

14.

MESSAGE 10

**THE COMMMAND TO HALLOW THE PRIESTS AND THE TABERNACLE
AND THE CARRYING OUT OF THAT COMMAND**

Leviticus 8:1-9:24

Introduction.

After Jehovah completed His instructions concerning the procedures the Israelites were to follow for each of the fire-offerings, He expected the Israelites to begin practicing them. However, before they could begin, it was necessary to officially set aside or hallow to God’s service the objects and persons who were to be involved in the offerings. Those objects and persons were The Tabernacle, its furnishings, and the priests. So God immediately commanded that they be hallowed, and Moses led in carrying out God’s command. As he did so, he used virtually all of the information that had been given to him in previous MESSAGES. This MESSAGE is built on every instruction that Jehovah had given from The Tabernacle and even adds some new details. In their hallowing, the priests experienced in action virtually every aspect of the fire-offering MESSAGES that had been delivered previously. All the details fit together in one perfect picture. It would have been impossible for the all of these MESSAGES to fit so consistently together if they had been pieced together from different documents.

In order to fully appreciate God’s command to hallow the priests, it is necessary to review the steps by which Jehovah prepared Moses and the Israelites to know how to do it: (1) While Moses was in the mountain, God gave him instructions concerning hallowing the priests (Ex. 29:1-37; 30:30) and also concerning hallowing The Tabernacle and its furnishings (Ex. 30:26-29). (2) Though the instructions concerning hallowing the priests and hallowing The Tabernacle had been given separately, when it came time to carry out those instructions, Jehovah commanded that they both be carried out on the same day (Ex. 40:9-16). These two hallowings were separate events but they were performed together when The Tabernacle was first used. The Tabernacle would never need to be hallowed again unless a whole new Tabernacle or Temple would be built, but additional hallowings of the priests would need to occur every time a new priest entered the duties of the priesthood. (3) Immediately after the erection of The Tabernacle (Ex. 40:17-33), the Glory Cloud entered The Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34-35); and Jehovah began to speak out of the Glory Cloud to give Moses instructions concerning the fire-offerings (Lev. 1:1). Those instructions were given in nine separate MESSAGES, which likely were delivered over nine days (Lev. 1:1; 4:1; 5:14; 6:1,8,19,24; 7:22,28; see INTRODUCTION TO LEVITICUS under the heading Theme). (4) At the completion of the instructions concerning the offerings, Jehovah commanded that Moses proceed to carry out the instructions that He had given concerning hallowing The Tabernacle and the priests. That command is contained in this passage, along with a record that shows how carefully those instructions were followed and obeyed.

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Interpretation

Chapter 8

Introductory note (8:1)

Verse 1 **And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,**

Another MESSAGE of Jehovah to Moses is introduced here.

- a. Jehovah’s command to hallow the priests and The Tabernacle (8:2-3)

Verse 2. **Take Aaron and his sons with him and the clothing and the anointing oil and the bull of the sin-offering and the two rams and the basket of unleavened bread**

Moses was not told to relate this MESSAGE but to perform it. He was commanded to gather Aaron, his sons, and certain specific items. Jehovah did not state the purpose for gathering those persons and items, because it was not necessary. When Jehovah had given Moses instructions concerning the hallowing of the priests while he was in the mountain, Jehovah had mentioned exactly those same persons and objects (Ex. 29:1-3). He had stated the purpose at that time as, “to hallow them to do the work of a priest for me.” When God told Moses to gather the priests and those specific items,

he knew the time had come to hallow them to the priesthood.

Verse 3. **And assemble all the congregation at the entrance of The Tent of Meeting.**

When Jehovah gave Moses instructions in the mountain concerning hallowing the priests and The Tabernacle, he did not mention that it was to be witnessed by the people. However, at this time, Moses was commanded to assemble the people to witness the ceremonies. It was to be a time in which they would learn to honor the priests and to recognize that in the future only the authorized priests had the authority to officiate over offerings at the altar. The hallowing was official notification that the day was ended when Jehovah would approve of patriarchs of families officiating over fire-offerings.

- b. The hallowing of the priests and of The Tabernacle (8:4-36)

- (1) The gathering of the people (8:4-5)

Verse 4. **4. And Moses did as Jehovah commanded him, and the congregation was assembled at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.**

5 And Moses said to the congregation, This is the word (practice) that Jehovah has commanded [us] to do.”

First, Moses obeyed the command to gather the people at the Tent of Meeting. Then He informed them that what he was about to do had been commanded by Jehovah. The innovations that he introduced that day were not his idea. They were practices commanded by Jehovah their God.

(2) The washing of Aaron and his sons (8:6)

Verse 6. And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and he washed them with water.

The first step in the hallowing ceremonies was to wash Aaron and his sons, as Jehovah had commanded in Exodus 29:4; 40:12. Since the people were gathered at The Tent of Meeting, the washing was done at the laver in the courtyard before the eyes of the people (Ex. 30:17-21; 38:8; 40:7, 30.) In the clothing ceremony that followed, no mention is made of placing on the priests the breeches that were a part of their formal clothing (Ex. 28:42-43). Evidently Aaron and his sons were to put on the breeches before coming out before the people. Jehovah had said in Exodus 28:42 that the linen breeches were “to cover [their] naked flesh” and that they were “to reach from loins to thighs,” which seems to mean from the waste to the knees. Some interpreters understand these breeches to be undergarments, but they were not the style of undergarments that were worn in that day. More likely they were the first part of the priest’s formal clothing. The priests wore the breeches during the washing ceremony (see comments on Lev. 6:10 in MESSAGE 5). The public washing was discrete and modest.

The washing was not done because Aaron and his sons were dirty but for symbolic purposes. Only their hands and feet were washed (Ex. 30:19). The washing symbolized that their lives had already had a general cleansing when they accepted the covenant with Jehovah but that any moral uncleanness or sin that had come into their lives through daily experiences had to be removed before they could serve at Jehovah’s altar. Their real cleansing came by surrendering to Jehovah. The washing ceremony symbolized it.

(3) The clothing of Aaron (8:7-9)

Verse 7. And he put on him the coat and girded him with the sash; and he clothed him with the robe, and he put on him the ephod and girded him with the artistic band of the ephod and fastened the ephod on him with it.

The second step in the hallowing was clothing Aaron with the clothing of the high priest, which had been commanded in Exodus 29:5-6; 40:13. The high priest wore the same clothing as an ordinary priest, which were breeches, a coat, a sash, and a headband (Ex. 28:40-43; 29:8-9), plus additional articles of clothing that included an ephod, a breast-piece, a robe, and a turban (Ex. 28:6-39; 29:5-6). This verse refers to clothing Aaron, because it mentions pieces of clothing that were worn by all priests but also pieces that were worn by the high priest only.

Since God had already given Moses instructions concerning the clothing of the priests and also about how to hallow them, Moses must have begun preparation for this day of hallowing soon after he received the instructions during his first forty days and nights on the mountain. So when Jehovah told him the time had come for hallowing the priests, the clothes already were ready for Moses to use in the hallowing ceremonies.

The proper place for a close study of the priests’ clothes is in the book of Exodus, where they are fully described. They are named in this verse only in a general way. The priests’ clothes showed that they were set apart to an important place of service to Jehovah. The highly ornate clothes of the high priest showed that he held a position of special importance and that he was expected to live an especially holy and pure life.

The pieces of clothing that were worn by all the priests that are mentioned in this verse may be briefly described as follows. The coat was a long loose dress-like garment that was worn by men in ancient times. It was worn over the breeches and probably extended to the ankles. The sash was a long wide band to tie around the waste (Ex. 28:40-43; 29:8-9).

The other pieces of clothing mentioned in this verse and in the next two verses were special pieces of clothing for the high priest. The robe was a one-piece sleeveless ornamental slip-over garment with openings for the head and the arms that extended probably to the knees or to below the waste (Ex. 28:31-35). A similar women's garment today is called a "shell." The ephod was a two-piece garment, with the front and back pieces held together at the shoulders by a strap onto which were fastened two stones. The names of six of the tribes of Israel were engraved on each stone (Ex. 28:6-14). The band on the ephod was an artistic adornment that ran around the ephod at the bottom and that was used to hold the ephod (Ex. 28:8).

Verse 8. And he put on him the breast-piece, and he put in the breast-piece the Urim and the Thummim.

The breast-piece was a piece of heavy cloth that was fastened onto the front of the ephod. Twelve semi-precious stones were fastened to it, each engraved with the name of one of the tribes of Israel (Ex. 28:15-30). It was made by folding in half a long piece of cloth that was sewed together on the sides and left open at the top to form a pocket to hold the Urim and Thummim. The Urim and Thummim were stones used to determine God's will. We know little about how they were used, but the few references to them in the Bible seem to indicate that the person who sought information from God asked questions and the stones were cast like lots to respond with a "Yes" or "No" answer or a brief statement (Ex. 28:30-31; Num. 27:18-23; 1 Sam. 23:6-13).

Verse 9. And he set the turban on his head; and he set on the turban in front of its face the golden plate, the holy commitment, as Jehovah commanded Moses.

