EXODUS

Chapter 29

*Consecration of the Priests*

**“This is what you are to do to consecrate them, so they may serve me as priests: Take a young bull and two rams without defect. 2 And from fine wheat flour, without yeast, make bread, and cakes mixed with oil, and wafers spread with oil. 3 Put them in a basket and present them in it—along with the bull and the two rams. 4 Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and wash them with water. 5 Take the garments and dress Aaron with the tunic, the robe of the ephod, the ephod itself and the breastpiece. Fasten the ephod on him by its skillfully woven waistband. 6 Put the turban on his head and attach the sacred diadem to the turban. 7 Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his head. 8 Bring his sons and dress them in tunics 9 and put headbands on them. Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance. In this way you shall ordain Aaron and his sons. 10 “Bring the bull to the front of the Tent of Meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 11 Slaughter it in the Lord’s presence at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. 12 Take some of the bull’s blood and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour out the rest of it at the base of the altar. 13 Then take all the fat around the inner parts, the covering of the liver, and both kidneys with the fat on them, and burn them on the altar. 14 But burn the bull’s flesh and its hide and its offal outside the camp. It is a sin offering. 15 “Take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 16 Slaughter it and take the blood and sprinkle it against the altar on all sides. 17 Cut the ram into pieces and wash the inner parts and the legs, putting them with the head and the other pieces. 18 Then burn the entire ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord, a pleasing aroma, an offering made to the Lord by fire. 19 “Take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on its head. 20 Slaughter it, take some of its blood and put it on the lobes of the right ears of Aaron and his sons, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. Then sprinkle blood against the altar on all sides. 21 And take some of the blood on the altar and some of the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments and on his sons and their garments. Then he and his sons and their garments will be consecrated. 22 “Take from this ram the fat, the fat tail, the fat around the inner parts, the covering of the liver, both kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. (This is the ram for the ordination.) 23 From the basket of bread made without yeast, which is before the Lord, take a loaf, and a cake made with oil, and a wafer. 24 Put all these in the hands of Aaron and his sons and wave them before the Lord as a wave offering. 25 Then take them from their hands and burn them on the altar along with the burnt offering for a pleasing aroma to the Lord, an offering made to the Lord by fire. 26 After you take the breast of the ram for Aaron’s ordination, wave it before the Lord as a wave offering, and it will be your share. 27 “Consecrate those parts of the ordination ram that belong to Aaron and his sons: the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented. 28 This is always to be the regular share from the Israelites for Aaron and his sons. It is the contribution the Israelites are to make to the Lord from their fellowship offerings.29 “Aaron’s sacred garments will belong to his descendants so that they can be anointed and ordained in them. 30 The son who succeeds him as priest and comes to the Tent of Meeting to minister in the Holy Place is to wear them seven days. 31 “Take the ram for the ordination and cook the meat in a sacred place. 32 At the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, Aaron and his sons are to eat the meat of the ram and the bread that is in the basket. 33 They are to eat these offerings by which atonement was made for their ordination and consecration. But no one else may eat them, because they are sacred. 34 And if any of the meat of the ordination ram or any bread is left over till morning, burn it up. It must not be eaten, because it is sacred. 35 “Do for Aaron and his sons everything I have commanded you, taking seven days to ordain them. 36 Sacrifice a bull each day as a sin offering to make atonement. Purify the altar by making atonement for it, and anoint it to consecrate it. 37 For seven days make atonement for the altar and consecrate it. Then the altar will be most holy, and whatever touches it will be holy. 38 “This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day: two lambs a year old. 39 Offer one in the morning and the other at twilight. 40 With the first lamb offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil from pressed olives, and a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. 41 Sacrifice the other lamb at twilight with the same grain offering and its drink offering as in the morning—a pleasing aroma, an offering made to the Lord by fire. 42 “For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the Lord. There I will meet you and speak to you; 43 there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory. 44 “So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. 45 Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. 46 They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.**

**29:1** *consecrate them.* See note on 19:10–11. (CSB)

*holy*. Hbr *qodesh*, “set apart.” God, uncreated and unique, is the only source of holiness. He hallows time (feasts), place (tabernacle/temple), people (priests/Levites/Israel), and the things and rituals that belong to them. In other words, these things belong to God because He selects them, not because of their own qualities. In the OT, there are degrees of holiness; what stands closest to God is “most holy.” What is not holy is “common” or “unclean.” These truths stand behind NT teaching about salvation as (1) purification from sin and (2) election by grace. (TLSB)

*Take*. Animals were selected from herds (cf Dt 12:6). (TLSB)

