads of their families, and the “patriarchs,” “judges,”¹⁰³ or “prophets” of ancient Israel.

Under the New Covenant of Jesus Christ, this “presbyter” class inherited the Levitical priesthood.

That is to say, all redeemed Christians stepped into the shoes of the “priestly sons of Aaron.”

At the institution of this New Covenant, *all redeemed Christians*— even common men, working men, slaves, etc.-- are “priests” and “kings” [Revelation 1: 5-6], having only one High Priest, the man Christ Jesus [Hebrews 9:11].

Therefore, while using the language of political science discourse, the Rev. William Goodell reminds us that the Western Christian democracies which the 17th-century Puritans introduced into the world were something unlike the so-called democracies of ancient Greece and Rome, because natural result of the

¹⁰² The Christian “presbyter,” then, is not really a conventional priesthood in the same sense that Aaron and his sons were priests, or in the same sense in which the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Church of England, etc., has “ordained priests.”

¹⁰³ The system of “judges” was established in Exodus, Chapter 18.

Christian religion was to break the bonds of servitude and slavery,¹⁰⁴ and to elevate the common man through common law, constitutional safeguards, and the franchise.¹⁰⁵

With this natural tendency of the Christian religion to democratize the civil polity came also the natural tendency—represented in the aims and objectives of the 16th and 17th century Protestant Reformation—to democratize the Western Church. The orthodox priesthood of the Roman Catholics and the High-Church Anglicans was replaced with the Reformed ministers of Protestantism—e.g., the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Mennonites, the Quakers, etc. (i.e., an egalitarian doctrine on the “priesthood of all believers.”)

¹⁰⁴ See, e.g., John Wesley, *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (originally published in London and Philadelphia in 1774 [public domain]), p. 4. (Rev. Wesley pointed out that slavery “gradually fell into decline in almost all parts of Europe... after Christianity prevailed. From this time Slavery was nearly extinct....”) See, also, Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York, N.Y.: Harper Perennial, 1988), p. 348, stating:

“[a]ntiquity could only have a very imperfect understanding of this effect of slavery on the production of wealth. Then slavery existed throughout the whole civilized world, only some barbarian peoples being without it. Christianity destroyed slavery by insisting on the slave’s rights; nowadays it can be attacked from the master’s point of view; in this respect interest and morality are in harmony.”

¹⁰⁵ See, e.g., William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765), Article 4, Section 2, Clause 3, at the following link: https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a4_2_3s1.html

Chapter Six

“Book of Leviticus: Priests as Lawyers and Judges in Ancient Israel”

In the Book of Leviticus, we find that the Levitical priesthood—i.e., Aaron and his sons—was authorized to administer the various laws on atonement, the health and sanitation laws regarding the Lepers, and laws regarding the ceremonial rituals and national festivals, on behalf of:

The entire body politic of the nation-state of ancient Israel.

Within the nation of ancient Israel, the office of the priesthood of Aaron had a “constitutional status,” and it was a “public office” with vested “legal and constitutional authority.”

In ancient Israel, the priests shared adjudicatory and governing responsibilities together with the judges of ancient Israel.

Levitical priests in the Old Testament served as judges in a “higher court” that handled difficult legal cases. This higher court was the final court of appeal for Israelite justice:

Deuteronomy 17: 8 - 13

8 If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose;

9 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:

10 And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

11 According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt

not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left.

12 And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.

13 And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

These Levitical priests also answered legal questions and were teachers of God's laws. But they shared these judicial functions with elders or judges who were members of the other eleven tribes of ancient Israel.

The history of the structure and function of the Jewish Sanhedrin, particularly during the Second Temple period, is worthy of note:

The Jewish Sanhedrin

The Sanhedrin (Hebrew and Middle Aramaic סַנְהֶדְרִין, a loanword from Koinē Greek: Συνέδριον, romanized: synedrion, 'assembly,' 'sitting together,' hence 'assembly' or 'council') was a legislative and judicial assembly of either 23 or 71 elders, existing at both a local and central level in the ancient Land of Israel.

There were two classes of Rabbinite courts called sanhedrins: Greater and Lesser. A lesser Sanhedrin of 23 judges was appointed to sit as a tribunal in each city.

There was only one Great Sanhedrin of 71 judges, which, among other roles, acted as a supreme court, taking appeals from cases that lesser courts decided.

In general usage, the Sanhedrin without qualifier usually refers to the Great Sanhedrin, which was presided over by the *Nasi*, who functioned as its head or representing president, and was a member of the court; the *Av Beit Din* or the chief of the court, who was second to the nasi; and 69 general members

In the Second Temple period, the Great Sanhedrin met in the Temple in Jerusalem, in a building called the Hall of Hewn Stones. The Great Sanhedrin convened every day except festivals and the sabbath day (Shabbat).

In the Hebrew Bible, Moses and the Israelites were commanded by God to establish courts of judges.

They were also commanded to establish a 'supreme court' located at the central sanctuary (after arriving in the Land of Israel), to handle cases too difficult for local courts. [citing **Deuteronomy 17: 9-12 (priests, Levites, and the judges were assigned adjudicatory responsibilities)**].

When Moses declared that the task of leading the people was too difficult for him, God had him appoint 70 elders (zekenim) to share the burden of leadership with him.

According to the Mishnah, these 70 elders plus Moses himself are the source for the 71 judges of the 'Great Sanhedrin.'

These elders are described as 'the elders of the people and its officers,' according to a midrash, they were the same officers who were beaten in Egyptian slavery for failing to meet Pharaoh's quota of bricks, and after the Exodus were rewarded with membership on the first Sanhedrin.

The 23 judges of the 'Lesser Sanhedrin' are derived from the following exegesis: it must be possible for a "community" to vote for both conviction and exoneration (Numbers 35:24–5).

The minimum size of a 'community' is 10 men, thus 10 vs 10. One more is required to achieve a majority (11 vs. 10), but a simple majority cannot convict (Exodus 23:2), and so an additional judge is required (12 vs. 10). Finally, a court should have an odd number of judges to prevent deadlocks; thus 23 rather than 22.

In Medieval England, the priests and bishops within the Roman Church of England fulfilled the duties of lawyers and judges in both royal courts and the shire and hundreds courts.¹⁰⁶ And this was largely true through Western Europe—throughout all of Christendom— where the priests were also the lawyers and judges in the civil courts.¹⁰⁷

In England, we find that this same constitutional ideal of incorporating priests into the governing body of the nation state has been incorporated into the unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom— there, several of the Church of England’s senior-most bishops sit as *Lord’s Spiritual* in the House of Lords. (And yet the entire House of Lords—both the Lords Spiritual and the Lords Temporal—is deed to be priestly and Christian.)

This idea that “**priests**” must minister as high-ranking officials to the body politic of nation states was not abrogated by Christ.

Conversely, Christ himself incorporated it into His “Great Commission” [Matthew 28: 18-20], stating:

18 ... All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to **observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you**: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Indeed, even in the United States, as Anglican priest Rev. Algernon Sydney Crapsey has observed in his *Religion and Politics* (1905), the “Oath” of government office, which utilizes the phrase, “so help me God,” is a tacit

¹⁰⁶ Roscoe Pound, “Legal Profession in the Middle Ages,” 3 *Notre Dame Law Review* 229, 234 (1944).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

acknowledgment that lawyers, judges, and civil magistrates still discharge their official duties as priestly servants of God.¹⁰⁸

Levitical Priesthood- To Help Administer Civil Polity and Government	Christian Priesthood—To Help Administer Civil Polity and Government
<p>Leviticus 19: 1- 37</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commandment to be a Holy nation • Commandment to mete out civil justice with equity, impartiality, and fairness • Commandment to help the poor and the stranger • Commandment not to defraud or do any unrighteousness in judgment; to have no respect of person; “but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.” V. 15, 35-36 • Circumcise the heart. V. 17 • Love thy neighbour as thyself. V. 18. • Do not oppress the stranger. V. 33-34 	<p>Matthew 7: 12 (“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”)</p> <p>John 7: 24 (“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”)</p>

¹⁰⁸ Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 256 – 257.

The only survival of the bond of union which once united these two institutions is the formal acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God which is expressed in the oath of office that the state requires of its officers as they enter upon their duties. This oath of office is a solemn religious act, giving divine sanction to the functions of the legal officer. When the mayor takes his oath he is bound, not simply to the service of the people, but also and more solemnly to the service of God. He is in the highest sense of the word an ordained, consecrated man. Like the King of Israel, he is the Lord’s anointed, and to the Lord he must give an account. When the officer of the state takes this oath of office seriously he makes of the state a religious institution, it rests, not only in the consent of the people, but also upon the will of God.

Leviticus 20: 1- 27

- Commandment to be a Holy Nation, v. 7-8, 26.
- Commandment not to serve Molech, whoredom, or other gods
- Commandment to follow certain sexual and family laws
- Homosexual conduct prohibited. V. 13
- The Old Testament Law reflects universal moral laws that apply not just to Israel but to all nations.
- V. 22-24 – keep all God’s statutes and judgments; do not walk in manners of other nations “which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people.”

At some point in the Old Testament, the monopoly of the Levitical priesthood slowly began to mutate into a general or common priesthood that was shared with the rabbis and other elders in ancient Israel.

This occurred primarily due to the corruption and the politics that became inherent in the Jewish priesthood as a “client office” of the enveloping Greco-Roman empires, and the loss of confidence in this priesthood’s authentic Jewish leadership.

Beginning in the Book of First Samuel, we begin to see “corruption” within the Levitical priesthood. There, we find that the High Priest Eli’s sons Hophni and Phinehas, who were also priests, had become corrupted.¹⁰⁹

In great displeasure towards this corruption, the LORD God changed this “priesthood” of ancient Israel; that is to say, a greater, perfect priesthood was prophetically foretold in the Book of First Samuel.¹¹⁰

According to Augustine of Hippo, this Book of First Samuel is an account of the Levitical priesthood being “mutated” or “changed.”¹¹¹ Augustine holds that when the Prophet Samuel succeeded the “House of Eli,” and became the new high priest and judge of ancient Israel, that his new role prefigured a future, permanent changing of the priesthood, because, although Samuel was a Levite, he was not one of the lineal descendants or sons of Aaron.¹¹²

In *The City of God*, Augustine of Hippo comments on this Book of First Samuel, and he notes that the “man of God”¹¹³ who forewarned the High Priest Eli had described the future priesthood of Christ— a “priesthood of all believers,” rather than of a select few consecrated priests:

“I desire to be a member, no matter what, or how small, of Thy priesthood. By the PRIESTHOOD he here means the PEOPLE ITSELF, of which He is the Priest who is the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. This people the Apostle Peter calls 'a holy people, a royal priesthood.'”¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ 1 Samuel 2: 12 (“Eli’s sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the Lord.”)

¹¹⁰ 1 Samuel 2: 27-36 (A man of God came to the Priest Eli and prophesied against the House of Eli).

¹¹¹ St. Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 579- 583.

¹¹² Ibid., pp. 579 - 580. In succeeding generations, however, the lineal descendants of Aaron regained the priesthood over ancient Israel.

¹¹³ 1 Samuel 2: 27.

¹¹⁴ St. Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 582.

“Put me in a part of Thy priesthood, to eat bread,' is ... the Word of God who dwells in the HEART of ONE WHO BELEIVES.”¹¹⁵

“For we see that priests and Levites are now chosen, not from a certain family and blood, as was originally the rule in the priesthood according to the order of Aaron, but as befits the new testament, under which Christ is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, in consideration of the merit which is bestowed upon each man by divine grace. And these priests are not to be judged by their mere title, which is often borne by unworthy men, but by that HOLINESS which is not common to good men and bad.”¹¹⁶

To the words, ‘In them the second death hath no power,’ are added the words, ‘but they shall be priests of God and Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years;’ and this refers not to the bishops alone, and presbyters, who are no specially called priests in the Church; but as we call all believers Christians on account of the mystical chrisim, so we call priests because they are members of the one Priest. Of them the Apostle Peter says, ‘A holy people, a royal priesthood.’¹¹⁷

Now the history of the fall of the Second Temple in Jerusalem coincides with the slow demise of the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood.¹¹⁸

Finally, suddenly at the time of Passover, in circa 34 A.D., the man Christ Jesus changed that Levitical priesthood forever at is Last Supper with his disciples (Mark 14: 22-24), through the following words:

Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, 'Take, eat: this is my body.' And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 746.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 728-729.

¹¹⁸ See the third essay in this series, “The Destruction of the Second Temple, the New Testament Priesthood, and the Early Church” and the fifth essay, “The First and Second Maccabees (Apocrypha) as Prologue to the New Testament.”

said unto them, 'This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.'

This New Testament priesthood would carry on the Levitical and Rabbinical tradition of judging and interpretation of law. Like Judaism, the New Testament religion of Jesus also emphasized the admonition given in Deuteronomy 16:20, "Justice, justice shall you pursue...."¹¹⁹ For the Apostle Paul commanded, "if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church.... Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers?"¹²⁰ And he asked, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?"¹²¹

Similarly in *The City of God*, Book 20, Part 9, "What the reign of the saints with Christ for a thousand years is, and how it differs from the eternal kingdom," Augustine of Hippo interprets the book of Revelation to mean that, during this thousand year reign of Christ and his church—which is the present age—that the saints shall sit in the seats of judgment and shall judge, stating:

But while the devil is bound, the saints reign with Christ during the same thousand years.... [T]he Church could not now be called His kingdom or the kingdom of heaven unless His saints were even now reigning with Him.... For, after saying that the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterward loosed for a short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, 'And I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given.' It is not to be supposed that this

¹¹⁹ See, e.g., "Jesus in the Synagogue" [<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/magazine/jesus-in-the-synagogue/>] ("As the local town hall and place of Jewish law, public synagogues also served other civic functions, especially that of a court of law and justice. The Gospels and Acts mention this on a number of occasions (Mark 13:9; Matthew 23:34; Luke 12:11-12; Acts 22:19)... Similar hints at the judicial function of synagogues appear in the Mishnah as well (Makkot 3:12; Shevu'ot 4:10)." [See, e.g., Luke 10: 25-37 (Jesus tested by "expert in the law" (NIV) or "lawyer" (KJV)); Luke 11: 45-52 (Jesus' debating "experts in the law" (NIV) or "lawyers" (KJV))]. Hence, Jesus of Nazareth "discussed and debated the interpretation and practice of Jewish law in synagogues (Mark 3:1-6; Luke 13:14-17; John 6:30-59).")