The ordinary priests wore headbands, but the high priest wore an ornate turban. On the front of it was fastened a gold plate the contained the words "A Holiness to Jehovah" (Ex. 28:36-38). It signified that the high priest was set aside by Jehovah and committed to Jehovah, making him "a holiness" or a holy person (see comments on Lev. 2:3 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading [It is] a holiness of

holinesses). In this verse, the golden plate is called "the holy commitment" because the plate meant that he was committed to Jehovah's service and to a holy life.

Moses was careful to point out that the clothing ceremony was carried out exactly as Jehovah had commanded in the mountain.

(4) The anointing of The Tabernacle and its furnishings (8:10-11)

Verse 10. And Moses took the anointing oil and anointed The Tabernacle and all that was in it; and he hallowed it.

And Moses took the anointing oil and anointed. The third step in the ceremonies was anointing The Tabernacle and its furnishings, which had been commanded in Exodus 29:36; 30:26-29; 40:9-11. The Hebrew language had two words that meant "to anoint." Both words referred to the application of oil. One referred to secular anointing, for medical or health purposes (Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; II Sam. 12:20; 14:2; II Chr. 28:15; Eze. 16:9; Dan. 10:3; Micah 6:15). The other, which is the word used here, referred to religious anointing. Its root means "to smear," or "to rub in." Prior to Sinai, the word is used in Scripture only in referring to Jacob's pouring oil on the rock that served as his pillow at Bethel (Gen. 31:13; compare Gen. 28:18). That reference seems to indicate that anointing was an ancient ceremony used to set apart an object or place for Jehovah. At Sinai, Jehovah incorporated the practice into Israel's ceremonies, elevated its importance, and regulated its use in Israel. On the mountain, He also had given to Moses the recipe for a special oil that was to be used only for anointing to set aside men and objects to Jehovah's service (Ex. 25:6; 29:7,21; 30:22-33; 31:11; 35:8,15,28; 37:29; 39:38; 40:9).

The Tabernacle and all that was in it. The anointing ceremonies described in verses 10-11 were not a part of the hallowing of the priests, but of The Tabernacle. The two hallowings were performed simultaneously on this occasion because both needed to be set apart to God before the first fire-offerings could be conducted. Hallowing ceremonies for priests ordinarily did not include hallowing

ceremonies for The Tabernacle (see Introduction to this MESSAGE). The anointing ceremonies for The Tabernacle were divided into three parts. The first part is described in this verse, which was the anointing of The Tabernacle and its contents. Moses went throughout The Tabernacle and anointed each article of furniture, as well as The Tabernacle itself, with the holy anointing oil.

The word translated “Tabernacle” in this verse is used here for the first time in the book of Leviticus, though it was used in the same sense 57 times in the book of Exodus. It was used to refer to the tent portion of The Tabernacle only (Ex. 26:1-37; 35:15; 40:33,38; Lev. 17:4). The word means a tent or building used as a dwelling. When used for secular dwellings, it referred to dwellings of wood and stone, as well as dwellings of skin. It was applied to The Tent of Meeting in order to designate it as Jehovah’s dwelling place. When Israelites came before The Tabernacle, they came to meet Jehovah at the entrance to His dwelling. In no sense was Jehovah confined to His dwelling, any more than the Israelites were confined to their dwellings. Jehovah went out of His dwelling to meet His people anywhere anytime He chose, but the place of His special abiding was in “The Tabernacle” or “The Tabernacle of Meeting.”¹

and he hallowed them. The word translated “hallowed” is a verb based on the root that means “to be holy” (see comments on Lev. 2:3 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading [It is] a holiness of holinesses). The intensive form of the verb is used here for the first use in Leviticus (see comments on Lev. 6:18 in MESSAGE 5 under the heading Whoever touches it must be holy, where the term occurs in its simple

¹ KJV, ASV, NEB, DRV, JB always translate this word as “the tabernacle.” RSV uses the same wording, except that in one instance it uses “my abode.” NASV also uses “the tabernacle,” except that in one instance it uses “My dwelling.” ABV follows the same pattern, except that once it uses “my dwelling” and once expands the translation to “the tabernacle [or] dwelling.” HCSB uses “the tabernacle,” except in two instances. In one instance it uses “residence” referring to Jehovah’s residence. In the other, it uses “dwellings,” referring to Israel’s dwellings. NAB and MV use “my tent.” True to its loose methods of handling the text, LB omits the word 32 times and then uses nine different renderings, though it uses “the Tabernacle” most often.

form). The intensive form of the verb means “to make holy,” “to hallow,” “to sanctify,” “to consecrate” or “to set apart.” The meaning is that, when Moses anointed The Tabernacle, he hallowed it. The purpose of anointing was to hallow or set apart a person or object to belong to Jehovah for use in His service. Thus, anointing was the central and most important part of the hallowing ceremony. It was at that point that the person or object actually became holy or set apart to Jehovah (see also Ex. 28:41; 29:21, 36; 30:26-30; 40:9,10,11,13,15; Lev. 8:11,12).

Verse 11. **And he splattered some of it on the altar seven times and anointed the altar and all its utensils and the laver and its base to hallow them.**

and he splattered some of it on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its utensils. The second part of the anointing of The Tabernacle was anointing the altar of rededication-offering. Special attention was given to the altar, in that the oil was splattered on the altar seven times. The furniture and vessels of the altar (Ex. 27:3; 38:3) were also anointed. The actual procedure for holy anointing is nowhere specifically described. This verse uses the word “splattered” (see comments on Lev. 4:6 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading shall take [some] of the bull’s blood . . .). Evidently The Tabernacle was anointed by thumping some of the oil onto it with the finger. Perhaps the oil was also rubbed onto the person or object.

and the laver and its base. The third step in anointing was anointing the laver and its base, the other article of furniture in the courtyard.

to hallow them. In each case, the anointing was the point at which these furnishings of The Tabernacle were made holy to Jehovah’s service.

(5) The anointing of Aaron (8:12)

Verse 12. **And he poured some of the anointing oil over Aaron’s head and anointed him to hallow him.**

The fourth step in the hallowing ceremonies was anointing Aaron, which had been commanded in Ex. 29:7; 40:13. Aaron was anointed before his sons

because he was their leader, not because he received a different kind of anointing (Ex. 40:15). At this point Aaron actually became a priest and the high priest. In the case of a priest, the oil was not splattered on him, as was done for The Tabernacle, but poured over his head. The extra profuseness indicated the greater significance of hallowing a man over hallowing a material object. It is an interesting question as to whether more was involved in anointing than just splattering or pouring the oil. The word actually means “to smear,” or “to rub in.” It may be that, after the oil was splattered on The Tabernacle or poured on a priest, it was rubbed in with the hands. If so, it would indicate that Old Testament anointing was in the background of the New Testament practice of laying hands on men who were being ordained. The purpose and significance of the two ceremonies were the same. The methods were similar.

(6) The clothing of Aaron’s sons
(8:13)

Verse 13. Then he brought Aaron’s sons and clothed them with coats, and he girded them with sashes and bound on them headbands, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

The fifth step was clothing the ordinary priests, which had been commanded in Exodus 29: 8-9; 40:14-15. The articles of clothing of the ordinary priests are explained in Exodus 28:40-43; 29:8-9. They are briefly described in Leviticus 8:7 above. They represented the pure life that was expected of a priest of Jehovah.

No mention is made here or in Exodus 29 of anointing the ordinary priests. Many have concluded from this omission that only the high priest was anointed. Thus they have interpreted the term “anointed priest” (Lev. 4:3,5,16; 6:22) to be a designation for the high priest only. This conclusion is in error, because Exodus 40:15-16 states that Jehovah commanded that the sons of Aaron be anointed just like Aaron, and this verse asserts that Moses carried out Jehovah’s commands just as they had been given to him. We must conclude that the sons of Aaron were anointed at the time they were clothed with their special clothing, as Moses had done with Aaron (see comments on Lev. 4:3 in

MESSAGE 2 under the heading the anointed priest). In addition, Lev. 7:35 spoke of “the anointment of Aaron and the anointment of his sons in the day He offers them as priests of Jehovah” (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 9). That verse clearly states that both Aaron and his sons were anointed on the same day.

(7) The sin-offering (8:14-17)

Verse 14. Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons pressed their hands on the head of the offering.

The sixth step was the offering of a sin-offering by Aaron and his sons, which had been commanded in Exodus 29:10-14. Offering a sin-offering first shows that in actual practice the offerings did not have to be offered in the order in which they are introduced in Leviticus 1-7. The worshiper was free to offer offerings singularly or in combination, and in such order as expressed his spiritual feelings and experiences. In this case, it was appropriate to begin with the sin-offering because sin had to be removed from Aaron and his sons before they were ready to begin their service as priests.

Aaron and his sons pressed their hands on the head of the bull in order to show that the offering represented them. By the offering, they publicly confessed themselves to be sinners, repented of their sins, and received the symbols of forgiveness (see comments on Lev. 1:4 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading And he shall press his hand on the head of the rededication-offering; on Lev. 3:2 in MESSAGE 1; and on Lev. 4:4 in MESSAGE 2.).

Verse 15. And he killed it, and Moses took the blood and put [it] on the horns of the altar round about with his finger and purified the altar. And he poured out the blood at the base of the altar and hallowed it to cover it.

And he killed it. Probably “he” means Aaron, because Moses is specifically mentioned only after the bull was killed (see comments on Lev. 1:5 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading And he shall kill the bull).