*without defect.* See note on 12:5. (CSB)

Without physical defect. Cf 1Pt 1:19. (TLSB)

**29:2** *unleavened*. Made without yeast. (TLSB)

*smeared*. As people today may spread butter on bread. (TLSB)

**29:3** *one basket*. For the grain offering (v 41). (TLSB)

**29:4–9, 31–33** Note the pattern of consecration: wash, dress, anoint, and eat from the sacrifices. Such elements were adopted by the early Christians for services of Baptism, confirmation, and first Communion during the Easter Vigil. (TLSB)

**29:4** *the entrance*. By the outer veil (26:36–37). (TLSB)

*Tent of Meeting.* See note on 27:21. (CSB)

*wash them with water.* Symbolizing the removal of ceremonial uncleanness (cf. Heb 10:22) and thus signifying the purity that must characterize them. (CSB)

Special event in arid climates, emphasizing the purity of God, whom they would serve. Moses would officiate at the first ordination when he washed the priests (cf 30:19). (TLSB)

**29:7** *anoint him.* Symbolizing spiritual enduement for serving God (see Isa 61:1). (CSB)

**29:9–10, 20, 24–25** Note the emphasis throughout on the priests’ hands, by which they served the Lord. (TLSB)

**29:9** *ordain*. Lit, “fill the hand” by entrusting the work and service to Aaron and his sons. (TLSB)

**29:10** *Bring the bull.* As a sin offering (see v. 14) to atone for the past sins of Aaron and his sons (see Lev 4:3). (CSB)

*lay their hands on its head.* As a symbol of (1) the animal’s becoming their substitute and (2) transferring their sins to the sin-bearer (see Lev 16:20–22 and note). (CSB)

Hands “filled” with the work of the Lord must empty themselves of sins by transferring the sins to sacrificial animals (Lv 4:3–4). (TLSB)

**29:12** *blood*. Shedding of blood brought atonement. (TLSB)

The purpose of this bloody sacrifice was to show that the Lord accepted the death of the animal for the atonement of Aaron’s sins. In Leviticus we are told the significance of the use of blood: “For the life of the creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’ life.” (PBC)

*horns of the altar.* See note on 27:2. (CSB)

By daubing the horns with blood, the entire altar was cleansed and consecrated. (TLSB)

**29:13** *fat.* The most select parts of the bull (see Lev 3:3–5, 16) were burned on the altar as a sacrifice to the Lord. (CSB)

The fat, the covering of the liver, and kidneys were to be burned on the altar. The bull’s flesh, its hide and it offal were to be burned outside the camp. Thus the better parts were to be part of the sacrifice for sin to be offered to the Lord as a fragrance pleasing to him. (PBC)

Pagan priests used such items for divination (TLSB)

**29:14** *flesh … hide … offal.* Thought of as bearing sin, and thus burned outside the camp (see Heb 13:11–13). (CSB)

*a sin offering*. For personal sins the priests committed. (TLSB)

**29:16** *blood* … *against the sides of the altar*. Ensured that both the offerer and altar were cleansed from impurity. (TLSB)

**29:18** *burn the entire ram.* Symbolizing total dedication. (CSB)

Consumed by fire. The flesh was the most important part, since it was burned on the altar (cf Lv 1:3–17). (TLSB)

*food offering*. The pleasing aroma to God (the aroma of grilling meat) assured people that the Lord took pleasure in them and would deal favorably with them.

**29:20** *right ears.* Symbolizing sensitivity to God and his word. (CSB)

An act of purification and consecration. The right ear emphasized hearing and obeying the Word of God. The right thumb signified that the priests were now pure to handle the holy things of God. The right toe allowed the priest to walk on holy ground, pure before God. (TLSB)

*right hands … right feet.* Symbolizing a life of service to others on God’s behalf. (CSB)

**29:21** *blood* … *oil*. Mixed together; elsewhere, blood was mixed with water (cf Heb 9:19). (TLSB)

*sprinkle*. This anointing gave priests access to the altar and its food. (TLSB)

**29:22** *right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination)*. This ram constituted the peace offering (Lv 3:9–11). The right thigh was the priests’ portion of the peace offering (Lv 7:32–33).

