

Apex of the Twelve Tribes

Dear Nun,

Greetings again from Tabitha's Place! Elbert taught this week about the Priesthood and he wanted me to share it with you there. In hearing this teaching, I felt that divine scalpel cutting away another layer of that insulation that grows so easily around my heart. I'm thankful for His word — and how it comes into our midst and rights us when we start drifting. Although the physical procedure of circumcision is usually a one-time thing, I see how we must be cut time and time again, after that crucial first cut. Layer after layer must come off as our self-judgment starts coming into focus. The wonderful news is that one day we will come into sharp, clear focus. And because we don't yet judge ourselves with perfect righteous judgment, we have one another to help us. We have our fellow priests here in the temple, and if we will only give them access to us, we will hear clearly enough from our Father to function as priests. I realize that when I'm full of *thankfulness* I'm expressing a circumcised heart. Those who are in touch with the spirit are always thankful — and never far away from that perpetual sense of awe and wonder about the salvation that He is accomplishing (Heb 13:13). This is one of the signs of the Priesthood — being able to give thanks. The priests are the ones who can delight in Him, because they have no other possession but Him. They have cut away all worldly entanglements. They can see clearly. They can live in ultimate reality. Only a priest can intercede for others, moving His hosts to the offensive. Priests can pray for the governments of the nations where they live — all prayers going forth with the motive of causing His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And all of this can only come from the Priesthood being perpetually filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are filled with the Spirit, we will hear from Him and know His will, so it's all important that we live that way. We are now just standing at the threshold of building something that has never been built — ever. If ever there was a generation of people who needed to hear continually from YHWH, it is us, because we're embarked on this journey to restore the twelve tribes of Messiah's Body. We don't know how far we've come really — perhaps we've come the first mile of a 1,000 mile journey. But, one thing we know — we've started the journey. The first church started on this journey, too. But they didn't finish. They probably didn't even come close. Every one wasn't fully circumcised in their hearts to hear from the Father. The church never reached the apex of twelve tribes. They never reached the full compliment of twelve that Israel must be. (Rev 21 — Israel is twelve sons, and twelve tribes.)

The reality is, *they never came to birth* — and neither have we! Until the twelve tribes are established we must go on and let Him circumcise us. Wouldn't it be tragic if we raised up eleven tribes, but couldn't deliver the twelfth? The Philadelphian church was praised because they were holding to the word of His perseverance (Rev 3:10) — we must persevere through our circumcision and come to the point of self judgment where our Father can begin to bring the promises of Abraham upon us.

The Body of Messiah is twelve tribes. Look at Rev 21 — we're that Temple, the place of His habitation, described as a body, a temple, a city — but it's all of us together as twelve tribes making the complete Body of Messiah. We've got to come to the point where we hear Him perfectly. Many won't enter the Kingdom of God because they didn't hear from Him about what His will was (Mt 7:21).

We've all been baptized into the Body. The reason there hasn't been a Priesthood for so long is because the Body has been absent. Heb 10:21 reveals that He is the High Priest, but only of those who have come under His anointing *in His house*. The house is where He is the high priest. There is only one High Priest. And if you're not in His house, you're outside His Body. There's certainly no High Priest in the individual, independent believer. Those who are in that house are priests. Our works of priestly service can only be done in perfect coordination with Him, in His house.

Of course the understanding of Priesthood has been lost and blurred by the many years of His absence from the earth. Men have various concepts of the Priesthood, but they are warped. Some think it is an elite class of people who are building up their spiritual "brownie points" for the Judgment Day, and the evangelicals seem to think that any old, lame sacrifice will do since all who "believe" are automatically New Covenant Priests.

(They're doing something noble, something extra, beyond the call of duty.) They are deluded into thinking that your mental assent will magically cause you to one day inherit "all things," having no knowledge of what a priest really is. But we are seeing that a priest is one who has wielded the sword to cut off all the tentacles of this world. Every claim of the world and family, every emotional spirit of compromise, everything that hinders our full obedience, all of these must be done away with in order to be a priest — one who is saved by his faith in Yahshua.

You can see in Ex 19:4-6 that if they kept the covenant, He would make them a Kingdom of Priests. This was His original intent, but it turned out that only Levi cared. Only the sons of Levi could ascend to the Father without an intermediary. The others couldn't — they didn't have a good conscience. They didn't live as He commanded. In order to be a priest you had to forsake everything — mother, father, and so on. When Yahshua called the disciples, He was calling *priests*. Their ministries are synonymous. Yahshua started forming a new Priesthood; the old one was DEFUNCT. This was to be a Royal Priesthood. Disciples are priests in the New Testament. Priests were disciples in the Old Testament.

Back then they had priestly communities while the rest of Israel lived much like the nations — because they chose to. Another word for the church today is Royal Priesthood. Disciples are disciplined by the Holy Spirit. The priests in the Old Covenant were disciplined by those who had the anointing to do so. They lived in communal cities. (See 1 Sam 22:19 — Ahimelech and the Priests of Nob — a type of the church to come.) Church — Royal Priesthood.