And Moses took the blood. Moses officiated as priest for this offering, even as he would for the other offerings that were offered during the hallowing ceremonies. He had been commanded to do so in the mountain (Ex. 29:10-28). This provision was allowed so that someone might serve as priest during the hallowing ceremonies. Afterward, this task belonged to Aaron and his descendants, not even to Moses.

and put [it] on the horns of the altar round about with his finger. In the sin-offering of a priest, blood was not smeared on the horns of the altar of rededication-offering but on the horns of the altar of incense (see comments on Lev. 4:5-7 in MESSAGE 2). The altar referred to here is clearly the altar of rededication-offering. Furthermore, Jehovah did not mention cleansing the altar when He gave Moses instructions concerning the blood of the sin-offering at the hallowing of Aaron and his sons (Ex. 29:12). However, in Exodus 29:36-37, He had told Moses to cleanse and hallow the altar with a sin-offerings. What was taking place was that this sin-offering served to cleanse the priests from their sins and to hallow the altar at the same time. The two ceremonies were blended together and slightly changed in order to conduct the two hallowings at the same time (see Introduction to this MESSAGE).

When Jehovah gave Moses instructions concerning making covering for the altar and hallowing it in Exodus 29:36-37, he told him to offer a sin-offering every day for seven days during the hallowing ceremonies. The sin-offering that is being described in this verse was the first of the seven daily sin-offerings. Its blood was used not only to symbolize forgiveness for the sins of the priests but also to cleanse and hallow the altar. This combination was appropriate, because any uncleanness or unworthiness of the altar did not come from itself but from the lives of the priests, who alone were allowed to touch it (see Ex. 29:37; see also comments on Lev. 6:18 in MESSAGE 5 under the heading Whoever touches it must be holy).

and purified the altar. The word translated “purified” means “to make pure.” In four previous references in Leviticus, Jehovah had referred to the concept of “cleanness” and “uncleanness.” Here a different word is used to refer to the same idea. To

distinguish the two words, in this writing the word used previously will be translated “cleanse,” and the word used in this verse will be translated “purify.” Whichever word is used, it should be understood that the two words have the same meaning. The word “purify” had been used one time previously, in Exodus 29:36 to refer to purifying or cleansing the altar during the hallowing ceremonies.

In Leviticus 4:12 in MESSAGE 1 and in Leviticus 6:11 in MESSAGE 5, Jehovah had spoken of “a clean place.” In Leviticus 5:2-3 in MESSAGE 2, Jehovah had spoken of “unclean animals” and “unclean men.” In Leviticus 7:19 in MESSAGE 7, He had spoken of “an unclean thing” and of “one who is clean.” (See comments on each of those verses) Each of those verses referred to the condition of “clean” or “unclean.” In this verse, the idea of purifying or cleansing is introduced for the first time in Leviticus. The word means “to make pure” an impure or unclean object or person.

“Cleanness” and “uncleanness” were ancient concepts. They are mentioned for the first time in the Bible with regard to animals on the ark (Gen. 7:2,8; 8:20). Jehovah would soon define and regulate this ancient practice for use in Israel in Leviticus 11-15 in MESSAGES 14-19 (see comments on those MESSAGES). A brief survey of those concepts will be explain here. “Cleanness” and “uncleanness” were ceremonial concepts. The conditions were symbolic. They did not identify persons, objects, animals, or conditions that were morally good or evil. Rather, they identified persons, objects, animals, or conditions that symbolized moral evil. Every time an Israelite saw an “unclean” object or person, he was reminded that he was obligated to avoid sinful actions. In this verse, the idea of being “purified” or “cleansed” from uncleanness is mentioned for the first time in Leviticus. It taught the Israelites that, if they had sin in their lives, they did not have to stay in sin. They could be forgiven and cleansed by confessing their sins and yielding their lives to God.

This verse refers specifically to purifying the altar. Even a brand new altar that had never been used needed to be purified. The reason was that all material objects in the world have been tainted and damaged by people’s sins. This world is a fallen

world. The sins of people have affected everything in the world, and none of the world's goods are worthy of the God who made them. Yet God will accept them in His service when they have been cleansed. The altar was cleansed by smearing some of the blood of the sin-offering on its horns. It means that, when the priests offered a sin-offering and were forgiven, the objects they used for God were also purified or cleansed and were now acceptable to be used in God's service.

And he poured out the blood at the base of the altar and hallowed it to cover over it.

Moses poured out the remainder of the blood around the base of the altar. This action conveyed a different aspect of the meaning of the ceremonies. Smearing the blood around the horns of the altar symbolized cleansing from sin. Pouring the blood around the altar symbolized hallowing or setting apart to God's service. The two ideas went together. Cleansing from sin was necessary if an object was to be effective in God's service. Since the blood of the priests' sin-offering was used to hallow that altar the meaning is that when God's servants are forgiven for their sins, the objects they use are made acceptable to God's service. The objects themselves are holy and useful only when those who use them are holy. God's servant and all he uses in God's service are made holy and useful when His servant confesses his sin and receives forgiveness.

Verse 16. **And he took all the fat that was on the intestines and the attachment to the liver and the two kidneys and their fat, and Moses roasted [them] on the altar.**

The fat was considered to be the best part of the animal. Offering the fat to God on the altar showed that, when a person was forgiven, the best of his life belonged to God (see comments on Lev. 4:8-10 in MESSAGE 2, where this part of the offering is explained in more detail).

Verse 17. **And the bull and its hide and its meat and its fecal matter, he incinerated with fire outside the camp as Jehovah had commanded Moses.**

And the bull and its hide and its meat and its fecal matter, he incinerated with fire outside the camp. In a sin-offering of an ordinary citizen, the remainder of the animal was given to the priests for their use. Doing so showed that the life and body of the worshiper was accepted by God after the person's forgiveness and cleansing (see comments on Lev. 7:6 in MESSAGE 7). In the sin-offering of a priest, the remainder of the animal was incinerated in a clean place outside the camp, so that a priest would not benefit from his own offering (see comments on Lev. 4:11-12 in MESSAGE 2). The significance was the same in both cases. Both actions meant that the person's life was accepted by God after being forgiven.

as Jehovah had commanded Moses. The verse closes with the assurance that Moses carried out this offering exactly according to Jehovah's instructions, both those found in Exodus 29:13-14, which gives instructions concerning hallowing the priests and those given in Leviticus 4:8-12, which gives instructions concerning the sin-offering of a priest. Certain details of the sin-offering of a priest are not mentioned here, such as splattering some of the blood before the veil of The Tabernacle and smearing some of it on the horns of the altar of incense (see comments on Lev. 4:7 in MESSAGE 2, where these actions are described). Since this verse gives assurance that this offering was performed just as Jehovah had commanded, we must understand that those details are not mentioned here simply for the sake of brevity. They were performed exactly as God had commanded them.

(8) The rededication-offering
(8:18-21)

Verses 18-21. **18 Then he brought the ram of the rededication-offering, and Aaron and his sons pressed their hands on the head of the ram.**

19. And he killed it, and Moses splashed the blood on the altar round about.

20. And when the ram was cut into pieces, Moses roasted the head and the pieces and the fat.

21. And he washed the intestines and the legs with water, and Moses roasted the whole ram on the altar as a rededication-offering, a soothing fragrance, a fire-offering to Jehovah, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

The seventh step in the ceremonies was offering a rededication-offering by Aaron and his sons, which had been commanded in Exodus 29:15-18. It was done according to the instructions given in Leviticus 1:10-13 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 1). However, Jehovah commanded one variation from a rededication-offering for a priest that is described in Leviticus 1:10-13. In that chapter, a priest was to bring a bull for a rededication-offering. Here a ram is specified. Probably the reason was that at their hallowing, priests were to bring a bull for a sin-offering. The less expensive, but still impressive animal, may have been specified on the rededication-offering in order not to make the combined offerings too expensive.

Aaron then killed the animal, and Moses, acting as the priest, took it to the altar and offered it there in the manner Jehovah had specified (see comments on Lev. 1:5-9 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading And he shall kill the bull). A rededication-offering symbolized the surrender of a person's whole life to God. After being forgiven for their sins, it was appropriate for Aaron and his sons to demonstrate that they surrendered their whole lives to God as they entered His service at the altar. Such a surrender of self was necessary if a priest was to serve successfully. The same kind of surrender is necessary for God's ministers today, though the offering of a rededication-offering is not necessary to symbolize it.

(9) The fillings (the slaughter-offering) (8:22-32)

Verse 22. And he brought the other ram, the ram of filling; and Aaron and his sons pressed their hands on the head of the ram.

The eighth step was offering a slaughter-offering, which had been commanded in Exodus 29:29-28. It is obvious that a slaughter-offering is described in this passage, but that name is not used here or in Exodus 29. Instead the animal used in the offering is called "the ram of fillings" (see comments on Lev. 7:37 in SUMMARY NOTE ON MESSAGES ON THE FIRE-OFFERINGS under the heading and of the fillings). The slaughter-offering symbolized the fellowship that existed among God's

people; however, the emphasis of this slaughter-offering was on the physical provisions that it provided to the priests. The portions of the slaughter-offering that went to the priests were used in the hallowing ceremonies to symbolize the many different ways that the material needs of the priests would be met. Since the priests were to devote their whole lives to God's service and would not be doing secular work to earn a living, providing for their material support was an extremely important thought for a new priest on the day he was set aside for his holy duties. It was through the "ram of fillings" that the new priests were given authority to receive and share in the offerings and gifts that were set aside for their support.

