

The Man in the Middle

Leviticus 8:1-15a; 18-19a; 22-24b; 31-36.

In Need of a Mediator

A mediator is a go-between, someone who brings two separated parties together. In our Western thinking we can think we don't need a mediator between us and God: we think we are doing God a favour giving him space in our lives. Leviticus tells us the opposite.

Alternatively, when we consider what we are really like we can feel totally unworthy to come before God. When we feel that way we are acknowledging our need for a mediator.

Leviticus speaks right into that need. It speaks to our 21st Century pride, and our feeling of unworthiness. It tells us we need a mediator and that God provides the go-between.

God's Go-between

The people of Israel needed a mediator who was like them – but he also had to be unlike them. He had to be holy. The High Priest's ordination service made him holy.

Having a High Priest, a mediator, was God's idea. He is the one who takes the initiative to bridge the gap and heal the relationship. Then Aaron was washed. He did not wash himself – he could not make himself holy – Moses (as God's representative) did it for him. We need a power outside ourselves to change.

Then Moses dresses Aaron in the priest's clothing. It set him apart – made him holy – for the task he was called to. On the breastplate were 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel – he was their representative before God. The he was anointed with oil: it was a sign of being welcomed into God's house, and a picture of the Holy Spirit equipping him for the task.

Then there were 3 sacrifices: to atone for Aaron's sin, to be a picture of his whole life given to God, and of his consecration to the Lord.

But all the rituals could not make Aaron holy on the inside. We need a much better mediator to do that.

The Go-between God.

The gospel tells us that God becomes the ultimate high priest and mediator. Jesus said he was anointed by God's Spirit. But unlike Aaron he did not need to be made holy. He was holy, and he kept God's law perfectly. He did not need a sacrifice to atone for his sin – he became the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Knowing that can cleanse our guilty consciences.

And that gives us boldness to approach God's throne, to receive the mercy and grace we need for life.