¹²⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:4-5.

¹²¹ 1 Corinthians 6:2.

refers to the last judgment, but to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the Church is now governed. And no better interpretation of judgment being given can be produced than that which we have in the words, ‘What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’... The Church, then, begins its reign with Christ now in the living and in the dead.¹²²

Augustine of Hippo opines that human society “compels” Christian lawyers and judges to the “duty” of judging and determining just, moral and righteous judgments in practical human affairs. For instance, in *The City of God*, Augustine speaks of the “error of human judgments when the truth is hidden,”¹²³ in which he writes: “What shall I say of these judgments which men pronounce on men, and which are necessary in communities, whatever outward peace they enjoy? Melancholy and lamentable judgments they are, since the judges are men who cannot discern the consciences of those at their bar... If such darkness shrouds social life, **will a wise judge take his seat on the bench or no? Beyond question he will. For human society, which he thinks it a wickedness to abandon, constrains him and compels him to this duty.**”¹²⁴

Therefore, in Reformed theology, we claim that the New Testament priesthood is both “secular-civil” and “sacerdotal-ecclesiastical.”¹²⁵

¹²² St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 725-727.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 681-682.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ E.g., Protestant Reformer Martin Luther (1483- 1546) has stated:

Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate(1520)(stating, “the *temporal authorities* are baptized with the same baptism and have the same faith and Gospel as we, we must grant that *they are priests and bishops*, and count their office one which has a proper and a useful place in the Christian community.”)

Temporal Authority: To What Extent it should be Obeyed (1523)(stating, “[h]ere you inquire further, whether constables, hangmen, jurists, lawyers, and others of similar function can also be Christians and in a state of salvation. Answer: If the *governing authority* and its sword are a *divine service*, as was proved above, then everything that is essential for the authority's bearing of the sword must also be divine service.”)

PART FOUR

Chapter Seven

“Book of Leviticus: The ‘Law of Moses’ (i.e., Holiness) is Upheld and Fulfilled in Christ’s Crucifixion”

Though Christ changed the Old Covenant priesthood and instituted a new one, the Law of Moses’ mandates for **“holiness before the LORD”**¹²⁶ were never changed. See, e.g., “Introduction” to the Book of Leviticus, contained in the Thomas Nelson King James Version (2017), stating:

Levitus is God’s guidebook for His newly redeemed people, showing them how to worship, serve, and obey a holy God. Fellowship with God through sacrifice and obedience show the awesome holiness of the God of Israel. Indeed, ‘**“Ye shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy”**’ (Lev. 19:2).

Thus, since **“holiness before the LORD”** was the central objective of the Book of Leviticus—not simply the performance of the various animal sacrifices and other offerings¹²⁷— Christ’s New Covenant never changed or abrogated that very high standard of holiness.

¹²⁶

Holiness

See, e.g., Lev. 11: 44-45, stating, “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.... For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God....”

Justice and Judgment

See, e.g., Genesis 18: 18-19, stating, “Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Hence, under both the Old Testament and New Testament schemes, **“holiness before the LORD”** is the central objective and must be achieved.

Old Law (or Old Covenant and Testament)	New Law (or New Covenant and Testament)
<p><u>Moral and Spiritual Law:</u> Reconciliation to God; Holiness; Righteousness; Justice and Judgment.</p>	<p><u>Moral and Spiritual Law:</u> Reconciliation to God; Holiness; Righteousness; Justice and Judgment.</p>

As previously stated, the Book of Leviticus continues to **point us in the direction** of “crucifixion” of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, as the Apostle Paul has explained, “through the law [of Moses] we become conscious of our sin... Do we, then, nullify the law [of Moses] by this faith [in Jesus Christ]? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law [of Moses],” wrote the Apostle Paul (Romans 3:20, 31)[NIV]. Hence, the **Christian religion**, which upholds the “law [of Moses]”—i.e., “holiness”¹²⁸— through “faith [in Jesus Christ],” is really and truly “ancient **Judaism**, without the ceremonial sacrifices.”

¹²⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Eight

“Book of Leviticus: The Christian Religion Does Not Lower or Change the Holiness Standards in Leviticus”

Did Christ ever change or lower the standards of holiness— ever?

“For I say unto you,” Christ once explained, “That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”¹²⁹

And in his famed “Sermon on the Mount,” while expounding upon the Law of Moses, Christ himself stated:

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

This brings us, for example, to questions such as whether, under the New Testament, Christians are at liberty to violate the “holiness” standards (i.e., moral laws) which are contained in Leviticus 20: 1-27, namely, commandments such as:

v. 1 “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying...”

v. 7 “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.”

v. 8 “And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.”

v. 10. “And the man that committeh adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committed adultery... shall surely be put to death.”

v. 13 “If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.”

¹²⁹ Matthew 5: 20.

v. 15 “And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.”

First off, under the principle of biblical hermeneutics previously set forth, we must now conclude that Jesus Christ—the Word of the LORD—is himself doing the speaking and the commanding in the Book of Leviticus.¹³⁰

For instance, we may rightfully conclude that Christ himself has forbidden, e.g., homosexual conduct in the Book of Leviticus.¹³¹

Mosaic Laws against Sin and Abomination	No Change Under the New Testament
<p>Leviticus 18: 1- 30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Old Testament Law reflects universal moral laws that apply not just to Israel but to all nations. • For “abominations,” the other nations are judged and destroyed. V. 27-28. • V. 25 (“And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.”) • V. 27-28 (“For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled; that the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.”) 	<p>Matthew 5: 48 (“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”)</p>

¹³⁰ On the contrary, in Reformed theology, where the LORD God (YHVH) speaks in the Old Testament, it was also Christ himself doing the speaking, such that any commandments given to Moses in the Old Testament were Christ’s own commandments, which only Christ himself could change.

¹³¹ But many Christians have argued that Old Testament commandments, such as the prohibitions against two men having sexual intercourse with other men have been abrogated by the New Testament, since ostensibly Christ himself said nothing directly about homosexuality in the Gospels.

- V. 30 (“Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.”)

Leviticus 19: 1- 37

- Commandment to be a Holy nation
- Commandment to mete out civil justice with equity, impartiality, and fairness
- Commandment to help the poor and the stranger
- Commandment not to defraud or do any unrighteousness in judgment; to have no respect of person; “but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.” V. 15, 35-36
- Circumcise the heart. V. 17
- Love thy neighbour as thyself. V. 18.
- Do not oppress the stranger. V. 33-34

Leviticus 20: 1- 27

- Commandment to be a Holy Nation, v. 7-8, 26.
- Commandment not to serve Molech, whoredom, or other gods
- Commandment to follow certain sexual and family laws

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homosexual conduct prohibited. V. 13 • The Old Testament Law reflects universal moral laws that apply not just to Israel but to all nations. • V. 22-24 – keep all God’s statutes and judgments; do not walk in manners of other nations “which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people.” 	
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Must we Christians assume that Christ’s silence about “homosexual acts” in the New Testament means that he approves of such actions, when the Old Testament clearly condemns it as an “abomination”?¹³²

¹³² See, e.g., St. Augustine of Hippo’s *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 36, stating:

Can it ever, at any time or place, be unrighteous for a man to love god with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind; and his neighbor as himself? Similarly, **offenses against nature are everywhere and at all times to be held in detestation and should be punished.** Such offenses, for example, were **those of the Sodomites**; and, even if all nations should commit them, they would all be judged guilty of the same crime by which the divine law, **which has not made men so that they should ever abuse one another in that way.** For the fellowship that should be between god and us is violated whenever that nature of which he is the author is polluted by perverted lust.

But these offenses against customary morality are to be avoided according to the variety of such customs. Thus, what is agreed upon by convention, and confirmed by custom or the law of any city or nation, may not be violated at the lawless pleasure of any, whether citizen or stranger. For any part that is not consistent with its whole is unseemly. Nevertheless, when god commands anything contrary to the customs or compacts of any nation, even though it were never done by them before, it is to be done; and if it has been interrupted, it is to be restored; and if it has never been established, it is to be established.

Clear reason, standard biblical hermeneutics, and basic jurisprudence commends us to answer this question in the negative.¹³³ Indeed, unless Christ himself made such a change to any plain commandment in the Old Testament, then Old Testament commandments remain valid and in full force in the New Testament—for it is Christ himself who speaks, as the Word of the LORD, in the Book of Leviticus, and throughout the Old Testament.

CONCLUSION

In Reformed theology, the entire body of the Christian faithful are “priests” and may consider themselves to be the rightful heirs to the priests and Levites of the Old Testament.

For this reason, the book of Leviticus is an archeological reflection of the New Testament Church, because its battery of laws on atonement and sacrifice point us to the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. But whereas the priests and the Levites in the Old Testament offered sacrifices to atone for their sins, the New Testament priests have been cleansed of their sins through faith in Christ and thereby are able to present their own bodies as living sacrifices in righteousness and holiness.

According to Reformed theology in general, since the New Testament Church priesthood is fiercely egalitarian and democratic, its ecclesiology is seemingly more presbyterian and congregational than hierarchical and episcopalian. Likewise, in Reformed theology, the secular institutions of civil polity, which respond to this Christian influence, tend more toward the principles

For it is lawful for a king, in the state over which he reigns, to command that which neither he himself nor anyone before him had commanded. And if it cannot be held to be inimical to the public interest to obey him—and, in truth, it would be inimical if he were not obeyed, since obedience to princes is a general compact of human society—how much more, then, ought we unhesitatingly to obey god, the governor of all his creatures! For just as among the authorities in human society, the greater authority is obeyed before the lesser, so also must god be above all.

¹³³ Ibid.

of Western democracy and republican institutions than monarchy or authoritarianism.

APPENDIX

by

Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, Litt.D., LL.D.

Appendix A

“Of Philo of Alexandria: A First-Century Jewish Conception of the Godhead”

The first-century Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (c 20 BC – 40 AD) referred to a particular “Angel” in the Old Testament as the *logos* [i.e., Word] or as “divine reason,” stating:

[F]or until a man is made perfect he uses divine reason as the guide of his path, for that is the sacred oracle of scripture: ‘Behold, I send my angel before thy face that he may keep thee in the road, so as to lead thee into the land which I have prepared for thee. Attend thou to him, and listen to him; do not disobey him; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.’¹³⁴

For, indeed, in his essay, “Who is the Heir of Divine Things,” Philo goes so far as to identify the *logos* of Greco-Roman philosophy with the LORD God’s **divine word** spoken throughout the Torah.

Philo gives definite imagery to this “divine Word” or “sacred word” one who “stand in the midst between the dead and the living.” He also calls it “reasoning” that “separated off the holy men who live in sincerity from the unholy who in real

¹³⁴ “On the Migration of Abraham,” *The Works of Philo* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., LLC, 1993), p. 270.

truth are dead.” Philo describes this “sacred word” as “a strong boundary fixed in the middle between” the faithful and the faithless, saving the former while leaving the later exposed to disease and death.¹³⁵

Thus, even during the time of Christ, an Alexandrian Jew named Philo had already begun to deduce that there was second member of the godhead which he called “the divine Word,” and which functioned universally, stating:

Therefore, the two natures are indivisible, the nature, I mean, of the reasoning power in us, and of the divine Word above us; but though they are indivisible themselves, they divide an innumerable multitude of other things.

For it is the divine Word which divided and distributed every thing in nature; and it is our own mind which divides every thing and every body which it comprehends, by the exertion of its intellect in an infinite manner, in an infinite number of parts, and which, in fact, never ceased from dividing.

And this happens by reason of its resemblance to the Creator and Father of the universe; for the divine nature, being unmingled, uncombined with anything else, and most completely destitute of parts, has been to the whole world the cause of mixture, and combination, and of an infinite variety of parts; so that very naturally, the two things which is in us and that which is above us, being without parts and indivisible, will still be able in a powerful manner to divide and distribute all existing things.¹³⁶

Philo’s conception of the Jewish religion, from which sprang the Christian religion, was never disserved from reason, logic, analytics, philosophy, the sciences, the so-called liberal arts—since all of these intellectual or spiritual pursuits are simply

¹³⁵ “Who is the Heir of Divine Things,” *The Works of Philo* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., LLC, 1993), p. 293.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296. See, also, *Ibid.*, p. 293 (“Therefore the sacred Word, having given us instruction respecting the division into equal parts, leads us also to the knowledge of opposites, saying that God placed the divisions ‘opposite to one another.’”)

subcomponents of the creation uttered into existence through means of the sacred Word.

For the objective of this discussion, however, we shall not focus our attention upon Christ as *logos*, since that discussion has already been set forth in the first essay in this series, “Jesus Christ, the Logos of God, and the Foundation of Civil Law and Secular Jurisprudence.”¹³⁷ Here we shall focus on Jesus Christ as a member of the divine godhead, as referenced in the first five books of Moses (i.e., the Torah).

