Discovering Exodus: Finding prayer points, testimonies, reflection and journaling questions that will engage your heart with the Father.

Chapter 28: Serve Me as Priests

**□ The Invitation**: Invite the Holy Spirit to show you something new as you read through the chapter. The Father desires to meet with you and share something with you today. You may find it in the reading or you may hear His Voice speaking to Your Spirit in the quiet of this moment.

**□ The Reading:** Read Exodus Chapter 28. Record any thoughts from the chapter, questions you have or verses that the Holy Spirit highlighted to you while reading.

**□ The Focus**: Today’s focus is a reflection. Write your thoughts as you meet with the Father.

The office of Priest is mentioned 700 times in the Old Testament, and approximately 80 times in the New Testament. Since it is mentioned so often, we need to pay attention and dig deep to uncover the importance of the priesthood and how it relates to us today. The priests had two responsibilities in their occupation: to minister to God and to minister to the people. Today we will focus on these two responsibilities.

Scripture tells us that Jesus is our Great High Priest who has a forever priesthood. “...*but because Jesus lives forever, He has a* ***permanent priesthood***”. And Hebrews 8:1-2 tells us, “*...We do have such a* ***high priest****, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true Tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.”* Jesus has a new priesthood under the new covenant. We are that priesthood, the priesthood of believers. You and I will always be priests before God. Revelation 5:8 tells us, “*You have made them (believers) to be a kingdom of priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth*”. The establishment of the priesthood goes on forever; here on earth and at Jesus’ return, we will reign with Him on earth as priests.

Let’s use David’s cry in Psalm 27:4 to discover what it means to minister to God: “*I’m asking God for one thing, only one thing: To live with Him in His house my whole life. I’ll contemplate His beauty; I’ll study at His feet.”* (Message Translation). The more familiar translation of this passage is the New International Version (NIV), “*One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.”*

David’s desire was to dwell with the Lord in His tabernacle. To dwell means “to live, inhabit, to be settled, stay, to remain”. David restored the ark of God’s presence in Jerusalem during his kingship. He established priests, worshippers and gatekeepers to minister to the presence of the Lord twenty four seven. David sat before the Lord. He remained with Him. God is calling the believers to establish David’s Tabernacle again on the earth, to have a place to hold His weighty presence; a place where His Glory can dwell. God is moving on the hearts of His people around the world to be His priests as a full time occupation, ministering to Him in the Tabernacle. Not everyone is called to the priesthood full-time, but we are all called to minister to Him.

Even though David was a king, his highest priority was to be before God. His kingship sat in the context of his priestly anointing. David meditated on God’s beauty and holiness. David desired to know God and to seek Him. He took time to tarry before God. David wanted to burn from the inside out! Those who pursue Jesus gain intimacy with Him.

David’s desire was to dwell in the house of the Lord all his days and to gaze upon his beauty. To gaze means “to seek; to look; to observe; to choose”. How do you accomplish this? If you are going to gaze at your spouse, you look at him; almost like you are studying him. Or if you gaze at the night sky with the beautiful stars and the fullness of the moon, you set your face to the sky and observe the darkness and the lights that dot the background. You purpose to fix your gaze. That is what is meant in this verse too. We purpose to look at the beauty of Christ. In order to seek Him get alone with Him. Challenge yourself to delight in Jesus.

The second part of the priest’s occupation was to minister to the people. The description of the garments in chapter 28 help to explain one of the key ways to minister to people: intercession. The ephod was to be made with two shoulder pieces attached to it and two onyx stones were to be engraved with the names of the sons of Israel, “*six names on one stone and the remaining six on the othe*r...*Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the Lord*” (verse 10 &12). And the breastpiece was to have four rows of precious stones on it. “*There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes....whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart...”* (verses 21 & 29). Every time Aaron entered the Holy Place he carried the nation of Israel with him on his shoulders and over his heart. God saw more than the corporate tribes, He saw the individuals. God loves His people so very much that He made provision for each one to be brought before Him. Who is it you carry before the Lord’s presence in intercession? Who are the people that you bear over your heart? In intercession, we gain God’s heart for those He has entrusted us to carry. What does He say about them? What does He feel about them?

**Reflection**: Meditation Practice

“*One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.”* Psalm 27:4

**Goals for this time:** To get alone with the Lord & listen to Him; to restore your hunger and desperation for Him; to grow in knowing Him intimately; to learn to LOVE Him; to be restored & refreshed by His presence

**Enter into His presence**: Invite the Holy Spirit to come and do what He desires (John 14:17; 16:13; 4:14; 7:38; I Corinthians 3:16, Colossians 1:27). You may want to play quiet worship for your mind and heart to focus.

\*Go to a spot where you can be alone

**Practical Guidelines**:

1. Give all your worries & concerns over to the Lord. Talk to Him about them. Pray a prayer that says something like this: “*I invite you to come and search my heart. Come close and let me know Your love. I want to taste and see that the Lord is good.”*
2. Write out a scripture to help your mind focus on Him. You can start with the Psalm 27:4 written above. This can help you begin to clear your mind from the distractions of the world—focus on God. (This is NOT to be confused with a mantra that is part of the meditation in false religions. In that, your mind is to go blank, we are wanting you to focus on Jesus).
3. It takes most people 7-10 minutes before they stop thinking about the day’s events or future plans, etc. and come to a place of rest. Don’t be discouraged if your mind wanders. Keep refocusing on God.
4. If you don’t “feel” anything, that is OK. God communes directly with our spirit. By faith we know something is happening even though we don’t feel it. Your thoughts may tell you this is a waste of time. Do not give in to those thoughts…keep pressing in to Jesus. Trust that the Lord is doing something whether you feel it or not (2 Corinthians 3:16-18). You are to spend time loving Jesus.

1. Have your journal out, so when you hear from the Lord, you can write down what He is saying to you. He desires to commune with you. He desires to make His home in your heart. Make this a habit and you will be overwhelmed by the love that comes from Him unto you. You may want to ask Jesus a question like, “What do you want to say to me today?” or “What does friendship with You look like?” or “What in my life are You pleased with?”
2. Here are some more Scriptures to meditate on. Studying and meditating on the Word of God are essential, so we fall more in love with Jesus. Psalm 4:4, Psalm 62:1, Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 4:9-11, Is. 55:1-3, Psalm 91:1, Luke 9:35, I Samuel 3:9, Lamentations 3:25-26, Psalm 27: 4, 14, Psalm 130:5-6, Luke 10:39, Song of Songs 2:3-4, Hosea 2:14, Psalm 37:7, Psalm 131:2, John 15:9-11, Is. 30:15, Zechariah 2:12-13, Psalm 46:10, Proverbs 1:33, Ephesians 5:18, Is. 40:29-31