The ceremony for the observance of this slaughter-offering varied somewhat from the slaughter-offering that is described in Leviticus. 3:6-11 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 1). The variations most likely were not special variations for the hallowing ceremonies only. Rather, they were variations that were always to be used in slaughter-offerings offered by priests. Instructions had been given for special variations when a priest offered an homage-offering (see comments on Lev. 6:23 in MESSAGE 4), a sin-offering (see comments on Lev. 4:3-12 in MESSAGE 2), and an offense-offering (see comments on Lev. 7:7 in MESSAGE 7). The procedure given in this passage should be understood to be variations to be practiced when a priest offered a slaughter-offering.

One variation was that in other slaughter-offerings the worshiper could bring either a sheep or a goat and either a male or female (see comments on Lev. 3:1 in MESSAGE 1). When a priest brought a slaughter-offering, he was to bring a ram, which is a male sheep. This requirement showed the special significance of a priest when he offered a slaughter-offering.

Verses 23-24. **23 And he killed it, and Moses took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot.**

24. And he brought Aarons sons, and Moses put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and

on the big toes of their right feet, and Moses splashed the blood on the altar round about.

The handling of the blood was a second variation in the slaughter-offering of a priest. In a regular slaughter-offering, the blood was splashed onto the sides of the altar (see comments on Lev. 3:2 in MESSAGE 1 and on Lev. 1:5 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading shall offer the blood, and splash the blood). That action symbolized the reception of the worshiper's life by Jehovah for usefulness to Him. In the slaughter-offering of a priest, some of the blood was smeared on the tip of his right ear, his right thumb, and his right big toe. Then, the remainder of the blood was splashed onto the sides of the altar. This action had the same meaning as splashing the blood on the sides of the altar in a slaughter-offering of an ordinary citizen, only the idea was more graphically presented. It meant that Jehovah received and would use not only the priest's life in general way but also in a particular way He would use the priest's best and leading ear, hand, and foot. The dedication of the best of the priest's whole self is what made him worthy of having his needs filled from the offerings and gifts of God's people.

Verses 25-26. **25. Then he took the fat and the fat tail and all the fat that was on the intestines and the attachment that was between the liver and the two kidneys with their fat and the right front quarter.**

26. And he took out of the basket of unleavened bread that was at Jehovah's face. Then he placed one unleavened cake and one cake of bread with oil and one wafer on the fat and on the right front quarter.

27. And he put them in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and he waved them as a wave-offering at Jehovah's face.

Then he took the fat and the fat tail and all the fat that was on the intestines and the attachment that was between the liver and the two kidneys :with their fat. These fatty portions of the animal are described more fully in Leviticus 3:3-4 (see comments on those verse in MESSAGE 1). The fatty tail, a distinctive characteristic of sheep in Israel, is explained in comments on Leviticus 3:9 (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 1, under the heading [including] its entire fatty hump up to the

bone). These fatty portions were considered to be the best part of the animal, and they were Jehovah's portion of the offering because He was Lord and deserved the best part. The fat was roasted on the altar as a sign that it was received by God as His part of the fellowship meal that was part of a slaughter-offering (see Lev. 3:5 in MESSAGE 1 and Lev. 7:31 in MESSAGE 9).

and the right front quarter. This portion of a slaughter-offering was reserved as a contribution to the priest who officiated over the offering (see comments on Lev. 7:32-36 in MESSAGE 9). It was one of the provisions God made for the support of His priests.

And he took out of the basket of unleavened bread that was at Jehovah's face. A basket of several types of bread were offered with a slaughter-offering of thanksgiving but not with other types of slaughter-offerings (see comments on Lev. 7:12-16 in MESSAGE 7). The bread indicates that this slaughter-offering on the occasion of hallowing the priests was to be connected with the idea of thanksgiving. No doubt, it was to express the priest's thanksgiving for being appointed to the priesthood, but especially for the privilege and blessings of receiving support through the fillings that this offering made available to him. When a slaughter-offering was offered for the purpose of thanksgiving, a portion of each kind of bread was given to Jehovah, and it was then assigned to the priests to be a part of their share of the meal that followed the offering.

Then he placed one unleavened cake and one cake of bread with oil and one wafer on the fat and on the right front quarter. These words specifically describe the bread Moses had taken out of the basket. He placed the bread on the right front quarter of the animal. The bread and the right front quarter were Jehovah's portion of the fellowship meal.

And he put them in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons. Moses placed these parts of the offering in the hands of Aaron and his sons, not because these portions belonged to them, but so they could give them to Jehovah. This action was in fulfillment of the instructions given in Leviticus

7:29-30 that the worshiper's hands were to personally present these portions of the offering to Jehovah (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 9).

And he waved them as a wave-offering at Jehovah's face. According to Ex. 29:22-25, the worshiper held the offering in his hands and the priest grasped his hands and guided them in a waving motion over the altar, to indicate that the offering was given to God and assigned back to the priest for his support (see comments on Lev. 7:30-32 in MESSAGE 9). Since this offering was given in behalf of Aaron and his sons, apparently Aaron did the actual waving of these items, guided by Moses acting as priest, but he did it in behalf of both himself and his sons.

28 Then Moses took them from their hands and roasted these fillings on the altar with the rededication-offering, for a soothing fragrance, a fire-offering.

Then Moses took them from their hands and roasted these fillings on the altar with the rededication-offering. After Aaron waved the referenced portions of the offering over the altar, Moses, acting as a priest, took them from the hands of Aaron and his sons and roasted them on the altar, on top of the rededication-offering that had been offered a short time before. A third variation in the slaughter-offering of a priest is described here. In regular slaughter-offerings, the fat was first roasted on the altar as Jehovah's portion of the fellowship meal. Then a portion of the bread and the right front thigh were waved over the altar and assigned back to the priests, as a part of their portion of the fellowship meal (see comments on Lev. 7:14 in MESSAGE 7 and on Lev. 7:32 in MESSAGE 9). In the case of a priest's slaughter-offering, all these parts were waved over the altar and then roasted on the altar. The reason was to follow the principle that the priests should not benefit from their own offerings (see comments on Lev. 4:11,12, 21 in MESSAGE 2 and on Lev. 6:22-23 in MESSAGE 6). Though Moses was serving as priest on this occasion, the priest's portion of a slaughter-offering could be shared with all of the priests, so Aaron and his sons would have had right to eat of these portions of the offering if they had been given to the priests. In the

homage-offering of a priest, the priest's portion was incinerated without the camp (see comments on Lev. 4:5-7), but in a slaughter-offering of a priest, the priest's portion was roasted on the altar because it symbolized Jehovah's adding it to His portion of the fellowship meal. Nonetheless, these portions of the offering were called "these fillings" because the slaughter-offering symbolized all the provisions God made for the needs of His priests.

For a soothing fragrance, a fire-offering. These portions of the ram of fillings, like all fire-offerings, produced a soothing fragrance for Jehovah, because He was pleased and soothed when people supported the priests whom He had appointed as their teachers and guides (see comments on Lev. 1:9 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading a soothing fragrance to Jehovah).

Verse 29 And Moses took the breast and waved it for a wave offering at Jehovah's face. It was Moses' portion of the ram of filling, as Jehovah commanded Moses.

The breast of a slaughter-offering also was assigned by Jehovah to the priest who officiated over the ceremony (see comments on Lev. 7:30-31 in MESSAGE 9). In the case of a priest's slaughter-offering, the officiating priest did receive the breast, so that the priests would have a participation in the fellowship meal. Otherwise, a part of the significance of the slaughter-offering would have been lost. Since Moses was serving as priest during the hallowing ceremonies for Aaron and his sons, the priest's portion belonged to him. He waved it over the altar, as Jehovah had commanded in Leviticus 7:30 (see comments on this verse in MESSAGE 9 under the heading Regarding the breast, he must bring the breast to wave it as a wave-offering to Jehovah's face and also on Leviticus 9:29 in MESSAGE 10). Then he took it as his portion of the ram of filling. In this instance, Moses' needs were filled by the breast of the ram because he was acting as the priest for the occasion, and it provided his part in the fellowship meal.

Leviticus 7:30-32, which is a part of Jehovah's description of the priest's responsibilities in a regular slaughter-offering, mentions only waving the breast of the animal over the altar. Leviticus 9:20-21,

which is a part of the description of the people's first slaughter-offering after the hallowing of the priests, mentions only waving the breast and right front quarter. The verses under consideration here (vs. 25-29) say that a portion of the bread, the fat, the right front quarter, and the breast were all waved over the altar. Probably all of these parts of the animal were waved over the altar in every slaughter-offering before being divided out to those to whom they belonged. No reason can be found as to why parts of the slaughter-offering should be waved over the altar on one occasion and not on another.

Verse 30. Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar and splattered [it] on Aaron and his clothes and on his sons and his sons' clothes with him; and he hallowed Aaron and his clothes and his sons and his sons' clothes with him.