In addition to the previously-mentioned reference in **Exodus 23: 20-23** (i.e., the Angel), Philo also cites two other references in the Torah, namely:

Exodus 14:19: “And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.” Here Philo finds great symbolism in “the cloud” which prevented the Egyptian army from overtaking and capturing the fleeing children of Israel. Symbolically, says Philo, “the cloud... gently showers down wisdom on the minds which study virtue—wisdom which cannot be visited by any evil.”¹³⁸

Numbers 16:48: “And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.” Although the Sacred Scriptures says in Numbers 16: 44-50, that Moses commanded Aaron to make an atonement for all Israel, and to stand before them, the first-century Jewish philosopher Philo emphasizes that Aaron’s actions were commanded and carried out through “that sacred word which runs on with zeal, in one continued course, without taking breath, ‘In order to stand in the midst between the dead and the living...’”¹³⁹

¹³⁷ You may find a copy of that essay through clicking on the following link:
<https://nebula.wsimg.com/d8c1aea3d122eb68f1b40e3fbb92bcc2?AccessKeyId=CFD051C099636C9F5827&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ “Who is the Heir of Divine Things,” *The Works of Philo* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., LLC, 1993), p. 293.

Thus, utilizing and explaining through masterful allegory the passages contained in **Exodus 14:19** and **Numbers 16: 48**, Philo goes on to describe the Word, as follows:

And the Father who created the universe has given to his **archangelic** and **most ancient Word** a pre-eminent gift, to stand on the confines of both, and separated that which had been created from the Creator. And this **same Word** is **continually a suppliant to the immortal God** on behalf of the moral race, which is exposed to affliction and misery; and is also **the ambassador**, sent by the Ruler of all, to the subject race. And the Word rejoices in the gift, and, exulting in it, announces it and boasts of it, saying, ‘**And I stood in the midst, and between the Lord and you;**’ neither being un-created as God, nor yet created as you, but being in the midst between these two extremities, like a hostage, as it were, to both parties: a hostage to the Creator, as a **pledge and security that the whole race would never fly off and revolt entirely**, choosing disorder rather than order; and to the creature, to lead it to entertain a confident hope that the merciful God would not overlook his own work. For I will proclaim peaceful intelligence to the creation from him who has determined to destroy wars, namely God, who is ever the guardian of peace.¹⁴⁰

Hence, Philo’s authentic first-century Jewish interpretation of the Torah constitutes sufficient authority for present-day Christians to conclude that, even within Orthodox Judaism, there is this theology of a compound godhead that includes “the sacred Word” as a subcomponent of the LORD God (YHVH).

In the Book of Judges, there is a similar reference to “an angel of the LORD” who speaks as though he is more than a messenger but rather as though he were a component of the Godhead, to wit:

And **an angel of the LORD** came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, **I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto**

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

2 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but **ye have not obeyed my voice**: why have ye done this?

3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

4 And it came to pass, when **the angel of the LORD** spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.¹⁴¹

For it is clear that this “angel of the LORD” is the “word of God” who is also Christ Jesus.¹⁴²

Hence, in the Torah, whenever the LORD God (YHVH) communicates anything to human beings, it is his “sacred Word” who does the communicating on His behalf. In Reformed theology, and indeed in most orthodox Christian interpretations of the Sacred Scriptures, that “sacred Word” is Jesus Christ.

¹⁴¹ Judges 2: 1-4.

¹⁴² John 1: 1-3.

Appendix B

“Of Messianic Judaism: A Theological View of the Godhead”

The Reformed interpretation of the tri-unity or triune nature of the godhead is taken directly from the Pauline letters and constitutes a Messianic Jewish interpretation of the Torah:

While Jewish tradition has commonly rejected the idea of the Trinity, there is no doubt that Judaism portrays **a plurality of God’s existence**.

All the evidence so far rests firmly on the Hebrew language of the Scriptures. If we are to base our theology on Scriptures alone, we have to say that they affirm God’s unity, while at the same time they tend towards the concept of **a compound unity**. There is room for plurality in the Godhead....

First, there are numerous references to the LORD YHVH.

Second, there is a personality referred to as **the Angel of YHVH** who is considered distinct from the other angels. In passages where He is found, He is referred to as both the Angel of YHVH and YHVH Himself. For instance, in Genesis 16:7, He is referred to as the Angel of YHVH, but then in 16:13, as YHVH Himself. In Genesis 22:11, He is the Angel of YHVH, but God Himself in 22:12. Exodus 23:20–23 presents an angel who has the power to pardon sin because God’s own name YHVH is in him. This can hardly be said of any ordinary angel. But the very fact that God’s own name is in this angel shows his divine status.

A third major personality that comes through is the **Spirit of God**, often referred to as the **Ruach Ha-kodesh**. There are a good number of references to the Spirit of God in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Holy

Spirit cannot be a mere emanation because He contains all the characteristics of personality (intellect, emotion, and will) and is considered divine.

So then, from various sections of the Hebrew Scriptures, there is clear evidence that **three personalities** are referred to as divine and as being God: the **LORD YHVH**, the **Angel of YHVH**, and the **Spirit of God....**

If the concept of the Tri-unity in the Godhead is not Jewish according to modern rabbis, then neither are the Hebrew Scriptures. Jewish Christians cannot be accused of having slipped into paganism when they hold to the fact that Jesus is the divine Son of God. He is the same one of whom Moses wrote when he said:

Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and **obey his voice; do not rebel against him**, for he will not pardon your transgression, for **my name is in him**. But if you **carefully obey his voice and do all that I say**, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out. (Exodus 23:20–23).

Here we find Jesus Christ moving and shaping events in the Torah, and there He is referred to as the “Angel of the LORD.” Here in Exodus 23: 20-23, where Moses himself writes writing about “an Angel,” he writes about Christ.

Appendix C

“Of the Protestant Reformation and the New Testament Priesthood”

A word about the influence of John Calvin (1509 – 1564) upon the “priesthood” of the Western Church is now fully appropriate. For one thing, we must here acknowledge the logic and potency of Calvinism or of Reformed theology.

‘The idea of one universal priesthood, known in such living power to the first Christians, had been revived by Luther, in the sixteenth century. But this idea seems to have dwelt only in the Lutheran Church, and was really acted out only among the congregations of the Reformed Churches. The Lutheran congregations (agreeing, in this point, with the Anglican Church) took, it seems, a middle course, between the Romish and the Reformed Churches. Among the Lutherans, everything proceeded from the pastor or priest, and nothing was valid in the church, but what was regularly conveyed through its rulers. But the Reformed churches, while they maintained the divine appointment of the ministry—by some sects denied—approached nearer to the primitive condition of the apostolical communities.’¹⁴³

Before John Calvin, the European university systems were dominated by the Roman Catholic Church—such that to obtain a university degree was almost synonymous with ordination to the priesthood.

The first university degree was the law degree, and it was invented for the Roman Catholic priesthood.

¹⁴³ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852), p. 482.

The first academic degrees were law degrees, and the first law degrees were doctorates. The foundations of the first universities in Europe were the glossators of the 11th century, which were schools of law. The first European university, Bologna, was founded by four legal scholars in the 12th century. The first academic title of "doctor" applied to scholars of law. The degree and title were not applied to scholars of other disciplines until the 13th century.¹⁴⁴

When Calvinism gained its foothold in the 17th century, the common man was officially admitted to the “priesthood” which the Roman Catholic Church has formerly dominated. When that occurred, the university slowly began to cater to the “sacred callings and the noble life’s works” of the common man.

Ecclesiastical historians of Scottish Presbyterianism note this effect upon the Church of Scotland following the Protestant Reformation which the Calvinistic reformer John Knox brought to Britain.¹⁴⁵

The “*priesthood of all believers*” doctrine, when applied to common work of everyday laymen, produced the West (i.e., modern Europe, North America, and other emerging economies). This phenomenon has been accurately described in Max Weber’s *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, as follows:

One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of the calling.... The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly

¹⁴⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_degree

¹⁴⁵ See, e.g., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/education/The-Calvinist-Reformation>, stating:

In Scotland in 1560, John Knox, a disciple of Calvin and the leader of the Scottish Presbyterians, aimed at **setting up schools in every community**, but the nobility prevented this from actually being carried out. The major educational contributions of Calvinism were **its diffusion to a larger number of people and the development of Protestant education at the university level**. Not only was Geneva significant but also the Universities of Leiden (1575), Amsterdam (1632), and Utrecht (1636) in the Netherlands and the University of Edinburgh (1582) in Scotland. The Puritan, or English Calvinist, movement was responsible for the founding of Emmanuel College at the University of Cambridge (1584).

morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order.¹⁴⁶

Hence, all productive, lawful human endeavors — both secular and sacred— became “priestly” endeavors under the Protestant and Reformed doctrine on *the priesthood of all believers*.

If all Christians are “priests,” then all productive, lawful human endeavors is “priestly,” then the foundations of modern Western democracy rightfully be said to rest in the Christian religion.

Indeed, as Martin Luther (1483 – 1546) has written, even the “temporal authority,” which is the civil government, is “divine,” and, consequently, the governors and civil magistrates are indeed ordained “priests and bishops,” together with the ordained clergy.¹⁴⁷ I surmise here that Luther’s assessment of civil government is the official Protestant and Reformed doctrine on civil polity and democracy.¹⁴⁸

Hence, we Reformed theologians tend to hold that “democracy” is impossible without the essential principles of the “Christian religion”— i.e., that the death of the Christian faith can only mean the death of democracy. This general theological principle has been quite lucidly set forth in Rev. Goodell’s *The Democracy of Christianity*, to wit:

[T]he spirit and the usages of democracy distinguished the first Christians and the times of the apostles... this was in accordance with the genius and spirit of the Christian religion....¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Max Weber, *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, N.Y.: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1930 [Vigeo Press Reprint, 2017][), pp. 128-129.

¹⁴⁷ Martin Luther, *Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520)(“[T]he temporal authorities are baptized with the same baptism and have the same faith and Gospel as we, we must grant that they are priests and bishops, and count their office one which has a proper and a useful place in the Christian community.”)

¹⁴⁸ See, also, William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, p. 376 (“ ‘the **lawful power is from God** alone....”); p. 387 (“The magistrates, ostensibly appointed **to administer justice**, they were to obey, so far as they could without disobedience to God.”)

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

What is wanting, both in England and America, to the completeness and the security of human freedom, is an undeviating fidelity to those principles of Christian democracy which the Puritans in some measure restored.... If the people desire larger measures of liberty, they have only to become more democratic, more Christians....¹⁵⁰

The question of perpetuated liberty in North America is the same question. Shall the voice of Bible Christianity, in all its comprehensiveness of import, be heard, and obeyed?... As we determine that question, we settle the destinies of our country. Obeying Christianity, we are democratic. Rebelling against it, we become servile.¹⁵¹

The influence of the “*priesthood of all believers*” has been the dignity of the common man and basic democracy, and the Reformed theology of Calvinism has been its principal champion and exponent; whereas the principle countervailing influences have all the socioeconomic, political, and spiritual forces which tend towards inequality, exploitation, and human oppression.

Now the very issues and concerns which led Martin Luther (1483 – 1546) and others to revolt against Roman Catholicism were manifest in the Early Church as early as the third century, A.D. Beginning with Terullian and the Monatists, there were scores of dissenters or puritans who continuously arose upon within the Western Church and challenged many of the orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith, particularly, the role of bishops and priests within the local church.

<p>Protestant Movements in the Universal Church since the Second Century, A.D.</p>	<p>History of the “Puritan” Movement to re-establish the true meaning of “Priesthood of all Believers” in the Church</p>
<p>Tertullian</p>	<p>“Tertullian (/tər'tʌliən/; Latin: Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus; c. 155 – c. 220 AD) was a prolific early Christian author from Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. He was the first</p>

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 484.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 487.

	<p>Christian author to produce an extensive corpus of Latin Christian literature and was an early Christian apologist and a polemicist against heresy, including contemporary Christian Gnosticism.</p> <p>“Tertullian was the first theologian to write in Latin, and so has been called ‘the father of Latin Christianity,’ as well as ‘the founder of Western theology.’ He is perhaps most famous for being the first writer in Latin known to use the term trinity (Latin: trinitas)....</p> <p>“Tertullian has been claimed to have been a trained lawyer and an ordained priest....</p> <p>“Ronald E. Heine writes, ‘With Novatianism we return to the spirit of Tertullian, and the issue of Christian discipline.’”</p> <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tertullian</p> <p>“It was after the year 206 that [Tertullian] joined the Montanist sect, and he seems to have definitively separated from the Church about 211 (Harnack) or 213 (Monceaux). After writing more virulently against the Church than even against heathen and persecutors, he separated from the Montanists and founded a sect of his own. The remnant of the Tertullianists was reconciled to the Church by St. Augustine. A number of the works of Tertullian are on special points of belief or discipline. According to St. Jerome he lived to extreme old age.</p> <p>Source: https://www.newadvent.org/</p>
<p>Monatists (2nd Century, A.D., North Africa)</p>	<p>“Montanism (/ˈmɒntəˌnɪzəm/), known by its adherents as the New Prophecy, was an early Christian movement[broken anchor] of the late 2nd century, later referred to by the name of its founder, Montanus.</p> <p>Montanism held views about the basic tenets of Christian theology similar to those of the wider</p>

	<p>Christian Church, but it was labelled a heresy for its belief in new prophetic figures.</p> <p>The prophetic movement called for a reliance on the spontaneity of the Holy Spirit and a more conservative personal ethic....</p> <p>The Montanist movement spread rapidly to other regions in the Roman Empire before Christianity was generally tolerated or became legal following the Edict of Serdica in 311. It persisted in some isolated places into the 6th century.</p> <p>The Montanists did not want to separate themselves from the wider Christian Church, and the Christian theologian Tertullian even recorded an event where a bishop almost declared Montanism as orthodox, however changing his mind later.</p> <p>Some contemporary Christian theologians have drawn parallels between Montanism and modern-day Protestant movements, such as the Charismatic movement, as well as Pentecostalism (including Oneness Pentecostals).”</p> <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montanism</p>
<p>Novatianists (3rd Century, A.D., North Africa)</p>	<p>“Novatianism or Novationism was an early Christian sect devoted to the theologian Novatian (c. 200–258) that held a strict view that refused readmission to communion of lapsi (those baptized Christians who had denied their faith or performed the formalities of a ritual sacrifice to the pagan gods under the pressures of the persecution sanctioned by Emperor Decius in AD 250).</p> <p>“The Church of Rome declared the Novatianists heretical following the letters of Saint Cyprian of Carthage[2] and Ambrose wrote against them. Novatianism survived until the 8th century.</p> <p>“Novatian theology was heavily influenced by Tertullian, and made heavy use of his writings....</p>

