

**Establishment of a Nation (1525 – 1400 BCE)**  
***Ordination of the Priests***

**Readings: *Leviticus 8:1-10:20***

***Reflections:***

- This section is about setting up the Priests to do the work of the Tabernacle. We must remember everything is external. Everything serves as a picture or a symbol of judgment, sin and mercy. The people don't easily comprehend the truth about sin or God's holiness and so God uses one object lesson after another. Some of the object lessons may seem severe.
- This section is a bit gross with dead animal parts and blood. The symbols God uses to drive the point home with how graphic and at times disturbing they are.
- Symbolic images:
  - The washing of the Priests sets the stage for what will later in the Jesus movement be baptism.
  - The anointing oil sets the stage for the infilling of the Holy Spirit.
  - The religious robes set the stage for understanding true righteousness, spiritual robes of righteousness that are given as a gift, not something we earn or sustain by effort.
  - Animal sacrifice sets the stage for the death of Jesus and the cross.
  - The blood from the sacrificed animals is put on strategic parts of their body to symbolize the different aspects of our lives being covered under his forgiveness. The thumbs, ears and big toes symbolize what you do, where you go and what you do and say.
  - Seven is symbolic of perfection, of creation and of God's work. This is why the number appears many times in this passage.
- The glory of God does appear and this shows his blessing. Then some of the men act contrary to the Lord's command in how they handle the fire and incense. God's

judgment falls and they are burned to a crisp. God's holiness and perfection brings strict judgment at this time. Again, what a contrast we see in the story of Israel to the coming of Jesus and the full revelation of God's mercy and grace.

- The key insight at this stage of the story is simply to discern the difference between what is considered holy (what is set apart for a special purpose) and what is not holy (common), what is sin and what is righteousness. We can thank God that through Jesus we have moved to a whole new level of understanding and insight into his heart and character.