In obedience to instructions given in Exodus 29:21, Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was in the trough at the base of the altar and mixed them together. Then, he splattered the mixture on Aaron, his sons, and their clothes. Some have suggested that Aaron's sons were anointed by this action. Jehovah had commanded Moses to anoint the ordinary priests (Ex. 40:14-15), but their anointing was not mentioned in Leviticus 8:12, where Aaron's anointing is described. However, three considerations argue against interpreting this action as fulfilling the command to anoint the ordinary priests. First, in this verse blood was mingled with the anointing oil, which was not the custom in anointing (Ex. 30:22-33). Second, the mixture was splattered and not poured, as was the regular custom in the anointing persons (Lev. 8:12; I Sam. 10:1; II Kings 9:3,6; Ps. 133:2). Third, the mixture was splattered on Aaron and his clothing, as well as on his sons and their clothing. Aaron had definitely already been anointed just a short time before (v. 12). If this splattering of the blood had been an anointing ceremony, Aaron would have been anointed twice. It is better to conclude that the sons of Aaron had already been anointed at the time they were clothed with their official clothing, though their anointing was not specifically mentioned at that time (see comments on Lev. 8:13 in this MESSAGE). If so, splattering blood mixed with anointing oil on

Aaron and his sons must have had some significance other than anointing into the priesthood. The best explanation is that the oil and blood were splattered on Aaron and his sons as a sign that they now were duly authorized to come in contact with the blood of the offerings and with the holy oil, which people other than priests did not have the right to do. It showed that all the rights and privileges of the priesthood belonged to them.

In the instructions that Jehovah gave Moses for the hallowing of the priests, this portion of the ceremonies was described immediately after the pouring of the blood on the altar. This verse describes its being performed at the completion of the all parts of this offering that were performed at the altar. Likely it was performed at the point described in this verse so as not to inject into the midst of the slaughter-offering; but it was mentioned in the instructions in Exodus after the pouring of the blood simply because it involved the use of the blood. Keil suggested that, if splattering the blood and oil on Aaron and his sons had waited until the completion of the altar portion of this offering, the blood would have run off and could not have been scooped up for combining with the oil. However, it seems that the altar had a trough at the bottom to hold a certain amount of the blood and that, therefore, some of the blood still remained in the trough and could be scooped up easily (see comments on Lev. 4:7 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading And he shall pour the rest of the blood . . .). When Moses scooped up some of the blood from the trough of the altar, it included blood from both of the offerings that he had offered. The combination of blood from both offerings with the holy oil showed that the new priests now had the right to handle and touch all of the holy articles that were to be handled only by the priests (for a description of the anointing oil see Ex. 30:22-25).

Verse 31. And Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, Cook the meat at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, and there eat it and the bread that is in the basket of fillings, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.

And Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, Cook the meat at the entrance to The Tent of Meeting. The final part of the slaughter-offering was the meal

eaten by the worshiper and his guests. It was prepared from the meat and the bread that remained after Jehovah's portion had been roasted on the altar and Moses' portion had been taken by him. What was left provided the worshiper's portion of the fellowship meal that was part of a slaughter-offering (see comments on Lev. 7:15,16 in MESSAGE 7). In this case, the new priests were the worshipers who offered the offerings, so they were to eat the portion of the fellowship meal that belonged to the worshiper.

First they were to cook the meat and then eat it along with the remainder of the bread. The word that describes how the meat was to be cooked has been translated in various ways in different English translations. It is a general word that includes any method of cooking. Its proper translation is "cook" (see comments on Lev. 6:28 in MESSAGE 7). The meat did not have to be prepared by any special method.

and there eat it and the bread. This verse is the first place that specifically states where the worshiper was to eat his portion of the fellowship meal. He was to eat his portion of both the meat and the bread at the entrance to The Tent of Meeting, that is, in the courtyard of The Tabernacle, to show to show that this meal was a sacred symbol of fellowship that included Jehovah, the priest, and the worshiper.

and the bread. This verse is also the first place that states that the worshiper was to eat the remainder of the bread that accompanied a slaughter-offering of thanksgiving, though it had been implied in Leviticus 7:12-14 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 7).

that is in the basket of fillings. "The basket of fillings" obviously refers to the bread mentioned in verses 2 and 26. This description of the bread means that it was another reminder that this and other fire-offerings were one way that Jehovah filled the needs of the priests and provided for their support (see comments on Lev. 7:37 in SUMMARY NOTE TO SECTION I under the heading and of the fillings; and the comments on Lev. 8:22 above).

As I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it. This command had been given in Exodus 29:32. Jehovah made it plain that He wanted the whole ceremony, including the fellowship meal, to be carried out just as He had instructed Moses.

Verse 32. And the remainder of the meat and the bread, you must incinerate with fire

Any bread or meat that was left after Aaron and his sons had eaten was to be incinerated, according to instructions concerning the slaughter-offering given in Leviticus 4:12, which were that it was to be incinerated in a clean place outside the camp (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 2 under the heading he shall take out to the outside of the camp to a clean place, and on Leviticus 6:11 in MESSAGE 5, and on Leviticus 7:17-18 in MESSAGE 7). The left over food was a part of the holy offering and was to be given full respect by incinerating it outside the camp in a clean place. It was not to be simply discarded.

(10) The seven days of fillings
(8:33-36)

Verse 33. "And you must not go away from the entrance to The Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the day that fills your days of fillings, because [for] seven days one must continue to fill your hands.

And you must not go away from the entrance to The Tent of Meeting [for] seven days. Aaron and his sons were not inside the tent portion of The Tabernacle, but in the courtyard. They were to remain there, near the entrance to The Tent of Meeting for seven days, as commanded by Jehovah in Exodus 29:35. Probably the main purpose for the seven days was to give them time for prayer and meditation. The new priests needed time to think, commune with God, and dedicate themselves to their new responsibilities. They were to spend seven days in the presence of Jehovah, where they could be ministered to by the people as they prepared their hearts for future service.

until the day that fills your days of fillings, because [for] seven days one must continue to fill your hands. Many attempts have been made by

translators of this verse to interpret the Hebrew words “fills” and “filling” instead of simply translating them. When translators become interpreters, they often confuse the meaning of a verse instead of clarifying it. The words “fills” and “filling” do not refer to dedicating or consecrating, as most translators render them. They refer to filling the needs of the priests (see comments on Lev. 7:37 in SUMMARY NOTE TO SECTION I under the heading and of the fillings). This verse refers to two different kinds of “fillings.” First, Aaron and his sons were to fill the days God told them to remain at the entrance to The Tabernacle. They were to remain there a full seven days. Second, their hands were to be filled during those days. That statement seems to mean that people were to bring gifts of food to the priests to sustain them during their seven days of prayer in The Tabernacle. During those seven days, the new priests would begin to become accustomed to having their daily needs supplied by worshipers. In later years, priests would have lived all their lives by eating from the offerings and donations given to their fathers, since they would all be sons of priests. However, when they were hallowed as priests themselves, they would begin to receive those offerings and gifts directly for themselves. They would need seven days to accustom themselves to that responsibility and privilege.

Exodus 29:36-37 states that Jehovah commanded Moses to offer a bull sin-offering each day during the seven days of fillings and to use them to cleanse, cover, and hallow the altar. That statement had to mean that Moses was to officiate over the offering but that it was to be offered by Aaron and his sons. That conclusion is confirmed in that a bull was offered as a sin-offering only by priests or by the whole congregation. A ruler or an ordinary citizen offered lesser animals (see comments on Lev. 4:3, 14, 23, and 28 in MESSAGE 2). This offering was not offered by the congregation, and Moses was not a priest. He was only temporarily acting in that capacity. Therefore, these offerings were made by Aaron and his sons, with Moses officiating. The offering of these seven sin-offerings is not mentioned in this verse, but the first of them had already been offered right after Aaron and his sons’ clothing and anointing (see verses 14-17 and note comments on verse 15 above).

Thus, the seven days of fillings included the day in which the priests were anointed. Verses 14-17 above also confirm that the seven sin-offerings were offered in behalf of the priests and that they were to be used to hallow the altar (see comments on those verses).

Verse 34. That which one does in this day, Jehovah has commanded [you] to do to cover you.

Moses emphasized again that all the observances of the day had been commanded by Jehovah to cover over the priests and protect them from the damage done by their sins. Keil used this verse to support his contention that the entire of the ceremonies described in this chapter were repeated on each of the seven days of fillings, but this verse does not speak of the seven days. It speaks of what was done on “this day,” that is, on the first day of the hallowing ceremonies. The point was that the ceremonies of the day covered and protected the priests from their sins and from everything that was unworthy in their lives, assuming that they participated in the ceremonies with sincere believing hearts (see comments on Lev. 1:4 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading to cover over him). The ceremonies of the day not only hallowed The Tabernacle but also brought covering to the new priests from their sins.

Verse 35. You must remain at the entrance to The Tent of Meeting day and night [for] seven days, and you shall watch the watch of Jehovah; and you will not die because thus I have been commanded.

You must remain at the entrance to The Tent of Meeting day and night [for] seven days, and you shall watch the watch of Jehovah. English translations translate the words “watch the watch” as “keep the charge” or equivalent words. The words mean more than simply keeping commandments. Aaron and his sons were to watch and pray, that is keep a prayer vigil to Jehovah for the seven days.