	<p>“[Novatian was] consecrated bishop by three bishops of Italy and declared himself to be the true Pope. He and his followers were excommunicated by a synod held at Rome in October of the same year....</p> <p>“Novatian believed that being inside the church is not a requirement for salvation, but that the church is a congregation of saints, and if sinners would be let inside the church, it would endanger the church....</p> <p>Novatians always had a successor of Novatian in Rome (where Novatian was from) and they used the episcopal polity....</p> <p>“Augustine writes that the Novatians would rebaptize people who came from the Catholic Church....</p> <p>“[T]he Novatianist sect spread rapidly and could be found in every province and were very numerous in some places.</p> <p>“Those who allied themselves with his doctrines were called Novatianists, but they called themselves καθαροι (katharoi) or "Purists" (not to be confused with the later Cathars) to reflect their desire not to be identified with what they considered the lax practices of a corrupted and what was hitherto a universal Church....</p> <p>“Because Novatianists (including Novatian) did not submit to the bishop of Rome, they were labeled by Rome as schismatics. Additionally, Rome also labeled Novatianists heretics for denying that the Church had the power to grant absolution in certain cases (such as to the <i>lapsi</i>).”</p> <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novatianism</p>
<p>Donatists (4th to 7th Century, A.D.; North Africa)</p>	<p>“Donatist, a member of a Christian group in North Africa that broke with the Roman Catholics in 312 over the election of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage; the name derived from their leader, Donatus (d. c. 355). Historically, the Donatists belong to the tradition of early Christianity that produced the Montanist and Novatianist movements in Asia Minor and the Melitians in</p>

	<p>Egypt. They opposed state interference in church affairs....</p> <p>“The ultimate causes of the schism were both doctrinal and social. Throughout the 3rd century the prevailing tradition in the African church had regarded the church as a body of the elect. This view, which was espoused by Cyprian and developed in response to earlier controversy, had as its corollary the belief that the validity of sacerdotal acts depended on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the minister and that a minister who was not in a state of grace could not administer a valid sacrament. At the same time, riches and sin had tended to become identified; mammon and the Roman world were equally to be shunned....</p> <p>When Julian the Apostate became emperor in 361, the exiled Donatists returned to Africa and were the majority Christian party for the next 30 years. Their opponents, however, now led by St. Augustine of Hippo, gained strength, and in 411 a conference presided over by Augustine’s friend the imperial tribune Marcellinus was held in Carthage. This council decided against the Donatists and for the Catholics. In 412 and 414 severe laws denied the Donatists civil and ecclesiastical rights; however, the Donatists expected hostility from the world as part of the natural order of things, and they survived into the 7th century.”</p> <p>Source: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Donatists</p>
<p>Aerians (4th Century, A.D.)</p>	<p>“[O]ne of a 4th century a.d. Arian sect that believed in the equality of bishops and priests and repudiated prayers for the dead and compulsory fasts.”</p> <p>Source: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Aerian</p>
<p>Paulicians (7th & 8th Century, A.D.; Asia Minor)</p>	<p>“The sources indicate that most Paulician leaders were Armenians and the founder of the sect is said</p>

	<p>to have been an Armenian by the name of Constantine, who hailed from Mananalis, a community near Samosata. He studied the Gospels and Epistles, combined dualistic and Christian doctrines and vigorously opposed the formalism of the church. Regarding himself as having been called to restore the pure Christianity of Paul the Apostle, he adopted the name Silvanus (after one of Paul's disciples), and about 660, he founded his first congregation at Kibossa, Armenia. Twenty-seven years later, he was arrested by the Imperial authorities, tried for heresy and stoned to death.</p> <p>“Simeon, the court official who executed the order, was himself converted, and adopting the name Titus, became Constantine's successor. He was burned to death, the punishment pronounced upon the Manichaeans, in 690....</p> <p>“There are few sources for the beliefs of the Paulicians except for the reports of opponents and some Paulician material preserved in the History of the Paulician Heresy by Petrus Siculus, comprising certain letters ascribed to Sergius-Tychicus and, seemingly, a reworking of an account of their history composed by the Paulicians themselves....</p> <p>“In the 1940s, Soviet scholars saw the sect primarily as a product of proletarian revolt which found expression through a theological movement. Garsoïan agreed that this assertion is supported by both Greek and Armenian sources, but held it only a limited description of the sect.”</p> <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulicianism</p>
<p>Albigenses (12th & 13th Century, A.D.; France)</p>	<p>“It is exceedingly difficult to form any very precise idea of the Albigensian doctrines because present knowledge of them is derived from their opponents and from the very rare and uninformative Albigensian texts which have come down to us. What is certain is that, above all, they formed an antisacerdotal party in permanent opposition to the Roman church and raised a continued protest against the corruption of the</p>

	<p>clergy of their time. The Albigensian theologians and ascetics, known in the south of France as bons hommes or bons chrétiens, were always few in number.”</p> <p>Source: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Albigenses</p>
<p>Waldenses (12th Century, A.D., France and Italy)</p>	<p>“The Waldensians, also known as Waldenses (/wɔ:l'densi:z, wɒl-/), Vallenses, Valdesi, or Vaudois, are adherents of a church tradition that began as an ascetic movement within Western Christianity before the Reformation. Originally known as the Poor of Lyon in the late twelfth century, the movement spread to the Cottian Alps in what is today France and Italy. The founding of the Waldensians is attributed to Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant who gave away his property around 1173, preaching apostolic poverty as the way to perfection.</p> <p>“Waldensian teachings came into conflict with the Catholic Church and by 1215 the Waldensians were declared heretical, not because they preached apostolic poverty, which the Franciscans also preached, but because they were not willing to recognize the prerogatives of local bishops over the content of their preaching, nor to recognize standards about who was fit to preach. Pope Innocent III offered the Waldensians the chance to return to the Church, and many did, taking the name ‘Poor Catholics.’ However, many did not, and were subjected to intense persecution and were confronted with organised and general discrimination in the following centuries. In the sixteenth century, the Waldensians were absorbed into the Protestant movement, under the influence of early Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger.</p> <p>“In some aspects the Waldensians of the Middle Ages could be seen as proto-Protestants, but they mostly did not raise the doctrinal objections characteristic of sixteenth-century Protestant leaders. They came to align themselves with Protestantism: with the Resolutions of Chanforan [fr] on 12 September 1532, they formally became a part of the Calvinist tradition. They are members of the Community of Protestant Churches in</p>

	<p>Europe and its affiliates worldwide. They were nearly annihilated in the seventeenth century.</p> <p>“The main denomination within the movement was the Waldensian Evangelical Church, the original church in Italy. In 1975, it merged with the Methodist Evangelical Church to form the Union of Methodist and Waldensian Churches—a majority Waldensian church, with a minority of Methodists.”</p> <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waldensians</p>
<p>Vaudios (same as the <i>Waldesians</i>; 12th Century, A.D., France and Italy)</p>	<p>“Vaudois can refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waldensians, members of a Christian sect also known as Vaudois • People who live in the canton of Vaud, Switzerland” <p>Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaudois</p> <p>“The Vaudois were members of a Christian sect founded at Lyon in 1179 by Pierre Valdo. They only admitted belief in the Bible, especially the Apostles of early Christianity. They refused the sacraments and the cult of Saints, and they established their own clergy. The Vaudois were excommunicated in 1184.</p> <p>“The doctrine included absolute poverty and non-violence. The Vaudois sect, similar in some respects to the Cathars or to 16th-c Calvinism, numbered about 20,000 members. They sent forth pairs of missionaries to many lands, and were persecuted savagely in France, Italy and especially Spain....</p> <p>“On 17 February 1848, the King of Sardinia granted his Vaudois subjects freedom of religion on an equality with his other subjects. The 800-year war between Rome and the mountain Church was ended.”</p> <p>Source: https://www.beyond.fr/history/vaudois.html</p>

Lollards (14th Century, A.D.; England)

“Lollard, in late medieval England, a follower, after about 1382, of John Wycliffe, a University of Oxford philosopher and theologian whose unorthodox religious and social doctrines in some ways anticipated those of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation. The name, used pejoratively, derived from the Middle Dutch lollaert (‘mumbler’), which had been applied earlier to certain European continental groups suspected of combining pious pretensions with heretical belief.”

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Lollards>

Appendix D

“Of Altars and Sacrifices of the Patriarchs and the Passover”

In this paper, we shall analyze the relationship of the Old Testament’s Levitical priests to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The New Testament priesthood, which Christ instituted, was a “priesthood of all believers,” whereby every adult male— particularly as father of the family—is consecrated to make his own home into an altar and to administer family Christian discipline and worship.¹⁵²

Under this Reformed theological principle, the father and mothers are “Christian ministers,” and the “family unit” is the most basic, fundamental unit of the organized Church—i.e., the *family unit is a church*. This principle is based, of course, on Genesis, and the biblical relationship between Adam, Eve, and the duty of mankind to leave his father and mother and to cleave to his wife. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31). The Apostle Paul made reference to this divine familial structure in his recommendation for church discipline and order. (1 Timothy 2: 12-14).

Therefore, the Christian layman, especially as head of a family, is a *true Christian priest* of the New Testament (i.e., he is a member of the “common priesthood of believers”). Therefore, as a believing, faithful Christian, every adult male Christian may baptize and commemorate the Lord’s Supper; or, in the alternative, he may voluntarily *delegate that responsibility* to one of his fellow Christian brothers who he deems is more suitable to administer those sacred duties. But while this power of delegation is fully appropriate in most circumstances, it may, and should, *be revoked* in certain exceptional circumstances.¹⁵³ That *power of revocation* is at the heart of the Protestant Reformation.

¹⁵² See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36.

¹⁵³ But what often gets lost is that every Christian may thereafter **revoke that delegation** to any organized Church; and he or she **go directly to Christ**, in his or her mode of private worship and within the confines and privacy of his own home. And all of the sacraments—Baptism and the Lord’s Supper—may be carried out in private, nondenominational worship at home. Note: Section 1255 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: “[i]n case of necessity, anyone, even a non-baptized person, can baptize....” Under Reformed Protestantism, this “necessity” may differ and is justified under differing circumstances.

Prior to the institution of the Levitical priesthood, every man or father—and especially as the *head of a family*—was his own priest, who also often built his own altars.¹⁵⁴

In the Old Testament, all the Patriarchs were “priests over their own families” and who, in one form or another, offered burnt sacrifices or other offerings.

We find this practice mentioned as early as Abel’s *altar* and sacrifice. Genesis 4:4.

The Patriarch Noah built an *altar* and presented a burnt offering to the LORD. Genesis 8:20.

The Patriarch Abraham built an *altar* and presented a burnt offering to the LORD. Genesis 22: 7- 24 (v. 7 “And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”)

The Patriarch Isaac built an *altar* and called upon the LORD. Genesis 26: 25.

The Patriarch Jacob built an *altar* unto the LORD in the land of Canaan, which he called Bethel. Genesis 35: 1, 7.

Notably, in the Book of Job, which is a narrative of a man named Job and his fellow compatriots there are accounts of animal sacrifices made to the LORD God.

¹⁵⁴ See, e.g., “The Altars in Genesis — The Significance of Building an Altar: Consecration,” stating:

Genesis, the first book in the Bible, records the histories of four men – Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob –all of whom passed through distinct situations in the course of their lives. Noah built the ark, Abraham left his country for a promised land, Isaac inherited all the riches of his father and married Rebecca, and Jacob tricked his father in order to take the birthright from his brother. Although these men went through very different life experiences, one thing is common: they all built an altar to God (Gen. 8:20; 12:7, 8; 13:18; 22:9; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7). In this series of posts we will consider these altars in the book of Genesis. To build an altar to God is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to God.

For it is clear that the patriarch Job was not a Levitical priest, but because of Job's faith and righteousness, was made into a sort of priest on behalf of his three compatriots. See, e.g., Job 42: 7- 9, stating:

The Patriarch Job as non-Aaronic, non-Levitical "Priest"

⁷ And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.

⁸ Therefore take unto you now **seven bullocks** and **seven rams**, and go to my servant Job, and **offer up for yourselves a burnt offering**; and *my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept*: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

⁹ So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

Significantly, Job was not an Israelite; nor did Job live under the Law of Moses. "According to...[several] rabbis, Job was a Gentile—an opinion which is elsewhere expressed more fully, in that Job is said to have been **a pious Gentile** or one of the **prophets of the Gentiles.**"¹⁵⁵ In fact, Job may have lived during the time of patriarch Abraham and, as such, he could not have been a descendant of Abraham.¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, can we surmise that the seven bullocks and the seven

¹⁵⁵ "Job in Rabbinic Literature," *Wikipedia* (Online Encyclopedia).

¹⁵⁶ See, e.g., "Scholars know little of Job, time or place in which he lived," by Church News Archives (October 27, 1990), stating:

The scriptures do not state that Job was a prophet, or that he had any priestly calling. However, there is no doubt that he was a righteous man. In Job 1:1, he is described as a man who was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." (Job 1:1.)

Much mystery surrounds Job. According to the book that bears his name, Job lived in the land of Uz. The location of this land of Uz is unknown, and even the time in which Job lived is questioned. Some scholars say he lived during the time of the patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Others think he might have lived as late as the time of Malachi. Besides not having any information about the time or place in which Job lived, scholars know practically nothing of the

rams that were presented as “burnt offerings” were “sacraments” that symbolized Christ?

