

# ZOOM STUDY: IMPORTANT BIBLICAL TERMS

## PRIEST

Introduction: What is popular culture's understanding of a priest?

1.) The Old Testament priests served as intermediaries between God and the people. Note the following details and duties of their service.

**Numbers 3:10** "Appoint Aaron and his sons to serve as priests; anyone else who approaches the sanctuary must be put to death."

**Hebrews 5:1,3** Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ...This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. (cf. also Leviticus 1-7, 16)

**1 Samuel 7:5** Then Samuel said, "Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede with the LORD for you." // **Joel 2:17** Let [the priests] say, "Spare your people, O LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' "

**2 Chronicles 17:9** [Certain Levites and the priests Elishama and Jehoram] taught throughout Judah, taking with them the Book of the Law of the LORD; they went around to all the towns of Judah and taught the people. // **Nehemiah 8:2-3, 7-8** ...Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly ...And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law. ...The Levites... instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.

**Exodus 28:30** Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD. (cf. also "inquiring of the LORD" – Numb. 27:21 etc.)

**Leviticus 13-14** [The priests made judgments for the people about applying the law of God.]

**Leviticus 21-22** [The priests were to lead exemplary lives and have pure relationships.]

**Numbers 6:22-27** The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: " ' "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace." ' So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

2.) Jesus Christ was appointed the priest and intermediary, between God and the people. Note the many parallels between the priest's work and Christ's (the Anointed One).

**Hebrews 5:4-5** No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

**Hebrews 5:7** During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

**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.”

**Matthew 7:28-29** When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

**1 Timothy 2:5-6** There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men. // **Hebrews 9:12** [Christ] entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. // **Hebrews 9:26** [Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

**Romans 8:34** Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. // **Hebrews 7:25** He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

3.) What are some contrasts/differences between the high priest and his work and Jesus and his service? How is Jesus’ superior?

4.) Jesus is the High Priest for the ages, but we also serve as priests. How and why has this happened? If Christ has fulfilled this role completely, what are our functions?

**1 Peter 2:4-5, 9** As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” ...You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**Romans 12:1** I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

**Colossians 3:16-17** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

5.) In what ways is the work of a pastor (fr. Latin for “shepherd”) similar to the work of the Bible’s priests? In what ways is it different?

**Acts 20:28** Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

**1 Peter 5:1-4** To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, 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.

**Titus 1:6-9** An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, 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.

**Hebrews 13:7, 17** Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. ... Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

6.) Roman Catholic churches call their officiants “priests.” What elements of Roman Catholic doctrine does this reflect? What dangers to souls lurk in these teachings?

**1367** The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: “The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of the priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.” “And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner... this sacrifice is truly propitiatory.”

**1368** The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she is offered whole and entire. ...In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire value.

**1369** ...The Pope is associated with every celebration of the Eucharist... The bishop of the place is always responsible for the Eucharist, even when a priest presides... Let only the Eucharist be regarded as legitimate, which is celebrated under [the presidency of] the bishop or him whom he has entrusted it. Through the ministry of the priests the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is completed...

*Closing Prayer: Jesus, priestly Savior, we praise you for sacrificing yourself for our salvation. Lead us to offer you fittings sacrifices of obedience, praise, and thanksgiving in thought, word, and deed our whole life through. Amen.*