And you will not die. If they kept their hearts in a watchful and prayerful attitude, they would not die. The words imply that, if they did not “watch the watch of Jehovah,” they would die. In other words, if they remained at the entrance to The Tabernacle but did not keep a sincere and prayerful attitude in

their hearts, the ceremony would be of no avail. What mattered was not performing the ceremony but performing the ceremony with an understanding and committed heart.

Because thus I have been commanded. Moses gave these instructions to Aaron and his sons, but he was careful to affirm that he had been commanded to do so by Jehovah. None of these ceremonies were Moses' invention. They had been commanded by Jehovah to Moses while he was in the mountain for forty days and night (Ex. 29:35-37).

Verse 36. And Aaron and his sons did all the words that Jehovah had commanded by Moses.

Aaron and his sons obeyed all the commands concerning their hallowing that Jehovah had commanded through Moses. This statement surely includes offering a sin-offering each day for seven days, as Jehovah had commanded Moses in Exodus 29:36-37, even though this chapter does not specifically mention the sin-offerings of the remaining six days.

c. The first offerings over which the new priests officiated (9:1-24)

(1) The instructions of Moses (9:1-7)

Verse 1. And it came to be that on the eighth day, Moses called for Aaron and his sons and for the elders of Israel,

The eighth day was the first day after the hallowing ceremonies had been completed. It was time for the priests to begin performing their duties. So Moses called together the priests and the elders (concerning who the elders were, see comments on Lev. 4:15 and INTRODUCTION TO SECTION II). The purpose for calling them was to instruct the new priests to officiate over the first fire-offerings after their hallowing. Exodus does not contain a record that Jehovah gave Moses instructions in advance concerning these offerings, except that Jehovah had told Moses that the priests were to begin offering the continual offerings (Ex. 29:38-42). It is certain, however, that Jehovah gave Moses a number of instructions in the mountain that he did not record in

Exodus. Verses 6 and 10 give assurance that the instructions for these offerings were among those unrecorded instructions God gave Moses in the mountain.

Verse 2. And he said to Aaron, Take for yourself a calf, a son of the herd, for a sin-offering and a ram for a rededication-offering [both] pristine, and offer [them] before Jehovah.

Moses then instructed Aaron that the first offerings over which they were to officiate were to be in their own behalf. They had to have the experiences themselves before they could lead the people into those experiences. First, they were to offer a sin-offering, symbolizing repenting of their sins (see INTRODUCTION to MESSAGE 2). Then, they were to offer a rededication-offering, symbolizing commitment of their whole lives to God (see comments on Lev. 1:3 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading If his offering [is] a rededication-offering). Aaron and his sons had offered those offerings as a part of their hallowing ceremonies (see comments on Lev. 8:14-21 above). They needed to make the same commitments again as they began their new duties. The difference between the offerings made during their hallowing ceremonies and those offered on the day after their hallowing was that during the hallowing ceremonies Moses had officiated as the priest, and on this day after their hallowing Aaron and his sons officiated.

Moses instructed Aaron concerning the animals he was to offer in behalf of himself and his sons. The animal for their sin-offering was to be a calf, in agreement with instructions concerning a priest's sin-offering that are given in Leviticus 4:3 (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 2 under the heading a pristine bull). Though a priest's sin-offering had to be a bull, it could be a bull of any age. Jehovah specified a calf but clarified that it had to be a male calf by using the term "a son of the herd" (see comments on the term "son of the herd" in Lev. 4:14 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading then the congregation shall offer a bull . . .). Probably a young animal was specified so that the offerings would be sufficient to express the genuineness of their repentance and yet not so expensive as to be a burden, especially in view of the need to conserve their animals in the wilderness.

The animal the priests were to bring for a rededication-offering was a “ram.” The animals God had commanded to be offered as rededication-offerings did not differ according to whether the person was a priest, a ruler, or an ordinary citizen, but any one of them could offer a variety of animals for a rededication-offering. They could offer an animal from the herd (see comments on Lev. 1:3 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading of the herd), an animal from the flock (see comments on Lev. 1:10-13 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading And if his offering is of the flock, [that is] of sheep or of goats), or of birds (see comments on Lev. 1:14 in MESSAGE 1). The animal to be used on this occasion was a male sheep, probably again to be sufficient to express genuine commitment to Jehovah but not so expensive as to be a burden.

Verse 3. And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Take a buck of the goats for a sin-offering and a calf and a lamb, sons of a year, [both] pristine, for a rededication-offering.

And speak to the people of Israel, saying. Moses had gathered the elders, but here he tells Aaron to speak to all the people. Verses 22-24 say that all the people were present at the conclusion of these offerings, so the elders had gone back to their tribes and gathered them to witness these first offerings that were being offered after the hallowing of the priests. Moses did not instruct the people concerning the animals they were to bring. Instead, he told Aaron to instruct them, so the new priests would begin to exercise their leadership in the area of the offerings.

In this verse and in verse 4, Moses instructed Aaron to tell the people to bring materials for offering four of the five kinds of offerings described in Leviticus 1-7. Thus, they were to get an introduction to all but one of the experiences of the covenant life that the offerings symbolized. The sin-offering symbolized repentance and forgiveness for sin. The rededication-offering symbolized surrendering one’s whole life to God. Peace-offerings symbolized harmony and fellowship among God and His people, and homage-offerings symbolized recognizing that everything a person had or gained was a gift from God. If they understood the offerings, they would understand how to live a

life pleasing to Jehovah. The only offering the congregation would not offer on this occasion was the offense-offering, which symbolized restitution.

“Take a buck of the goats for a sin-offering. In Leviticus 4:23, Jehovah had specified “a buck the goats” as the animal to be offered as a sin-offering of a ruler (see comments on Lev. 4:23 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading he shall bring his offering [which shall consist of] a buck of the goats, a pristine male). In Leviticus 4:14, He had specified “a son of the herd,” in other words, a bull as the animal to be offered as a sin-offering by the whole congregation (see comments on Lev. 4:13-14 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading then the congregation shall offer a son of the herd for a sin-offering . . .). Since the offering was both for the rulers and the congregation, offering only a buck of the goats seems insufficient. However, in Numbers 15:24 Jehovah specified that a sin-offering of the congregation could consist of a “male goat of the goats” if it accompanied a bull rededication-offering. That verse established the principle that if other expensive offerings were offered at the same time, a less expensive animal could suffice for the sin-offering. The justification for this practice was not written in the Record until a later MESSAGE, but it is unlikely that Moses would have given these instructions on his own. His giving these instructions provides evidence that Jehovah gave him instructions concerning these offerings while he was in the mountain, even though those instructions are not recorded in Exodus.

and a calf and a lamb, sons of a year, [both] pristine, for a rededication-offering. The animals specified for the congregation’s rededication-offering are the first example of combining two animals to constitute one offering, but that practice was often employed later. Likely two animals were specified in this case to show that the rededication-offering was both for the rulers and for the whole congregation. The animals specified in this verse are allowed in instructions for rededication-offerings given in Leviticus 1:3-17 (see comments on verse 2 above concerning animals allowed for rededication-offerings).

Verse 4. **a bull and a ram for peace-offerings to slaughter before Jehovah, and an homage-offering mixed with oil, because Jehovah will appear to you today.**

A bull and a ram for peace offerings. The people were also to prepare “a bull and a ram” for peace-offerings (see comments on 4:10 in MESSAGE 2 and on Lev. 5:15 in MESSAGE 3). Peace-offerings could be from the herd, male or female (see comments on Lev. 3:1 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading whether male or female, he must offer a pristine [one] without blemish), or from the flock, male or female (see comments on Lev. 3:6 in MESSAGE 1). On this occasion, large male specimens are specified for the offering, probably because of the number of people who would share in the fellowship meal that would be prepared from it (see comments on Lev. 3:1 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading a slaughter-offering of peace-offerings). The five priests and their families, as well as at least some of the elders, would all have a share in the meal.

to slaughter before Jehovah. The word translated “to slaughter” is an infinitive based on the same root as the name “slaughter-offering.” It was another way of specifying that the special offering called “slaughter-offering of peace-offerings” is the offering being referred to here.

and an homage-offering mixed with oil. In addition, the people were to prepare “an homage-offering mixed with oil.” Since this homage-offering is mentioned in conjunction with peace-offerings, it must have been intended to provide the bread that was to accompany a slaughter-offering for thanksgiving (see comments on Lev. 7:11-15 in MESSAGE 7). Four kinds of bread are named in MESSAGE 1 as suitable for use as an homage-offering. All of them were offered with oil in one manner or another (see comments on Lev. 2:1,4,5,7 in MESSAGE 1) so evidently the new priests were allowed to bring any one of the four kinds of bread. This combination of the homage-offering with the peace-offerings identified this slaughter-offering of peace-offerings as a slaughter-offering for thanksgiving. Leviticus 7:15 specified that the meat of a slaughter-offering for thanksgiving had to be eaten on the day of the offering (see comments on

that verse in MESSAGE 7). This requirement becomes important in determining the sequence of events described in MESSAGE 13 (see comments on Lev. 10:16-18 in MESSAGE 13).