1 Cor 12:12 — one body, many members — the commonwealth of Israel — commonwealth is a community. It's even translated this way in some Bibles. Dt 15:4 — outlined the justice of this community — no poor. The wealth should be common. But in those days, only the priesthood wasn't selfish. The rest of Israel fell way short. They had the covenants, the Law, and the word of the prophets, but still did not have the inner obedience of the heart to everything. Acts 4:32 — obedience from the heart to Dt 15:4, the beginnings. Now we are in the Body and in the beginnings of the restoration of the commonwealth of Israel.

Only by the ministry of the "sent ones" can we be brought into the commonwealth of Israel. Only these can communicate the right spirit — a communication of life. Only here can our sacrifices come to be acceptable. Surely the Jesus, the gospel, and the spirit I received from Campus Crusade, the Navigators, etc., was a reasonable presentation of the historical data about Jesus — but where was the communication of life? This gospel was void of power to transfer me into the commonwealth priesthood. It is not a question of the accuracy of their doctrine — perhaps we could say that Billy Graham is not radically different in doctrine from us — but it's only through receiving the *anointing* of the sent ones that we can enter the Priesthood. The Priesthood is by an anointing. Surely, every little facet and function of our lives must be through the power of the Holy Priest's anointing on us. And this anointing was mediated to us when we believed with all our heart the messenger and His message. The displeasing citizens of old Israel certainly had a mental knowledge of the Priesthood and all, but they weren't offering up a life of obedience. They weren't in the Priesthood.

Everyone in the Body has to be anointed, because we are in the anointed One (2 Cor 1:21). The Apostles are anointed ones of the one uniquely anointed One (Isa 61:1).

Rom 15:16 — Everyone who does a function in the Body has to have an anointing, "... because of the grace that was given me from God to be a minister of Messiah to the nations, *ministering as a Priest* the gospel of God, that my offering of the nations might become *acceptable*, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." Paul had an *anointing*. But so must the bakers, the shoe makers, the dishwashers, the teachers... Our Father is raising up a Royal Priesthood and all in this Priesthood must be anointed for their particular ministry. Our offering must be acceptable — righteous offerings coming from hearing from our Father and executed in the power of the Holy Spirit (builds up the Body in love).

The Royal Priesthood in this day is to do what hasn't been done for decades, even centuries — the twelve tribes (Isa 49:5,6). But without an anointing upon us, we will do everything in drudgery. If you don't feel like you are doing something worthwhile and vital as a priest, then you will eventually leave Messiah — you won't be fit for the Priesthood. Many want to *be* something — apostle, crew head, prophet — but they are not worthy of

honor because they despise what they have already been given to be faithful in. We must be able to confess: All I live for is to please Him through the life and gifts He has given me (and the righteous use of these gifts will stimulate others to love Him and work toward bringing about the end of the age, 2 Cor 5:15).

We've all got to come to a place where we see that we are an *integral* part of the Body. You can't even take part in communion worthily without this. It's not just that you don't discern Messiah's Body in others, but that we would fail to see ourselves as vital members. This is not truly discerning the Body (1 Cor 11:29). If we don't realize that what we do is as important as what Paul did, then we are unfit (as in the parable of the talents, Mt 25). There is no communication of life, like all those who left Him (except the twelve), because they all wanted to be something special — a special recognition. We are important and because we don't belong to ourselves anymore, we must discern the Body and judge rightly how we function. We've got to be filled with the Spirit who fills the Head. Christianity today is from the multitude who left Him in Jn 6:67-68.

I am an integral part of the Body. I can't move by myself. It's a question of the Body. Every movement has to take place on the ground of the Body. Individual things have to go. You have to wait for others. You have to move with others. You have to go with the brethren in order to go with Messiah. Acts 3:23 — If anyone doesn't obey the Head of the Body (the prophet of our heart) then he is cut off from the commonwealth.

What makes us a member of the Body? Messiah in us — the hope of Glory. Col 1:27 — His life is in us, but if we are not receiving the sap, we become cut off and hopeless. We lose the spring in our step, we lose the shine of hope in our eyes — we become drudges — we must stay attached to the Source of Life.

What does a priest do in the church, those who are anointed to bring about the ministry of the works of service? Eph 4:11-16 — the gifts were given to us as priests that we might equip our fellow priests that the whole Body could reach the stature of growth into the Head, into a mature man. These “works of service” are the service of the New Priesthood — works of rest coming from rest, not restlessness (the one who is full of restlessness is motivated by lawlessness). Pure motive, surely interested in others, blessing others with your gifts, love. We priests are here in the Temple, to do exactly what He wants us to (1 Pet 2:5,9,10).

Rev 20:6 — We are a Kingdom of Priests (the realization of Exodus 19:4), in the next age, the Kingdom Age, these will be Priests of Yah and Messiah, and reign for 1,000 years. Those who are a part of the Royal Priesthood in this age will be a part of the Royal Priesthood in the next age, and then a citizen of the Holy City in the next age, the eighth day!