I surmise that Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—all Gentiles who were from the land of Uz and who were non-Israelites— represent the ancient “Church of the Gentiles,”¹⁵⁷ whereby all righteous men of faith are indeed “priests,” as in the “priesthood of all believers.” The “burnt offerings” which Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar presented were “sacraments” that symbolized Christ Jesus. Hence, the Book of Job supports the Protestant-Reformed theological doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers” (e.g., 1 Peter 2:9).

Lastly, the first Passover in the Book of Exodus was administered not through the “Levitical priesthood” but rather through the “elders of Israel,” — partly because the Levitical priesthood had not yet come into existence. See, e.g., Exodus 12: 21-27, stating:

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the Passover....And Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.... That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD’s Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

The significance of these “**altars**” and this first “**Passover**” are of great importance to the Christian faithful, because, like the Levitical sacrifices previously mentioned, they constituted a ceremonial or liturgical “sacrament” that pointed towards the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ:

An altar is a simple structure built of earth or stone marking the place where God meets people. Typically, **God made his presence known**

man himself. Some boldly contend Job is a fictitious character who had a leading role in a purely literary story in the Bible.

¹⁵⁷ For example, in *The City of God*, Augustine of Hippo uses the term “Church of the Gentiles” to describe such righteous persons in the Old Testament who were not Israelites or Jews.

at a location and then **commanded his people to build an altar** there....

It appears that the **altar was a place where sacrifice could and did take place**. The altar was where the worshiper came into the presence of God, and God, as we have seen, hates sin. Therefore, **sin had to be accounted for** before a person entered the holy place....

[An altar was] a holy place, a set-apart place, because that was where God chose to meet with his people and bring them his blessings.”
(Tremper Longman, *Immanuel in Our Place* [Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2001], 16–17).¹⁵⁸

For the first “Passover” consecration was to have profound obligation for every family and head of family in ancient Israel. See, e.g., Exodus 13: 1-22 (v. 2, 12 “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn... thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; **the males** shall be the LORD’s... therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the openeth the matrix, **being males**; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.”)

Given this historical, social, and cultural foundation, the Jewish religion at the time of Christ was patrifocal and patriarchal—the father, as the Head of the Family, was his own priest since the times of the Patriarch Abraham, before there was ever a Levitical priesthood.

Now Jacob (i.e., “Israel”) had 12 sons (Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Asher, Gad, Naphtali, and Levi) and 1 daughter (Dinah).

The twelve sons of Israel became “heads of the house of his fathers” and were accounted as a “tribe” of ancient Israel.¹⁵⁹ Whereas the 1 daughter (Dinah) received no “headship” over a house of any kind, and she were not accounted, as one of the twelve sons who became heads of a tribe in Israel— otherwise, there would have been **a thirteenth tribe** in ancient Israel, the tribe of Dinah.

¹⁵⁸ <https://centralpresworship.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/2-ot-worship-abraham-to-joseph.pdf>

¹⁵⁹ Numbers 1: 4-16.

Now when Jesus of Nazareth called his **twelve disciples**, these men represented the **twelve princes over the twelve tribes of Israel**—the “restored Israel” which had been foretold in the several prophecies that a Messiah would return and establish.¹⁶⁰ See, e.g., Epistle of James 1:1 (“...**to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.**”).

Hence, we find here Jesus of Nazareth’s fulfillment of the prophecy regarding a “**restored Israel**,” through honoring the “tradition” and the “law” of Moses in formally establishing the nation of Israel on the basis of the twelve tribes (see, e.g., Numbers 1: 4-16).

If Jesus had been concerned that women were unfairly subordinated and discriminated against under this scheme, he would have certainly changed this scheme and acknowledged Dinah as a “matriarch” over a “thirteenth tribe,” and appointed a female disciple to fulfill that symbolic role.

The linkage between the “Lord’s Supper” as a Passover meal, carried out on the evening of an actual Passover commemoration, denotes the significance of “gender,” for the Passover lamb was to be “**without blemish, a male of the first year**: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats....” (Exodus 12:5).

That Passover lamb certainly points us to a male child named Jesus.

And out from this first Passover commemoration came the first formal law of consecration, namely, “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn.... That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD... **the males** shall be the LORD’s.... the firstborn of man... **being males**... all the firstborn of my children I redeem.” (Exodus 13: 2, 12-15).

Hence, even before there was a formal institution of the tribe of Levi and of Aaron as the priests, the LORD God commanded Moses to consecrate “the firstborn males” for sacred, consecrated service.

This means that, in a formal, sacred and public religious setting— e.g., a *tabernacle*, a *temple*, a *synagogue*, or a *church*— the formal “consecrated” spiritual

¹⁶⁰ See, e.g., St. Boniface Catholic Church, “Twelve Tribes and the Twelve Apostle,” <https://stboniface-lunenburg.org/twelve-tribes-and-the-twelve-apostles>

leadership must symbolize the **Passover lamb** (“without blemish, a male of the first year”)¹⁶¹ or the **firstborn child** (“being males”).¹⁶²

There is no record in the New Testament where Christ or his disciples or apostles changed this basic requirement that “consecrated” or “ordained” ecclesiastical heads of synagogues and churches must be the males.

New Testament Elders and Males Heads of Families

- **1 Peter 2: 9** (“a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nations....”)
- **1 Peter 3: 1-7** (“the holy women... being in subjection to their own husbands”).
- **Titus 1: 5-7** (“ordain elders in every city... [i]f any be blameless, the husband of one wife.... For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God....”)
- **Titus 2: 3-4** (“[t]he aged women... that they teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children....”)
- **1 Timothy 3: 1-2** (“... the office of a bishop.... A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife... one that ruleth well his own house....”)
- **1 Timothy 3: 12** (“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”)
- **1 Timothy 2: 12-15** (“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man.... Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”)

¹⁶¹ Exodus 12: 5.

¹⁶² Exodus 13: 15.

The qualification for elder or presbyter, bishop, and deacon was that he be a male with one wife and husband who ruled well his household.

Hence, the rulership over the household being an important requirement for this “ordination.”¹⁶³ The early Jewish synagogues, and the early Christian synagogue churches were governed by a plurality of elders (i.e., “the presbytery”).¹⁶⁴

Hence, we say in Reformed theology—as the Rev. Richard Baxter (1615 - 1691) does in his *Christian Directory*—that, in the Christian religion, every father is the “priest of his own family” and “priest of his own household”; and, as such, every father is authorized to build his own sanctuary and altar, which today is represented “sacramentally” in “The Lord’s Supper,” viz:

[B]efore the flood in the families of the righteous, and after till the establishment of a priesthood, God was worshipped in families or households: it is a greater doubt whether then he had any other public worship....¹⁶⁵

When there were few or no church assemblies that were larger than families, no doubt God was ordinarily worshipped in families. Every **ruler of a family** then was **as a priest to his own family**. Cain and Abel offered their own sacrifices so did Noah, Abraham, and Jacob.... After the institution of Aaron’s priesthood family-worship continued....¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ The “restored Israel” that Jesus Christ, as king, represented, re-instituted this same patrifocal or patriarchal “priesthood” in the men or the fathers of Israel—whether Jew or the Gentiles who were the “spiritual Israelites.” In this Christian brotherhood, every Christian man—especially the fathers as “Heads of Families”—is entitled to build a spiritual “altar” for himself and his family. This may be done, of course, is a “church home,” such as a local organized church that meets regularly in a specific designated location.

¹⁶⁴ 1 Timothy 4: 14.

¹⁶⁵ See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

Nor is there a word of Scripture that speaketh of God's reversing of his command or order for family prayer, or other proper family worship. Therefore it is proved to continue obligatory still....¹⁶⁷

After the institution of Aaron's priesthood family-worship continued, as I have proved before; yea, the two sacraments of circumcision and the Passover, were established in families by the master of the house; therefore prayer was certainly continued in families....¹⁶⁸

If before the giving of the law to Moses, God was worshipped in families by his own appointment, and this appointment be not yet reversed, then God is to be worshipped in families still....¹⁶⁹

The husband is to be the mouth of the family.... He must be as it were the priest of the household....¹⁷⁰

Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430 AD) has said something quite similar in his magnum opus, *The City of God*, stating:

And therefore, although our righteous fathers (i.e., The Patriarchs) had slaves, and administered their domestic affairs so as to distinguish between the condition of slaves and the heirship of sons in regard to the blessings of this life, yet in regard to the worship of God, in whom we hope for eternal blessings, they took an equally loving oversight of all the members of their household.

And this is so much in accordance with the natural order, that the head of the household was called paterfamilias; and this name has been so generally accepted, that even before those whose rule is unrighteous are glad to apply it to themselves.

But those who are true fathers of their households desire and endeavor that all the members of their households, equally with their own

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 61.

children, should worship and win God, and should come to that heavenly home in which the duty of ruling men is no longer necessary, because the duty of caring for their everlasting happiness has also ceased; but, until they reach that home, masters ought to feel their position of authority a greater burden than servants their service. And if any member of the family interrupts the domestic peace by disobedience, he is corrected either by word or blow, or some kind of just and legitimate punishment, such as society permits, that he may himself be the better for it, and be readjusted to the family harmony from which he had dislocated himself....

Since, then, the house ought to be the beginning or element of the city, and every beginning bears reference to some end of its own kind, and every element to the integrity of the whole of which it is an element, it follows plainly enough that domestic peace has a relation to civic peace—in other words, that the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and domestic rule has a relation to the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and civic rule.

And therefore it follows, further, that **the father of the family** ought to frame his domestic rule in accordance with the law of the city, so that the household may be in harmony with the civic order.¹⁷¹

Even the Puritan conception of the “traditional family” was in keeping with traditional Roman Catholic and Anglican views on paterfamilias. The “traditional family” was fundamental to ancient Judaism from which the Christian religion arose.

For example, J. Andrew Dearman, Professor of Old Testament and Acting Dean, “Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology,” writes:

The Hebrew term to ‘Family’ is bet’ ab, literally rendered as ‘father’s house,’ reflecting a male-headed, multigenerational household as the basic unit in ancient Israel. A household was shaped by endogamous marriage rites, patrilineal succession, and inheritance customs that privileged the eldest son.... Another term related to the concept of ‘family’ is mispaha, often

¹⁷¹ See, e.g., Saint Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library), pp. 694-695.

rendered ‘clan.’ A mispaha is a kinship unit of related fathers’ houses. An association of related ‘clans’ would comprise a tribe (sebet).

And Keith Reeves, Professor of Biblical Studies at Azusa-Pacific University, writes:

Within the clans was the most basic unit, the “father’s house.” This is headed by the “father,” the oldest living patriarch of the family. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are all under the authority of the father. The father’s house could be a fairly large unit, comprised of more than 50 people.... This is much more than just interesting history. The family unit is as important to economics and social order today as it was in ancient Israel. We no longer have a land-based economy, so land as such is not the key factor now. But the family is still vitally connected to the economy. Nick Schulz, in *Home Economics: the Consequences of Changing Family Structure*, details the destructive consequences of the breakdown of the family in America. Wayne Grudem and Barry Asmus, in their book *The Poverty of Nations*, include “Laws that give protection and positive economic incentives to stable family structures” as one of the factors that help nations overcome poverty [(pp. 256- 257).] The biblical account of the household raises no shortage of critical questions for us today. What can we do – as individuals, as families, as churches, as communities – to protect the integrity of the family? What can we do to aid those who find themselves in broken families? How can we help people see familial and economic relationships as deeply interconnected rather than separate and unrelated?

Lastly, according to the Epistle of James, the Christian churches of Jesus Christ constitute **“the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.”** As such, the churches are bound to the fundamental laws of ancient Israel— i.e., the patriarchy and the male leadership over the family, the “Passover” criteria for consecration, the symbolism of the 12 apostles and The Lord’s Supper—which Christ himself reaffirmed and fulfilled.

Appendix E

“Of The Father as ‘Priest of the Family’”

In this paper, I argue that the answer to the Old Testament Church began as a family unit and, hence, in the Christian religion, the *family unit is a church*.¹⁷² For this reason, the complex liturgical practices of the Levitical priesthood eventually reverted back to its basic and fundamental origin: the patriarchs, or father of the Hebrew family, had always been “priestly,” or the first priests.¹⁷³ Whereas the Old Testament witnessed the transfer of the priesthood from the patriarchs to the Levitical priests, the New Testament witnessed the transfer of the priesthood from the Levitical priests back to the patriarchs (i.e., the presbyters or elders).

For this reason, the ecclesiastical institutions of the various Christian Churches *may not displace* the fundamental or primary church which is *the family unit*— i.e., the first human society, namely: Adam (as patriarch) and Eve (as his wife). Within the *family unit*, the ancient Patriarchs built altars and made sacrifices, and the first Passover was administered in the home or local *family unit*.¹⁷⁴

It is in this sense that the Christian home and family is a “unit” of the Church, and is, in fact, a “church within the Church.”¹⁷⁵ In fact, the family may exist as “church” outside of the “Church.” That being the case, the organized Church is subordinate to, and serves the primary objectives and interests of, the *family unit*.

¹⁷² See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36. (“[e]very **ruler of a family** then was **as a priest to his own family**.”)

¹⁷³ This fundamental Christian principle is based, of course, on Genesis, and the biblical relationship between Adam, Eve, and the duty of mankind to leave his father and mother and to cleave to his wife. See, e.g., Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:31. The Apostle Paul made reference to this divine familial structure in his recommendation for church discipline and order. See, e.g., 1 Timothy 2: 12-14.

¹⁷⁴ See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36. (“[e]very **ruler of a family** then was **as a priest to his own family**.”)