Because Jehovah will appear to you today. Moses foretold that Jehovah would appear to them that day. It is most unlikely that Moses would have known to predict this appearance if Jehovah had not given him information about it while he was in the mountain. “Today” shows that the offerings were to be made and the appearance of Jehovah was to be given in the same day that Moses called the priests and elders together for the priests to officiate over their first offerings after their hallowing. All these events occurred on the first day after the completion of the seven days of fillings.

Verse 5. And they brought what Moses commanded to the face of The Tent of Meeting; and all the congregation drew near and stood before Jehovah.

The offerings were brought before The Tent of Meeting, that is, into the courtyard beside the altar, just as Moses had instructed them. Evidently the priests brought their offerings and the elders brought the offerings of the congregation. Then the people drew near to The Tabernacle to witness the impressive occasion. They must have felt great excitement. For the rest of their lives, those who were present would be able to tell vividly how they had witnessed the first occasion when Aaron and his sons officiated as priests.

Verse 6. **And Moses said, This is the word (practice) that Jehovah commanded you to do, and The Glory of Jehovah will appear to you.**

Before the offerings were actually made, Moses addressed the people. He told them that Jehovah had commanded the events that were about to take place. His statement is a clear affirmation that he had indeed received instructions concerning these offerings while he was in the mountain. Then he told the people, “The Glory of Jehovah will appear to you.” In verse 4, Moses had told the priests that Jehovah would appear to them. He now affirms that The Glory of Jehovah will appear to the people as well. “The Glory of Jehovah” was the

brilliant appearance of fire that had often appeared to them in the Cloud and that guided them through the wilderness (Ex. 14:19-20; 16:7,10; 24:15-18; 40:34-35,38; Num. 9:15-16; 16:42). A careful reading of these verses shows that the Cloud had a dark, foggy appearance. It was always visible over The Tabernacle when the Tabernacle was at rest, and at night Fire could be seen mingled in it. At times, however, the fiery appearance in the Cloud burst forth with a brilliant, powerful light that could be seen even in the daytime. This magnificent brightness was called "The Glory of Jehovah." Both the Cloud and the Fire symbolized Jehovah, each presenting a different aspects of His character. The dark Cloud showed how God appeared to be a dark mystery when He was seen only through human insight. The bright Fire showed how He appeared when He revealed Himself. So, the statement in verse 6, "The Glory will appearing to you," had exactly the same meaning as the statement in verse 4, "Jehovah will appear to you" The Fire was a symbol of the presence of Jehovah. The bursting forth of The Glory on that day would show Jehovah's approval on the important events of the day.

Verse 7. **Then Moses said to Aaron, Draw near to the altar and offer your sin-offering and your rededication-offering and make covering for yourself and for the people, and make the offering of the people and cover over them as Jehovah has commanded.**

Moses then commanded Aaron to proceed with the offerings in order to "make covering" for himself and for the people (concerning the significance of covering over them, see comments on Lev. 1:4 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading to cover over him). The words "and for the people" must refer to the covering that was to come from the offerings of the people, not from those of the priests. The sins of the priests did not make the people guilty (see comments on Lev. 4:3 in MESSAGE under the heading so as to harm the people), and the offerings of the priests did not provide covering for the people (refer again to comments on Lev. 1:4, as cited above"). They gained covering from their sins through offering their own offerings.

(2) The offerings of the priests
(9:8-14)

(a) Their sin-offering (9:8-11)

Verses 8. **And Aaron drew near to the altar and killed the calf of the sin-offering that was for himself.**

Aaron officiated over the offering and killed the calf of the sin-offering. The next verse shows that he offered it in behalf of himself and his sons. The first offerings handled by the new priests were their own offerings. The chief reason was to set an example. As they offered their offerings, they showed that they believed in and were ready to practice the ceremonies they were leading the people to practice. However, they surely had a sincere need to offer a sin-offering. They too were sinners, and their offering showed that they repented of their sins. Though they had offered a sin-offering each day for seven days, new sins entered their lives daily; and anyone in the service of Jehovah needed to receive a new cleansing from sin each day.

Verse 9. **And the sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar, and he poured out the blood at the base of the altar.**

This verses give a description of the procedure that was used when more than one priest officiated at the offerings. Aaron led the ceremony, and his sons assisted him. The sons held the bowl to catch the blood and then brought it to Aaron. Then Aaron applied it to the altar. The same procedure was followed when they assisted Aaron in the rededication-offering for themselves (v. 12) and in the offerings of the people (v. 18). Aaron carried out the blood ceremony exactly as Jehovah had commanded it in Leviticus 4:6-7, though some of the details are omitted in this description of his carrying out of the instructions (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 2 for a full description and for an interpretation of the meaning of the blood part of the ceremony).

Verse 10. **And the fat and the kidneys and the attachment to the liver from the sin-offering, he roasted on the altar as Jehovah had commended Moses.**

Moses carried out the fat ceremony exactly like Jehovah had commanded in Leviticus 4:8-10, though it is described in fewer words here. The roasting of the fat showed that the priests gave the best of themselves to God (see comments on those verse in MESSAGE 2 for a full description of how the fat was handled and for the interpretation of its meaning).

Verse 11. **And the meat and the hide he incinerated outside the camp.**

Aaron carried out this part of the ceremony as Jehovah had commanded in Lev. 4:11-12. A priest's sin-offering was roasted in a clean place outside the camp so the priest would not benefit from his own offering. It symbolized that he was received back completely into God's service after his forgiveness (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 2 for a full description of these actions and for the interpretation of their meaning.).

(b) Their rededication-offering
(9:12-14)

Verse 12. **And he killed the rededication-offering, and Aaron's sons presented the blood to him; and he splashed it round about the altar.**

Aaron and his sons worked together in the same way as when they offered the sin-offering. Aaron officiated over the offering, and his sons assisted him (see comments on verse 9 above). In carrying out the blood ceremony, Aaron followed exactly the procedure Jehovah had commanded in Leviticus 1:5. It symbolized the surrender of their lives to God and God's acceptance of their surrendered lives (for a full description of the rededication-offering and its meaning, see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 1).

Verses 13-14. **13 And they presented to him the rededication-offering, piece by piece; and he roasted them on the altar.**

14 And he washed the intestines and the legs and roasted them with the rededication-offering on the altar.

The whole animal of a rededication-offering was roasted on the altar as a symbol of the total commitment of the worshiper's life. Aaron followed the procedure for this part of the offering exactly as Jehovah had commanded it in Leviticus 1:1:6-9 (for a full description of this part of the ceremony and its interpretation, see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 1).

The new priests' offering a sin-offering and a rededication-offering as their first official duty after their hallowing provides proof that the fire-offerings did not represent salvation, but experiences of the covenant life. The priests had accepted the covenant, had been appointed to serve as priests, had been installed into office, and had already offered these same offerings previously. If these offerings represented salvation, they would have taught that a person needs to be saved over again every day. Since they represented covering from sins that come into a believer's life, the repetition of the offerings teaches a most valid truth. Believers, even priests and ministers, sin repeatedly, not out of rebellion but out of weakness. When we sin, we need to be covered from our sins to restore us to God's fellowship and to usefulness in God's service. Confession and recommitment are needed repeatedly. Forgiveness for a believer does not give pardon from the penalty of sin. It removes the barriers to fellowship with God that come from each new sin.

(3) The offerings of the congregation
(9:15-21)

(a) Their sin-offering (9:15)

Then he began to offer the people's offering, so he took the goat of the sin-offering that was for the people and killed it and offered it as a sin-offering like the previous [one].

The first offering of the congregation was the male goat for a sin-offering that had been commanded in verse 3. The word translated "offered it as a sin-offering" is a verb that means "to sin-offering." Perhaps, it can best be rendered in English as "proceeded to make a sin-offering of it" or "proceeded to offer it as a sin-offering." "Like the previous [one]" means that he offered the congregation's sin-offering in the same way that he had offered the priests' sin-offering. The ceremonies for a sin-offering of a priest and those for the whole congregation followed exactly the same procedure, whereas the ceremonies for a ruler or for an ordinary citizen were somewhat different (for a description of the procedure for a priest see Lev. 4:4-12; for the congregation see Lev. 4:16-21; for a ruler see Lev. 4:25-26; and for an ordinary citizen see Lev. 4:29-31. All of these passages are in MESSAGE 2).

(b) Their rededication-offering
(9:16)

Then he offered the rededication-offering, and he did it according to the judgment.

The second offering of the congregation was the calf and the lamb that Moses had told them to bring in verse 3 for a rededication-offering. Moses did not describe the steps in the ceremony. He simply said it was done according to "the judgment," that is, according to the decision that Jehovah had rendered as the Judge of Israel (see comments on Lev. 5:10 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading according to the judgment). The statement means that the offering was carried out according to the instructions God had given in Lev. 1:3-13 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 1).

(c) Their homage-offering (9:17)

And he offered the homage-offering, and he filled his hand from it; then he roasted it on the altar, along with the rededication-offering of the morning.