**29:24** *palms of Aaron*. The newly consecrated priests now take the food offering in hand. (TLSB)

*wave offering.* See note on Lev 7:30–32. (CSB)

By elevating these foods, the priests dedicated to God what by law belonged to them. (TLSB)

Note on Lev. 7:30-35 Executed by extending the offering horizontally, away from the body and back again. With the breast waved horizontally, followed by the thigh presented vertically, we see symbolized God’s later tool of salvation: the cross. (TLSB)

The rite of waving the sacrificial portion before the Lord was regularly performed in the peace offering, the guilt offering of lepers, and the meal offerings of jealousy (Lv. 7:30, 34; p:21; 14:12; 21;Num. 5:25). The sheaf of the first ripe grain as well as two loaves and two lambs at Pentecost were also waved before the Lord (Lv. 23:10-11, 15, 20). (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2)

The expression “wave offering” has be explained by the Jews in their Talmud as an act of moving back and forth, first toward the Lord and back again toward the priest, signifying fellowship between the two parties in this sacrifice. In this case a part of the “wave offering” was given back to the priest to indicate that the Lord shared his gifts with the officiating priests, also in act of fellowship. The breast was “waved” and the thigh was “presented” (lifted up and returned) as the priest’s share of the fellowship offering. (PBC)

**29:26** *the breast* … *shall be your portion*. Moses officiated at the first ordination (Lv 8). Because he was not a priest, he could not eat the sin offering (v 14; Lv 6:25–26) or the thigh from the ram of ordination (vv 31–32), but instead ate the breast. (TLSB)

**29:28** *regular share … for Aaron and his sons.* Parts of certain sacrificial animals were set aside as food for the priests and their families (see Lev 10:14). (CSB)

The ordination pertained to Aaron and his sons, from the tribe of Levi. (TLSB)

*perpetual*. This contribution occurred whenever peace offerings were presented. (TLSB)

**29:29** *holy garments* … *for his sons after him*. The ephod that hung on the shoulder and the sash around the waist (28:4) were adjustable, which allowed the garments to fit the next generation. (TLSB)

**29:30** *son who succeeds him*. High priest who would succeed Aaron and serve in the Most Holy Place. (TLSB)

*wear them seven days*. High priest began his work on the eighth day, the first day of the new week. (TLSB)

**29:31** *sacred place.* Probably the tabernacle courtyard. (CSB)

**29:32** *the entrance*. By the screen (27:16) in front of the altar for burnt offering. (TLSB)

**29:33** *outsider*. Only priests ate what pertained to ordination. (TLSB)

**29:36** *purify the altar*. Due to the priests’ sinfulness. (TLSB)

**29:37** *most holy*. Lit, “holy of holies,” which is how Hbr forms a superlative. Items described this way were to be handled only by priests on duty at the tabernacle. (TLSB)

*Whatever touches the altar shall become holy*. It could not return to use outside the tabernacle court. (TLSB)

**29:38–42** Regular, daily sacrifices the new priest would offer. (TLSB)

**29:38–39** Institution of the daily morning and evening offerings—sometimes observed even during days of apostasy (see 2Ki 16:15). (CSB)

**29:40** *drink offering*. Poured at the base of the altar (Nu 28:7). Cf Lv 23:13. It accompanied all burnt offering. (TLSB)

Pouring wine or some other liquid as an act of worship (Ex. 29:40-41; Jer. 44:17-25) (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2).

**29:42–43** *I will meet.* See note on 27:21. (CSB)

God promised that through the ark He would commune with His people. (TLSB)

**29:43** *my glory.* Symbolic of God’s presence over the ark of the covenant (see note on 25:10; see also 40:34–35; 1Ki 8:10–13). (CSB)

The tabernacle of Israel would be sanctified by God’s abiding presence. (TLSB)

**29:44** *I will consecrate*. The Lord Himself is the true source and cause of consecration. The rituals illustrated and applied this truth. (TLSB)

**29:45–46** *dwell among.* See note on 25:9. (CSB)

**29:45** *I will … be their God.* Commonly denotes the essence of the divine promise pledged in his covenant with his people (see note on 6:7). (CSB)

A reference to the promise given in 25:8, 22, which was fulfilled in Jesus, who tabernacled with us (Jn 1:14). (TLSB)

**29:46** *I am the Lord… who brought them out.* See note on 20:2. (CSB)

Connection to the Book of the Covenant and its testimony (20:1), which distinguished Yahweh from every so-called god. As the Lord claimed the people, they would claim and proclaim Him. (TLSB)

**Ch 29** God consecrates the Aaronic priesthood to consecrate His people, who would be a kingdom of priests (19:6). Our High Priest, Jesus, set aside this old order of sacrifices to offer Himself once for all (Heb 10:8–10). • Rejoice that, through Jesus, we can “draw near [to God] with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Heb 10:22) and receive forgiveness of our sins. Amen. (TLSB)