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

The husband or father is the “priest” of the home and family.¹⁷⁶

When the husband of the family joins with several other husbands of other families, they may formulate a “**presbytery**” or a **brotherhood of local elders**,¹⁷⁷ and thereby establish a “church.”¹⁷⁸ (Under Jewish custom or law, 10 men (i.e., a minyan), who were over the age of 13, could form a local synagogue).¹⁷⁹ “The presbytery of a church could be nothing distinct from the plurality of elders in a church, nor hold any other powers than those of an elder.”¹⁸⁰

Subsequently, the local elders or presbyters within a local “church” may, amongst themselves, select or elect church officers, the president of which may hold the title of pastor,¹⁸¹ bishop,¹⁸² overseer,¹⁸³ moderator,¹⁸⁴ etc. This we find amply demonstrated in Martin Luther’s landmark essay, *Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520), stating:

It is pure invention that pope, bishops, priests and monks are to be called the ‘spiritual estate’; princes, lords, artisans, and farmers the ‘temporal estate.’ That is indeed a fine bit of lying and hypocrisy. Yet no one should be frightened by it; and for this reason -- viz., that all Christians are truly of the ‘spiritual estate,’ and there is among them no difference at all but that of office, as Paul says in I Corinthians

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852), p. 317 (“The word presbyter is of Greek origin, and signifies the same thing as elder.”)

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 315 (“[t]here was commonly, if not always, a plurality of these elders in each church, and also a plurality of deacons.”)

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 317 (“The elders in the local synagogues preside as presidents, but were not exclusively priests, and held no monopoly of exhortation, preaching, or rituals. And it can hardly be supposed that the elders of the New Testament churches were more autocratic than these.”)

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid (“The term pastor occurs but once in the New Testament. ‘He gave some pastors and teachers.’ (Eph. IV.)

¹⁸² Ibid (“The bishops are sometimes called elders, or presbyters, or pastors”).

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

12:12, We are all one body, yet every member has its own work, where by it serves every other, all because we have one baptism, one Gospel, one faith, and are all alike Christians; for baptism, Gospel and faith alone make us 'spiritual' and a Christian people.

But that a pope or a bishop anoints, confers tonsures; ordains, consecrates, or prescribes dress unlike that of the laity, this may make hypocrites and graven images, but it never makes a Christian or 'spiritual' man. Through baptism all of us are consecrated to the priesthood, as St. Peter says in I Peter 2:9, 'Ye are a royal priesthood, a priestly kingdom,' and the book of Revelation says, Rev. 5:10 'Thou hast made us by Thy blood to be priests and kings.' For if we had no higher consecration than pope or bishop gives, the consecration by pope or bishop would never make a priest, nor might anyone either say mass or preach a sermon or give absolution. Therefore when the bishop consecrates it is the same thing as if he, in the place and stead of the whole congregation, all of whom have like power, were to take one out of their number and charge him to use this power for the others; **just as though ten brothers, all king's sons and equal heirs, were to choose one of themselves to rule the inheritance for them all, -- they would all be kings and equal in power, though one of them would be charged with the duty of ruling.** To make it still clearer. **If a little group of pious Christian laymen were taken captive and set down in a wilderness, and had among them no priest consecrated by a bishop, and if there in the wilderness they were to agree in choosing one of themselves, married or unmarried, and were to charge him with the office of baptizing, saying mass, absolving and preaching, such a man would be as truly a priest as though all bishops and popes had consecrated him.** That is why **in cases of necessity any one can baptize and give absolution,** which would be impossible unless we were all priests.

This great grace and power of baptism and of the Christian Estate they have well-nigh destroyed and caused us to forget through the canon law. It was in the manner aforesaid that Christians in olden days chose from their number bishops and priests, who were afterwards confirmed by other bishops, without all the show which now obtains.

It was thus that Sts. Augustine, Ambrose and Cyprian became bishops. Since, then, **the temporal authorities are baptized with the same**

baptism and have the same faith and Gospel as we, we must grant that they are priests and bishops, and count their office one which has a proper and a useful place in the Christian community. For whoever comes out the water of baptism can boast that he is already consecrated priest, bishop and pope, though it is not seemly that every one should exercise the office....

On this account **the Christian temporal power** should exercise its office without let or hindrance, regardless whether it be pope, bishop or priest whom it affects; whoever is guilty, let him suffer. All that the canon law has said to the contrary is sheer invention of Roman presumption. For Thus saith St. Paul to all Christians: Roman 13:1, 4 "Let every soul (I take that to mean the pope's soul also) be subject unto the higher powers; for they bear not the sword in vain, but are the ministers of God for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well." St. Peter also says: 1 Peter 2:13, 15 "Submit yourselves unto every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, for so is the will of God." He has also prophesied that such men shall come as will despise the temporal authorities; and this has come to pass through the canon law. So then, I think this first paper-wall is overthrown, since **the temporal power has become a member of the body of Christendom, and is of the "spiritual estate," though its work is of a temporal nature.** Therefore its work should extend freely and without hindrance to all the members of the whole body; it should punish and use force whenever guilt deserves or necessity demands, without regard to pope, bishops and priests, -let them hail threats and bans as much as they will.

But the fundamental ecclesiastical primacy of the "family unit"— with the husband and father as "priest of the family"— cannot be displaced by hierarchal ecclesiastical authority of organized churches; and the fundamental equality of all Christians (i.e., the adult males who are "elders" or "presbyters")— as Revs Luther and Goodell explains— may not be displaced by a "bishops," a "synods" or a "colleges of bishops," or a "patriarch or pope," and the like.

For, as the Book of Revelation explains, Jesus Christ has made every Christian both a "king" and a "priest." See, e.g., Rev. 1: 5-6, stating:

... Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and **the prince of the kings of the earth**.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath **made us kings** and **priests** unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

According to Rev. Goodell's general thesis, *The Democracy of Christianity*, both modern-day democratic civil polity and the Reformed or Protestant Church—beginning, perhaps, with the Puritans of colonial New England and the Mayflower Compact (1620)—owe their basic democratic-republican and Presbyterian structures to the fundamental Christian theology of the primitive Early Church.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, pp. 481 – 487.

Appendix F

“Of Slavery and the Black Slave as ‘Priest of the Family’”

Priesthood (or the “call to preach”) in the Black Church has deep, deep roots in African nature religion—e.g., voodoo, animism, etc.— and was first manifest in the form of medicine men, root men, and “witch” doctors who healed ailments believed to be caused by witchcraft and evil.¹⁸⁶ The spirituality of such African religious practices came to North American on the slave ships and has never fully disappeared from the African American religious character.¹⁸⁷

Since, in the Black Church, the “call to preach” is deeply rooted in this African heritage, one can make a strong argument that the Black church’s fundamental and general conception of “priesthood” is in *no way exclusively connected* to the Torah’s, the orthodox Catholic, or the New England Puritan’s patriarchal conception of the monogamic family— with husbands and fathers serving as “priests” of monogamic families.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986)(Chapter 10, “Of the Faith of Our Fathers”), p.497, stating:

It was a terrific social revolution, and yet some traces were retained of the former group life, and the chief remaining institution was the Priest or Medicine-man. He early appeared on the plantation and found his function as the healer of the sick, the interpreter of the Unknown, the comforter of the sorrowing, the supernatural avenger of wrong, and the one who rudely but picturesquely expressed the longing, disappointment, and resentment of a stolen and oppressed people. Thus, as bard, physician, judge, and priest, within the narrow limits allowed by the slave system, rose the Negro preacher, and under him the first Afro-American institution, the Negro church.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 493 – 505.

¹⁸⁸ See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36. (“[e]very ruler of a family then was as a priest to his own family.”)

Instead, because of slavery, the institution of the Black Church in the United States *predated* the institution of the Black family.¹⁸⁹ Under this set of circumstances, African American males were “not ordinary men either, but black men emasculated by a peculiarly complete system of slavery, centuries old.”¹⁹⁰ Hence, Bishop Daniel Payne (1811 - 1893) of the A.M.E. Church has written that “the greatest curse which slavery inflicted upon us was the destruction of the home.”¹⁹¹

Next, after slavery was ended, “the emasculating effects of caste distinctions”¹⁹² under Jim Crow perpetuated their impediments to patriarchal leadership within the Black family:

For this much all men know: despite compromise, war, and struggle, the Negro is not free. In the backwoods of the Gulf States, for miles and miles, he may not leave the plantation of his birth; in well-nigh the whole rural South the black farmers are peons, bound by law and custom to an economic slavery, from which the only escape is death or the penitentiary. In the most cultured sections and cities of the South the Negroes are a segregated servile caste, with restricted rights and privileges. Before the courts, both in law and custom, they stand

¹⁸⁹ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p.499 ([The Negro church] as a social institution it **antedated by many decades** the monogamic Negro home....”)

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

¹⁹¹ Daniel P. Black, *Dismantling Black Manhood: An Historical and Literary Analysis of the Legacy of Slavery* (London and New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997), p. 165.

See, also, Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor (March 1965)), stating: “It was by destroying the Negro family under slavery that white America broke the will of the Negro people....”

¹⁹² W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 404.

See, also, Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor (March 1965)), stating: “It was by destroying the Negro family under slavery that white America broke the will of the Negro people....”

on a different and peculiar basis. Taxation without representation is the rule of their political life. And the result of all this is, and in nature must have been, **lawlessness** and **crime**. That is the large legacy of the Freedmen's Bureau, the work it did not do because it could not.¹⁹³

With such lawlessness and crime came sexual debauchery, systematic abuses of black women, and the systematic break-up of the African American family, both during and after slavery. Under these conditions, the Black church both adjusted and, to some degree, acquiesced—the monogamic Black family structure, with the Black father as “priest of the family,” was never a central feature of the historic Black church. Nor was establishing (or preserving) the Black father as “priest of the family” a central feature of the historic church-led Civil Rights Movement.¹⁹⁴

The Puritan ideal of family being thus denied to African Americans during slavery, the materialism and mammon of free-market secularism and popular education also did not promote or reinforce those old patriarchal values within the African American community. So that today, an African American “womanist” theology—undoubtedly the brainchild of American feminism—has taken root in the Black church, and has labeled the old Puritan conception of patriarchy as “Eurocentric” ecclesiological oppression, thus divesting the Black man of his birthright as “priest of the family.”¹⁹⁵

In this essay, I shall endeavor to summarize the chapter “Of the Faith of the Fathers” from *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) written by W.E.B. Du Bois; there, he writes:

First, we must realize that no such institution as this Negro church could rear itself without definite historical foundations. These foundations we can find if we remember that the social history of the

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 390.

¹⁹⁴ See, generally, Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Negro family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, DC: Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor (March 1965)).

¹⁹⁵ See, generally, James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Theology: A Documentary History (Volume Two: 1980 – 1992)* (Maryknoll, N.Y., Orbis Books, 1993).

Negro did not start in America. He was brought from a definite social environment,-- the polygamous clan life under the headship of the chief and the potent influence of the priest. His religion was nature-worship, with profound belief in invisible surrounding influences, good and bad, and his worship was through incantation and sacrifice. The first rude change in this life was the slave ship and the West Indian sugar-fields. The plantation organization replaced the clan and tribe, and the white master replaced the chief with far greater and more despotic powers. Forced and long-continued toil became the rule of life, the old ties of blood relationship and kinship disappeared, and instead of the family appeared **a new polygamy and polyandry**, which, in some cases, almost reached **promiscuity**.

It was a terrific social revolution, and yet some traces were retained of the former group life, and the chief remaining institution was the Priest or Medicine-man. He early appeared on the plantation and found his function as the healer of the sick, the interpreter of the Unknown, the comforter of the sorrowing, the supernatural avenger of wrong, and the one who rudely but picturesquely expressed the longing, disappointment, and resentment of a stolen and oppressed people. Thus, as bard, physician, judge, and priest, within the narrow limits allowed by the slave system, rose the Negro preacher, and under him the first Afro-American institution, the Negro church.

This church was not at first by any means Christian nor definitely organize; rather it was an adaptation and mingling of heathen rites among the members of each plantation, and roughly designated as Voodooism. Association with the masters, missionary effort and motives of expediency gave these rites an early veneer of Christianity, and after the lapse of many generations the Negro church became Christian.

Two characteristic things must be noticed in regard to this church. First, it became almost entirely Baptist and Methodist in faith; secondly, as a social institution **it antedated by many decades the monogamic Negro home**....The second fact noted, namely, that the

Negro church antedates the Negro home, leads to **an explanation of much that is paradoxical** in this communistic institution and in **the morals of its members....**¹⁹⁶

Many of the worst characteristics of the Negro masses of to-day had their seed in this period of the slave's ethical growth. Here it was that **the Home was ruined under the very shadow of the Church**, white and black; here habits of shiftlessness took root, and sullen hopelessness replaced hopeful strife....¹⁹⁷

For fifty years Negro religion thus transformed itself and identified itself with the dream of Abolition, until that which was a radical fad in the white North and an anarchistic plot in the white South had become a religion to the black world. Thus, when Emancipation finally came, it seemed to the freedman a literal Coming of the Lord. His fervid imagination was stirred as never before, by the tramp of armies, the blood and dust of battle, and the wail and whirl of social upheaval. He stood dumb and motionless before the whirlwind: what had he to with it? Was it not the Lord's doing, and marvelous in his eyes? Joyed and bewildered with what came, he stood awaiting new wonders till the inevitable Age of Reaction swept over the nation and brought the crisis of to-day.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ See, e.g., Rev. William Goodell, *The American Slave Code* (New York, N.Y.: American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1853), pp. 109- 111, stating:

The Church is here seen submitting, with complacency, to that feature of the Slave Code that annuls marriage! What the Southern Baptists have avowed, the other religious sects there practice. Some of the facts stated concerning the 'uses of slave property' illustrate the absence of slave marriage.... The **restored institution and sanctity of marriage would cut off the supplies that gorge the slave markets**. The Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, in their address, have given us their testimony to the general fact and its effects. They say: The system '**produces general licentiousness among the slaves....** We are then assured by the most unquestionable testimony that licentiousness is the necessary result of our system.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Souls of Black Folk," *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), pp. 497-501.