And he offered the homage-offering, and he filled his hand from it; then he roasted it on the altar. The third offering of the congregation was the homage-offering that Moses had told them to bring in verse 4. In officiating over this offering, Aaron carried out the instructions for that offering that are given in Leviticus 2:4 or Leviticus 2:7-10, whichever type of bread the people had chosen to prepare. According to the instructions God had given, he took out a handful of the bread-and-oil mixture and roasted it on the altar in recognition that all the possessions of the congregation had come from God (see comments on Lev. 4:2 in MESSAGE 1).

along with the rededication-offering of the morning. This offering was to be offered along with "the rededication-offering of the morning," which means the morning continual rededication-offering. In Leviticus 6:8-18, Jehovah had instructed Moses that a rededication-offering and an homage-offering were to be offered each morning and evening in behalf of the congregation. They were called "continual offerings" because they were to be offered regularly every day indefinitely into the future (see comments on Lev. 6:8-18 in MESSAGE 5). Jehovah had repeated those instructions to Moses when he told him how to hallow the priests to their places of service (Ex. 29:28-32). This special homage-offering for the congregation was to be offered along with the continual rededication-offering for that morning, so it was to serve a dual purpose. It was an homage-offering of the congregation, and it was the continual homage-offering for that morning. This reference is the first mention of continual offerings actually being offered. Evidently the offering of continual offerings began on that morning when the new priests began to officiate at the altar.

Since this homage-offering was to serve as the continual homage-offering for that morning, all of these offerings over which the new priests were officiating for the first time were conducted early in

the morning. Jehovah expected the new priests to get to work early on the day immediately after their hallowing.

(d) Their slaughter-offering
(9:18-20)

Verse 18. **And he killed the bull and the ram [which were] the slaughter-offering of peace-offerings for the people; and Aaron's sons presented the blood to him, and he splashed it on the altar round about.**

The fourth offering of the people was a slaughter-offering of peace-offerings, which symbolized the fellowship that comes from serving God together with others (concerning the name and meaning of this offering see comments on Lev. 1:1 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading a slaughter-offering of peace-offerings). Leviticus 7:11-21 describes two occasions on which a slaughter-offering could be offered. (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 7). It was offered with bread to express thanksgiving or without bread to accompany a vow or a voluntary gift. This verse makes no mention of a vow or a voluntary gift, but it was offered along with an homage-offering, which probably met the requirement for bread. The significance of this slaughter-offering, in addition to celebrating fellowship among God's people, most likely was intended to express thanksgiving to God for the blessing of worshiping Him.

Verses 19-20. **19 And [they took] the fat of the bull and of the ram, the fat tail and that which covers the intestines and the kidneys and the attachment of the liver,**

20 And they put the fat on the breasts and he roasted the fat on the altar.

The fat ceremony was carried out just as Jehovah had instructed Moses in Leviticus 3:3-5 for the bull and in Leviticus 3:9-11 for the ram (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 1). They also followed the instructions given in Leviticus 7:29-32, which specified that the fat was to be placed on the breast and waved over the altar. Then the fat was roasted on the altar, and the breast was given to the priests as part of their portion of the fellowship meal (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE

9). Aaron and his sons also worked together in offering this offering. The sons put the fat on the breasts. Moses waved them over the altar, and offered the fat on the altar.

21 And Aaron waved the breasts and the right front quarters for a wave-offering at Jehovah face, as Moses had commanded.

This portion of the ceremony was carried out in just the manner that had been commanded in Leviticus 7:28-34 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGES 9). This verse confirms that both the two breasts and the two right front quarters were waved over the altar before they were given to the priests for their part in the fellowship meal.

d. The blessing of the people by
Aaron and Moses (9:22-23a)

Verse 22. **Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them. Then he came down from doing the sin-offering and the rededication-offering, and the peace-offerings.**

Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them. At the completion of the offerings, Aaron turned toward the people, lifted up his hands, and blessed them. The beautiful benediction of the priests recorded in Numbers 6:22-26 had not yet been given, but this blessing must have been similar to it at least in type. His blessing must have expressed a desire that Jehovah would be with them, protect them, teach them, and meet their needs.

Then he came down from doing the sin-offering and the rededication-offering, and the peace-offerings. After the blessing, Aaron "came down" from the altar. This statement indicates that, when a priest officiated at the altar, he was at least slightly above the worshipers. Exodus 20:26 states plainly that Jehovah's altar was not to be on a platform high enough to require steps. Perhaps a small platform was built onto the altar itself for the priest to stand on as he served at the altar. The description of the altar in Exodus 27:1-8; 38:1-7 does not give every detail about its construction. However, its height (3 cubits or 4 ½ feet) was such that a priest would have needed to be slightly raised

above the base of the altar to work comfortably over it. This slightly raised platform on the altar may have been what was meant by the “ledge” mentioned in Exodus 27:5; 38:4. Possibly, Aaron’s standing on that ledge helped the people, who were standing outside the courtyard, see him as he offered the offerings and pronounced his blessings on them.

Verse 23a. **And Moses and Aaron went into The Tent of Meeting, and they came out and blessed the people.**

And Moses and Aaron went into The Tent of Meeting. Then Moses, who had probably been standing in the courtyard with the elders and participating with them in presenting the offerings of the congregation, went into The Tent of Meeting with Aaron. It was to be Moses’ last time to enter The Tabernacle. He had entered The Tabernacle previously when he anointed The Tabernacle (Lev. 8:10) and when he officiated as priest over the sin-offerings of the priests at their hallowing (Lev. 8:14-17; compare Lev. 4:5-7). But, now he was completing his temporary service as acting priest, and he was turning the duties of the priesthood over to Aaron and his sons. Moses and Aaron entered The Tabernacle and stood before Jehovah as that official transfer took place. It must have been an exciting and awesome moment for the two brothers.

and they came out and blessed the people. Then Moses and Aaron “came out,” which probably means outside the whole Tabernacle complex to stand before the people outside the courtyard. Together they blessed the people, as Aaron already had done.

- e. The appearance of the Glory of Jehovah (9:23b-24)

Verse 23b. **And The Glory of Jehovah appeared to all the people.**

Then the promise that Moses had made in verses 4 and 6 was fulfilled. The splendid beauty of the fiery light that represented the glorious revealing character of Jehovah burst forth from within the Cloud that was above The Tabernacle. It was of such special brilliance that it was magnificently impressive even under the full glare of the desert

sun. When the people saw The Glory, they knew that Jehovah Himself was present to bless and protect them.

Verse 24. **And fire came forth from the face of Jehovah and consumed the rededication-offering and the fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.**

Finally, another marvelous event occurred. Fire burst forth from The Tent of Meeting and consumed the offerings that were still roasting on the altar. The Hebrew says literally “ate the offerings.” The fire must have been the same as the fiery Glory they saw in the Cloud. The Cloud and the Fire were both over The Tabernacle and inside The Tabernacle over the Ark of the Covenant at the same time. It is a mistake to assume, as many interpreters have, that the Fire ignited the offerings, because roasting offerings on the altar had been specifically stated eight times during the hallowing ceremonies and during the first offerings officiated over by the new priests (Lev. 8:17,20,21,28; 9:10,14,17,20). Coals for roasting the offerings had obviously been lighted eight days earlier when the first offerings were offered on the altar on the first day of the hallowing, ceremonies as described earlier in this MESSAGE (8:14-29). The purpose of this fire was to instantly and completely consume the offerings. Since the Glory fire symbolized the presence of Jehovah, the fire’s bursting forth from The Tabernacle meant that Jehovah was accepting the offerings that had been presented to Him, including His share of the fellowship meal that had been placed on the altar from slaughter-offering of the congregation. The people were deeply impressed and were overcome with emotion. They shouted for joy and then fell to the ground on their faces, expressing the great humility they felt in seeing such a tremendous and awesome demonstration of Jehovah’s approval of the offerings.

The Jewish rabbis had a tradition that the Fire of God that burst forth from The Tabernacle was kept burning on the altar until the fall of Jerusalem before the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. However, this passage contains no statement that it was God’s intention to light the coals that would roast the offerings. If that had been His intention, He certainly would have worked that wonder eight days

previously when the first offerings were offered on the altar during the hallowing of Aaron and his sons. It is virtually impossible that fire could have been preserved for such a long time, especially through the neglect and misfortunes that befell The Tent of Meeting during the period of the judges and that befell the temple during such periods as the rule of Manasseh. Besides, the fire that so quickly and

instantly consumed the offerings must have more nearly resembled lightning than igniting coals, and lightning cannot be preserved. This fire was a one-time event, dramatically demonstrating that God accepted fire-offerings that were properly offered on His altar..

Application

As the hallowing of the priests was a most important spiritual occasion, the ordination of a Christian minister is equally important and spiritual. The laying-on-of-hands officially sets aside a Christian minister to the work to which God has called him, just as anointing officially set aside the priests to the service to which God had called them. However, the hallowing of a priest included much more than just anointing, just as the ordination of a Christian minister includes much more than just laying on of hands. Ordination should include public commitment on the part of the minister to turn away from sin and to totally commit his life to God. It should also include the public commitment of the members of the church to turn from sin, surrender their lives to God, and recognize their obligation to support the minister with material means. The ordination service should also include a great and heartfelt expression of appreciation for the sweet fellowship that is shared by God's minister, God's people, and God Himself.

When a new minister and a church make such commitments and mean them from their hearts, God will bless them and reveal His glory to them. Overflowing joy and heartfelt humility will result. The ordination of a Christian minister is different in form but not in substance from the hallowing of an Israelite priest. It should be prepared for with deep devotion and participated in with holy awe.