

Ir-ot-21  
God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him  
(1 Samuel 2-3; 8)  
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Here is inspirational background showing that Jesus the Christ would replace a wicked priesthood and servants in the temple, both in His days and in the Latter-days).

I. Samuel's is a true story of a young boy being raised up and called to replace a corrupt priesthood who served in the temple.

A. In doing so he shows how vital it is to be worthy to hold the priesthood and to serve in the temple.

1. While serving as a temple ordinance worker in Palmyra, New York Temple, being worthy was impressed on my mind. During the time when the temple was closed for cleaning, we temple workers assisted. I was deeply impressed with how every inch of the temple was cleaned, and where possible, polished.

An Assistant Matron also asked the workers, before returning, to wash and press all their clothing, wash the soles of their shoes, and polish their shoes.

This touched me, and I did so. When I went back into the Temple after all this preparation, I knew it is even more important that *we* workers be as fully cleansed inside. So as I re-entered, I tried to remember each time to look up and review the words, "Holiness to the Lord." I tried memorizing the words of "More Holiness Give Me," tried to review them often and apply their principles in my life.

All in all, I felt a renewed desire to serve there with as much purity as I could possess.

B. Samuel's righteousness was manifest as he let "none of [God's] words fall to the ground" (1 Samuel 3:19).

1. This means he *continued* to hearken and to heed the Lord.

II. When Samuel replaced a wicked priesthood, it bore witness such changes would be made in the future. Note the parallels in three periods of time: the days of Samuel, the time of Jesus Christ, and the Latter-days.

**B. The priesthood had become corrupt;  
God sent His Son, Jesus, to replace it.** ↓

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A. The priesthood had become corrupt; God sent Samuel, to replace. →

C. The priesthood had become corrupt;  
God sent prophet Joseph Smith to replace.

**III. Before Christ came, the priesthood of Israel had become extremely corrupt.**

A. In fact, perhaps the time of the greatest corruption in the Judaic priesthood occurred just prior to His coming. The Lord had given strict laws as to who should serve as priests, and particularly as High Priest. God had commanded only Levites were to serve as priests, and the *High Priest was to be a direct descendant of Aaron*. But in

Jesus' time, the role of High Priest was no longer obtained according to God's Law. The Maccabees, Jewish rebels who had earlier freed Judea from Greek rule, *made themselves or their sons High Priests*, though they were neither Levites nor descendants of Aaron.<sup>i</sup> **By Christ's time, under Herod, the role of High Priest and other choice priesthood positions were obtained by bribery.**

- B. Joseph Smith taught that Zacharias' son, John, *was* a direct descendant of Aaron. **Zacharias was actually murdered at the temple by this false priesthood** because he hid his son John due to Herod's edict to kill all the infants<sup>ii</sup> (See Matthew 23:35).
- C. Many Jews understood this priesthood was wicked. Many had fled into the wilderness as a result, and in their Dead Sea writings revealed they had gone there in rejection of this corrupt priesthood.<sup>iii</sup> Eventually, this priesthood's greatest wickedness was crucifying Christ, thus unrighteously offering Him as sacrifice.

**Therefore the most dramatic change in Israel from corrupt priesthood to righteous priesthood occurred when Christ Himself came. He was the ultimate High Priest.** While He allowed Himself to suffer at the hands of such corrupt leadership, nevertheless, *He replaced them* with His own chosen apostles who were given authority to establish anew *His true church and kingdom*. Thus He came as the True High Priest, and replaced a corrupt priesthood with a new, God-given priesthood.

- D. Like Samuel, Jesus was called to His great role not by man, but by God. He answered willingly, "Here am I. Send me."

IV. Due to the slaying of the early apostles who were not replaced, apostasy eventually overcame the church Christ established. The priesthood keys perished as the apostles perished. Those who sought to serve Him no longer had true authority, and many who *claimed* to serve Him were actually corrupt.

- A. Christ Himself warned of wolves entering among His disciples, as did Paul. "For know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).
- B. While some Christians claim that men do not need God's authority to act as priests, and others claim that priesthood powers continued through centuries in spite of **admitted** wickedness by the highest leaders, **the life of Samuel and of Christ testify this could not be so. Through Samuel, the Lord showed He removes Priesthood keys when those leading His Church become corrupt.** These histories also foretold what would happen in the future. For: *In the Last Days*, God would again raise up a new priesthood leader. Samuel also foreshadowed him. And like Samuel, he would be called while yet a young boy. (The Lord restored the priesthood keys to Joseph Smith by those who held them anciently: Peter, James and John).

V. And very importantly, God revealed to Joseph the *principles which must underlie true priesthood*.

- A. “Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson --- That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness (D&C 121:34-35).
- B. The Lord re-affirmed what really occurs when the priesthood is not carried righteously. “That [the rights of the priesthood] may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man” (D&C 121:37).
- C. Through Joseph the Lord further revealed how the priesthood must be carried. “No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;  
 “By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile...  
 “Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven” (vs. 41-42, 45).
- D. The Lord promised Eternal blessings to those who bear priesthood righteously. “The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness...; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever” (v. 46).

VI. The Lord said men shall know true prophets from false prophets by their fruits. There are innumerable witnesses that the powers of the priesthood truly were restored through Joseph Smith and do reside among faithful Latter-day Saints today. For excellent examples see President Monson’s Priesthood address, November 2008 *Ensign*, pp. 67-68.

*Learning to recognize that the historical events of the Old Testament also carried prophecies of the future will prepare us for greater understanding when we come to the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc. This is because they understood the three levels of prophecy in the histories and wrote their prophecies to contain the same three levels of meaning: 1. The meanings in the current history, 2. prophecies of Christ’s first coming, and 3. prophecies of Christ’s Second Coming with the restoration of the gospel immediately preceding it.*

<sup>i</sup> Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*, Paulist Press, 1984, p. 519.

<sup>ii</sup> Larry E. Dahl, Donald Q. Cannon, eds. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Bookcraft, pp. 351-52.

<sup>iii</sup> Boadt., p. 524

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