Here in Du Bois' thesis in *The Souls of Black Folk*, we may readily observe that **African indigenous religions** and the transatlantic **African slave trade** and the institution of **African slavery** formed the foundational basis upon which the black Baptist, black Methodist, and other black Protestant churches were formed.

As Du Bois' thesis implies, the central paradox of the Black Church and American Christianity is that the Black family was decimated and sexual licentiousness flourished among the slaves, even as the Gospel was being preached. One can certainly cogently argue that the influences which the Roman Catholic Church or the Church of England might have had upon white Baptists, white Methodists, and other white Protestant churches—particularly regarding patriarchy, sexual morality, and the institution of the family—were systematically deprecated or thwarted, if not altogether absent, in corresponding Black churches.

Arguably, the institution of slavery and its negative effects upon the African American family and the natural rights of African American husbands and fathers prevented Black churches from otherwise operating and functioning along conventional, orthodox ecclesiological principles.¹⁹⁹

As a consequence, what is seldom heard in Black theology is the following Reformed or Puritan theological doctrine:

- (a) that the “**priesthood of all believers**” means that the common man is indeed a “priest” in his own right;

¹⁹⁹ Indeed, it was a “badge or incident of slavery” to prevent African American wives from serving as a “Help Meet” to their African American husbands. On this very point, the Rev. William Goodell writes:

The obligations of marriage are evidently inconsistent with the conditions of slavery, and cannot be performed by a slave. The husband promises to protect his wife and provide for her. The wife promises to be the help-meet of her husband. They mutually promise to live with and cherish each other, till parted by death. But what can such promises by slaves mean? The ‘legal relation of master and slave’ renders them void! It forbids the slave to protect even himself. It clothes his master with authority to bid him inflict deadly blows on the woman he has sworn to protect. It prohibits his possession of any property wherewith to sustain her. His labor and his hands it takes from him. It bids the woman assist, not her husband, but her owner! Nay! It gives him unlimited control and full possession of her own person, and forbids her, on pain of death, (as will be shown,) to resist him, if he drags her to his bed!

The American Slave Code (New York, N.Y.: American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1853), p. 108.

- (b) that the “**monogamic family unit**” is a “**church**,”²⁰⁰
- (c) that the husband or father, within the monogamic family unit, a “**priest of the family**.”²⁰¹

Under this Reformed and Puritan doctrine, the present-day objective of the institutional black churches of the United States ought to be this, namely,

- (a) to establish the *monogamic* Black family unit as the primary sub-unit and basic foundation of the Black church; and,
- (b) to uproot the negative effects of chattel slavery through re-establishing the Black father as the “priest of the family.”

In closing, to achieve this objective of re-establishing the monogamic Black family unit, the Black church’s conception of “priesthood” must go beyond our predominant notion of ordained clergymen holding theology or divinity degrees; but, rather, as the Reformed theologians, such as Martin Luther (1483 – 1546) and Richard Baxter (1603 – 1691), understood the meaning of “priesthood,” the Black church’s conception clergy must include **a multitude of “elders”** trained in a wide variety of multidisciplinary fields (i.e., *a presbytery*),²⁰² and it should certainly acknowledge the Reformed, Puritan doctrine which sees the “civil polity” itself as being a “divine” thing that is ordained and established by God; and which sees the civil magistrates (i.e., legislators, lawyers, judges, and governors, etc.), who have been baptized and who take the sacraments of our Lord, as a part of the common

²⁰⁰ See, e.g., Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory Or, a Sum of Practical Theology, And Cases of Conscience* (Part 2 Christian Economics)(reprinted in Columbia, S.C. on January 18, 2019), p. 36. (“[e]very **ruler of a family** then was **as a priest to his own family**.”)

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² 1 Timothy 4:14.

priesthood (i.e., the presbytery) of the church,²⁰³ and who are under solemn oaths to establish true justice and judgment in the land.²⁰⁴

In Medieval parlance, which I deem to still be valid, the Church and the State represent the Two Tables of the Decalogue, and while the Church (i.e., the “First Table”) does not hold the civil sword, it is nevertheless within its province to *admonish* the State (i.e., the “Second Table”) for not utilizing that civil sword to establish justice. In other words, as Augustine, Aquinas, Martin Luther, Roger Williams, and Martin Luther King, Jr., each and all surmised, the Church’s purpose is to commend, recommend, and admonish the State. Under this system, the Church itself (including its priests, pastors, bishops, etc.), which is as an obedient subject or corporate citizen of the State, is under no exemption from the mandates of civil law and civil justice.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ See, e.g., Genesis 18: 18-19 (“justice and judgment”); Exodus 18: 21- 26 (judges of ancient Israel); Deuteronomy 1:15- 17 (judges of ancient Israel). See, also, the text of the American Declaration of Independence (1776).

See, also, Martin Luther, *Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520), stating:

It was thus that Sts. Augustine, Ambrose and Cyprian became bishops. Since, then, **the temporal authorities are baptized with the same baptism and have the same faith and Gospel as we, we must grant that they are priests and bishops, and count their office one which has a proper and a useful place in the Christian community.**

Appendix G

“Of The Consecration of Holy Women”

Christian women are indeed “priestly” women who, as a part of the body of Christ, are a part of what the Apostle Peter called “a chosen generation, royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,”²⁰⁵ and who that same apostle compared to “the holy women” from “the old time... being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham.... Likewise, ye husbands... [give] honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life.”²⁰⁶

That being the case regarding the Christian home, the question naturally arises as to the status of “holy women” outside of the home and within the organized body of the institutional churches.

In the Book of Acts, when one of the first great theological questions confronted the Church at Jerusalem—that of whether the Gentile converts needed to be circumcised in accordance with the Law of Moses—that presbyterian council decided in favor of non-circumcision. Their instructions to the Gentiles were thus recorded as stating:

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ 1 Peter 2:9.

²⁰⁶ 1 Peter 3: 5-7.

²⁰⁷ Acts 15: 28 – 29.

For here we find that, other than the “necessary things” of abstaining from fornication (i.e., sexual promiscuity), idolatry, and a dietary restriction, the Church at Jerusalem granted to the Gentile Christians wide latitude (i.e., latitudinarianism).

Over the past century, the following question has divided many churches of Jesus Christ:

What is the status of female ordination to the presbytery or the priesthood— are they a part of the common priesthood of all believers? If so, can they also be ordained as priests?

The short and simple answer to the first question— i.e., are women a part of the “common priesthood of all believers”— is, “Yes.”

However, the most sacred role of women in the Bible was that of “help meet,” beginning with the first woman, Eve; and her chief ministerial status was that of a **help meet**, viz.:

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.²⁰⁸

From creation, then, we find the “nature” or purpose of the LORD’s creation of women was so they could fulfill the role of “help meet” for their men.²⁰⁹

St. Paul thus admonished, “I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over man.... For Adam was first formed, then Eve....”²¹⁰ And St. Peter thus admonished, “ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands... For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God.... Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord....”²¹¹ And, similarly, Augustine of Hippo, in his *Confessions*, gives us this interpretation:

²⁰⁸ Genesis 2: 18.

²⁰⁹ For a Reformed-Puritan conception of “help meet,” see, e.g., Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650 to 1750* (New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1991).

²¹⁰ 1 Timothy 2: 12-13.

²¹¹ 1 Peter 3: 1-6.

[S]o also, physically, the *woman was made for the man*; for, although she had a like nature of rational intelligence in the mind, still in the sex of her body she should be similarly subject to the sex of her husband, as the appetite of action is subjected to the deliberation of the mind in order to conceive the rules of right action. These things we see, and each of them is good; and the whole is very good!²¹²

Therefore, although women were made with full equality of dignity and equality of intellectual endowment, it is the divine Law of Moses which subordinates the woman to the man in such a manner that she is his “helper”— not his priest, pastor, or bishop!

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man.

Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

²¹² St. Augustine, *Confessions* (New York, N.Y.: Barnes & Nobles Classics, 2007), p. 258.

Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.²¹³

To thus deprive the husband of his wife's services as his "help-meet" is to deny him of the fundamental right of marriage.²¹⁴

Accordingly, in both the Old and New Testament Hebrew or Jewish societies, it would have been improper to call a "holy woman" a "priest."²¹⁵

²¹³ 1 Corinthians 11: 3- 12.

²¹⁴ Indeed, it was a "badge or incident of slavery" to prevent African American wives from serving as a "Help Meet" to their African American husbands. On this very point, the Rev. William Goodell writes:

The obligations of marriage are evidently inconsistent with the conditions of slavery, and cannot be performed by a slave. The husband promises to protect his wife and provide for her. The wife promises to be the help-meet of her husband. They mutually promise to live with and cherish each other, till parted by death. But what can such promises by slaves mean? The 'legal relation of master and slave' renders them void! If forbids the slave to protect even himself. If clothes his master with authority to bid him inflict deadly blows on the woman he has sworn to protect. It prohibits his possession of any property wherewith to sustain her. His labor and his hands it takes from him. It bids the woman assist, not her husband, but her owner! Nay! It gives him unlimited control and full possession of her own person, and forbids her, on pain of death, (as will be shown,) to resist him, if he drags her to his bed!

The American Slave Code (New York, N.Y.: American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1853), p. 108.

²¹⁵ In my book, *Jesus Master of Law: A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity* (2015), p. 58 [citing E.W. Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses* (New York, NY: M.H. Newman, 1843)], I wrote:

Regarding the '**Institution of holy women,**' Dr. Hengstenberg writes: 'An Egyptian reference is undeniable in **the Israelitish institution of the holy women.**' 'That the **holy women among the Israelites had no external service in the tabernacle of testimony,** that their service was rather a **spiritual one,** we have already seen. Just so is it among the Egyptians.... That also among the Israelites, **noble women** especially were devoted to the service of the temple was previously shown. Just so was it among the Egyptians.... That the **holy women among the Israelites were always unmarried, either young women or widows,** has been shown in the Contributions. Just so also is it with the holy women among the Egyptians....'

This description of "holy women" appears to describe the Prophetess Anna in the Book of Luke 2:36-38, to wit: "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, abut served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks

Indeed, throughout the Holy Bible, no “holy woman” was ever admitted into the Aaronic or the Levitical priesthood—for only Aaron and his sons fulfilled this sacred office.

Nevertheless, throughout the Holy Bible, God always used holy women in order to fulfill his divine purposes. For instance, the “Holy Women” of ancient

likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.” But another prophetess, Deborah, in the Book of Judges, Chapt. 4, played a different role: “And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.... And she went and called Ba’rak the son of Abinoam out of Kedech-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD GOD of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?... And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.... And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD had delivered Sisera into thine hand....” And Judges, Chap. 5 reads: “Then sang Deborah and Barak... on that day, saying, Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.”

Hence, the role of consecrated women in the Bible is precisely defined; but clearly, holy women were permitted to pray or sing in the tabernacle of God; and, as God’s voice to the congregation, to prophesy as did Prophetess Deborah. Whether women were ever called “deacons” or “deaconess” in the New Testament is not clear. But the Apostle Paul describes one woman named “Phebe” as “a succourer of many,” meaning that she played some sort of leadership and ministerial role in the church. For this reason, Paul instructed the church at Rome to “assist her in whatever business she hath need of you.” Romans 2:1-2.

Moreover, Paul insisted that this same church receive Phebe “in the Lord, as becometh saints,” since she was “a servant of the church.” Therefore, on the basis of biblical text and example, there appeared in my mind some role for formal consecration or ordination of women for high-level church leadership and service within the church, and to hold office within the church. The title “reverend,” “pastor,” “mother,” “sister,” and the like, I leave open: but one thing is clear: in the Bible, God used women for important leadership functions.

Thus, the theology of an “all-male” priesthood—as in the Orthodox or Roman Catholic church traditions, which is based upon the theology of the first-born sons of the families of Israel or of the tribe of Levi— does not necessarily prohibit other types of pastoral or ecclesiastical offices, such as the office of deaconess or prophetess, which may be opened to women. The question of whether “deacon/prophetess” entitles women to be a “pastor” (but not be a “priest”) is an open theological question, since the orthodox view is that a “priest” is in nature a male who is the “father of the congregation.” But the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers,” which is a Protestant doctrine, certainly leaves open this entire question of the possibility of a female priesthood in the New Testament.

Israel set themselves apart for special service at the Tabernacle, the First Temple, the Second Temple, and in the Jewish synagogue.

In the Old Testament, the “Holy Women” were also the virtuous wives of the Patriarchs or the mothers of great leaders; and, in the New Testament, they were described or “defined” in the third chapter of the first epistle of Saint Peter.²¹⁶

For example, the Book of First Samuel references such “Holy Women,” who congregated as the door of the tabernacle and prayed daily, viz.: 1 Samuel 2:22 (“the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation”).

In the New Testament, we find that the prophetess Anna was such a consecrated Holy Woman who lived in the Temple, prayed, and was devoted to special service. See, Luke 2: 36-39, stating:

³⁶ And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

³⁷ And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

²¹⁶ 1 Peter 3: 1-6, stating:

Likewise, ye wives, **be in subjection to your own husbands**; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

² While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

³ Whose adorning **let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel**;

⁴ But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even **the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit**, which is in the sight of God of great price.

⁵ For *after this manner in the old time the holy women* also, who trusted in God, **adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands**:

⁶ Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, **calling him lord**: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

³⁸ And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

The Holy Women of ancient Judea likewise served as deaconess and matrons in the Jewish synagogues— a practice which we find instituted in the Early Church as recorded, e.g., in the letters of the Apostle Paul, viz.:

Phoebe is said to have been ‘a servant of the church of Cenchrea,’ (Rom. xvi;) but so indefinite is the term that it is not agreed among the learned whether she was a minister of the gospel, a deaconess, or a servant performing ordinary services. There were deaconesses or matrons in some of the ancient churches, of the first or second century.²¹⁷

Holy Women have been called to the role of the prophetess, which entails reading and interpreting the Law of Moses (e.g., the Prophetess Huldah, 2 Kings 22: 14-20; 2 Chronicles 34: 22-28), and thus proclaiming its meaning and interpretation. And the prophetess Deborah actually “sat in Moses seat,” and she became a Judge over all of Israel (Judges 4: 4-16)(“... she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: **and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.**”) For I do not see how the Wisdom of God, when speaking through the woman who is His prophetess, is any different than when it is spoken through the man who is His prophet. For in both instances, it is Christ who speaks. And it is Christ who instructs the man through the woman, his prophetess. But still the divine order is never disrupted simply because the prophetess speaks as Christ’s messenger:

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.²¹⁸

Therefore, in no sense were “holy women” permitted to take on the exact same roles and functions as male priests (i.e., the Levities and priests),²¹⁹ or as the

²¹⁷ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, p. 316.

²¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 11: 3.

²¹⁹ See Footnote 214 [citing E.W. Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses* (New York, NY: M.H. Newman, 1843), pp. 183-184 (“An Egyptian reference is undeniable in the Israelitish institution of the holy women”)].

rulers of the Jewish synagogues or the Sanhedrin, or of the rulers and overseers of the Early Church. St. Peter (1 Peter 3: 1-6); St. Paul (1 Timothy 2: 12-14); and St. Augustine (e.g., *The Confessions*) all acknowledge that the LORD God himself had assigned a separate role to women from the Creation. The Apostle Paul indicates that women-to-women ministries were suitable for the church:

The **aged women** likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

That they may **teach the young women** to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, **obedient to their own husbands**, that the word of God be not blasphemed.²²⁰

Although there were “holy women” amongst the disciples, such as Mary Magdelin, Susanna, Joanna, Martha, Salome, the Samaritan woman at the well, and Christ’s own mother, Jesus of Nazareth himself admitted no “holy women” as members of one of his twelve disciples, and none were present, for instance, at the Lord’s Supper.

Are the “nuns” in Roman Catholicism “ordained”? They are not, but they take “vows,” which carry the same degree of commitment and devotion as do “ordination.” This is a very good practice, because it permits Christian women to do ministerial work as “holy women,” without violating the divine order set forth in the Sacred Scriptures. See, e.g., 1 Peter 3: 1-6; 1 Corinthians 11:3.

For it is in this sense that the Roman Catholic practice is superior that of the Protestant sects, because in Roman Catholicism there are viable alternatives for “holy women” to consecrate themselves to holy service:

- *Mother Teresa*— An Albanian-Indian nun who founded the Missionaries of Charity.

²²⁰ Titus 2: 3-5.

- *Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini*— The first American-born saint, Cabrini was a missionary who believed in the importance of humility.
- *Mother Angelica*— An American nun who founded the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) and the radio network WEWN.
- *Sister Henriette DeLille*— Founded the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order of Black nuns who cared for orphans, the sick, and taught slaves.
- *St. Katharine Drexel*—Established the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to care for Black and Indigenous communities.
- *Sister Jacqueline Grennan Wexler*—Also known as Sister J, Wexler was the president of Webster College, which became the first Roman Catholic university to split from the Catholic Church

Though in many Reformed churches there is no role whatsoever for holy women to engage in ministry or to serve as assistant pastors or deaconesses, I find no scriptural precedent for such prohibitions. Nor do I take the viewpoint that holy women who hold such positions will tend to “usurp” authority from men. Instead, I take the viewpoint that the holy women in Protestant or Reformed churches need an avenue to perform consecrated holy service to the LORD in their churches and communities.

Hence, in Protestant or Reformed theology, the result is an **“all or nothing” approach** to the ordination of women in the Christian ministry, when in reality the Sacred Scriptures allows for **a middle way**, and that “middle way” is the acknowledgement of the Old Testament’s institution of **the special office of “Holy Women”**—modeled after the “daughters of Abraham” and the “Institution of Holy Women” under the Law of Moses²²¹ – that is designed for *special service* to the

²²¹ See Footnote 214 [citing E.W. Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses* (New York, NY: M.H. Newman, 1843), pp. 183-184 (“An Egyptian reference is undeniable in the Israelitish institution of the holy women”)].

church as matrons, deaconesses, prophetesses, and church mothers.²²² Just at the Early Church at Jerusalem took a latitudinarian approach to the question of circumcision, the present-day churches of Jesus Christ need not take an “all or nothing approach” to the consecration of holy women for special service to the church.



Nevertheless, howsoever the several churches of Jesus Christ resolve and decide to utilize their consecrated “holy women,” my recommendation is that these “holy women” should wear a covering upon their heads at all times within the sanctuary of the churches during regular service, especially when they pray or present a prophecy or other message from God to the congregation.²²³ This solemn covering upon the heads of such holy women, which the great Apostle Paul has prescribed and which stems from an ancient Hebrew tradition (see, e.g., Numbers 5:18), acknowledges the divine order of things.²²⁴ Amen.

²²² The holy women of the Tabernacle or Temple in the Old Testament typically were virgins or unmarried women and widows. The Roman Catholic Church’s institution of a system of convents and nuns is an imperfect replica of that system. The Protestant and Reformed Churches can achieve something similar without the celibacy and ordain holy women for special Christian service on behalf of the various churches. See, e.g., **Women of the Presbyterian Church of Africa**, <https://pcawcaa.co.za/>.

²²³ 1 Corinthians 11: 5 (“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.”); see, also, [origins of the covering upon head of women in Christianity](https://pcawcaa.co.za/). See, e.g., **Women of the Presbyterian Church of Africa**, <https://pcawcaa.co.za/>.

²²⁴ 1 Corinthians 11: 3 (“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”)

Appendix H

“Of John Knox and The Scottish Presbyterians”

According to *Wikipedia*'s online encyclopedia, “John Knox (c. 1514 – 24 November 1572) was a Scottish minister, Reformed theologian, and writer who was a leader of the country's Reformation. He was the founder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.”

And to John Knox is credited the “Presbyterian” form of ecclesiastical government, which challenged the episcopal structure of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church of Scotland.

It has been reported that John Knox learned this Presbyterian system from John Calvin (1509 – 1564), who he met in Geneva during the early days of the Reformation. And Calvin, no doubt, devised his presbyterian system directly from the pages of the New Testament.

In order to promote democracy in the church, and fidelity to the doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers,” John Knox and the Scottish Protestants implemented their own revised form of presbyterian church government, which became the model for the future Presbyterian denomination. According to *Wikipedia*'s online encyclopedia:

Presbyterian government is by councils (still known as courts in some countries, as boards in others) of elders.

Teaching and ruling elders are ordained and convene in the lowest council known as a session or consistory responsible for the discipline, nurture, and mission of the local congregation.

Teaching elders (pastors or ministers) have responsibility for teaching, worship, and performing sacraments. Pastors or ministers are called by individual congregations.

A congregation issues a call for the pastor or minister's service, but this call must be ratified by the local presbytery. The pastor or

minister is a teaching elder, and Moderator of the Session, but is not usually a member of the congregation; instead, this person is a member of the Presbytery of which the given church is a member.

Ruling elders are elected by the congregation and ordained to serve with the teaching elders, assuming responsibility for the nurture and leadership of the congregation.

Often, especially in larger congregations, the elders delegate the practicalities of buildings, finance, and temporal ministry to the needy in the congregation to a distinct group of officers (sometimes called deacons, which are ordained in some denominations). This group may variously be known as a "Deacon Board", "Board of Deacons" "Diaconate", or "Deacons' Court". These are sometimes known as "presbyters" to the full congregation....

Above the sessions exist presbyteries, which have area responsibilities. These are composed of teaching elders and ruling elders from each of the constituent congregations.

The presbytery sends representatives to a broader regional or national assembly, generally known as the General Assembly, although an intermediate level of a synod sometimes exists. This congregation / presbytery / synod / general assembly schema is based on the historical structure of the larger Presbyterian churches, such as the Church of Scotland or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); some bodies, such as the Presbyterian Church in America and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, skip one of the steps between congregation and General Assembly, and usually the step skipped is the Synod. The Church of Scotland abolished the Synod in 1993.

Presbyterian governance is practiced by Presbyterian denominations and also by many other Reformed churches.

This “presbyterian” form of church government is not a monopoly of the Calvinists or of the Scottish Presbyterians—indeed, there are dozens of other church denominations which operate along similar lines, including the Congregational

churches, the Primitive Baptist churches, and even the Jehovah’s Witness congregations.

Ostensibly, as in 1 Timothy 4: 14 (“...with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery”) and 1 Peter 5: 1-5 (“The elders...[f]eed the flock... [n]either as being lords... but being ensamples to the flock”) the New Testament itself— and not the theological deductions or innovations of any European reformer— serve as the Scriptural basis and ultimate authority for the “presbyterian” form of church government.

Nevertheless, to the 16th-century Protestant Reformers of Western Europe, such as John Calvin and John Knox, much credit is deserved. For these men caused the whole history of the Roman Catholic Church to be re-examined in light of (a) the history of ancient Hebrew polity and Judaism, (b) the plight of the Early Church of the first two centuries of its existence, and (c) the original biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek.



Their noble efforts have been carefully chronicled in Rev. William Goodell’s noble work, *The Democracy of Christianity*.²²⁵ There Rev. Goodell traces what he calls “the democratic principles in the churches of the first three centuries.”²²⁶ During

²²⁵ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852).

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 419 – 435.

the first three hundred years of the Early Church, the principle of “priesthood of all believers” was readily manifested in the practices of the Early Church, where there was “lay preaching and baptizing” in “the time of Justin Martyr, A.D. 155.”²²⁷ The bishops of the first three centuries “were only pastors of local churches, and nothing resembling diocesan episcopacy” existed.²²⁸ There was a “common brotherhood [i.e., a presbytery]²²⁹ of the churches,” who participated in the management of the local churches.²³⁰ This common brotherhood exercised the right, when necessary, to depose their bishop (i.e., the local pastor).²³¹

But the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper were transformed from “memorials to ‘mysteries,’”²³² and “when the office of a bishop (i.e., pastor) of a church became desirable as a source of pecuniary revenue and ecclesiastical power,”²³³ church politics soon evolved, the lower-ranking elders or presbyters or “priests” were emasculated, and divested of wives and families through the invention of “celibacy,”²³⁴ and placed under the authoritarian power of bishops and archbishops who controlled the synods.²³⁵

From the third century on to the sixteenth century (i.e., the time of the Protestant Reformation), there was this “gradual, stealthy, unperceived, and simultaneous advances of religious declension and of spiritual despotism in the

²²⁷ Ibid., pp. 421- 423.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 425.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 429 (“[W]e have a minute account of the manner of clerical licenses or ordinances in the times of Cyprian and of Origen. It appears that the application of the candidate was made, not to the association, council, or synod of congregational pastors, or of pastors and lay delegates, as among the Congregationalists of America in our times, but to the ‘presbytery of the parish where he dwelt;’ that is, to the plurality of elders or presbyters which were found in each local church.”)

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 430- 435.

²³² Ibid., p. 423.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 424.

²³⁵ Ibid.

ancient churches.”²³⁶ Without question, episcopacy—the episcopalian form of church government—has been from the beginning marked by “episcopal ambition”²³⁷ and “increasing power of the bishops”,²³⁸ “provincial synods”,²³⁹ the “fanciful imitation of Judaism [i.e., the Levitical priesthood]”;²⁴⁰ and “corresponding superstitions” wrought from the corrupted bishoprics of Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism.²⁴¹

The 16th-century Church of Scotland, which was led by John Knox and several other Scottish nobles, laid the foundation for spiritual reformation of the Christian faith throughout the British empire.

Together with the English Baptists, the English Puritans, and the English Presbyterians, the Scottish Presbyterians helped to democratize the Christian religion on the British isles, and this movement led to the foundation of colonial British North America—where the Puritans of colonial New England laid the spiritual and constitutional foundations of civil polity of the United States.²⁴² Their Reformed seminaries and colleges—Harvard (1636), Yale (1701), Princeton (1746),²⁴³ and Brown (1764)—stand as testaments to the powerful Reformed doctrine on the “priesthood of all believers,” and amply demonstrate that the early Reformed theologians of colonial New England revered learning and scholarship.

²³⁶ Ibid. p. 436.

²³⁷ Ibid., pp. 437 – 440.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 447.

²³⁹ Ibid., pp. 447 – 453.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 455.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 457.

²⁴² See, generally, William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, Vol. II (New York, N.Y.: Cady and Burgess, 1852), pp. 481- 487; and see, also, Algernon Sidney Crapsey, *Religion and Politics* (New York, NY: Thomas Whittaker, 1905), pp. 244- 245; and see Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, La: Quid Pro Books, 2010), pp. 3-27.

²⁴³ And in colonial British North America, the college at Princeton (1746) was founded as a Presbyterian seminary and formally embraced John Knox’s Scottish-Presbyterian legacy.

At the same time, we must remember that at the heart of the Reformed theology of colonial New England was the firm belief in the divinity and dignity of the common man— i.e., the Protestant doctrine on the “**priesthood of all believers**” and a belief that the Puritans were “**a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people**” (1 Peter 2:9). Indeed, “the Reformed churches, while they maintained the divine appointment of the ministry—by some sects denied—approached nearer to the primitive condition of the apostolical communities.”²⁴⁴ Upon this Reformed theology, the Puritans laid the constitutional foundations of the United States of America.²⁴⁵

--- The End ---

²⁴⁴ William Goodell, *The Democracy of Christianity*, supra, p. 482.

²⁴⁵ See Footnote # 241.