

What About The Priesthood Of Messianic Believers?

By Rabbi Reuel Dillon

The question: “In the millennial kingdom when Yeshua establishes His Kingdom and reigns as both King and High Priest, since He is High Priest under the order of Malki-Tzedek, and not Aaron, will the priests serving under Him need to be descendants of Aaron, or will the office be open to all Believers?”

This is a good question. I will give a simple answer and one that is more in-depth.

For the simple answer, not everyone will qualify to serve in the office of a Levitical Cohen. The word “cohen” meaning “priest” in it’s most basic sense is someone whom is a representative of Adonai whom ministers for Him. This is how Yisrael could be called a Kingdom of Priests (Shemot/Exo. 19:6) without actually all being Levi'im (Levites). But, because there are different divisions of the Cohenim it follows that not everyone will qualify to operate in just any role. A parallel argument can be seen in regards to the subject of men and women. Adonai has chosen the men of Yisrael to minister in certain roles. While this doesn't mean that that women are not ministers in the sense that they fulfill certain roles of ministry unto Adonai, this doesn't mean that they could ever serve in the Temple as a Cohen, or even for that matter as the Rosh Cohen (Head Priest) of their homes. For those whom take hold of Yeshua The Messiah and The Torah, such will be Kings and Priest unto Adonai in the coming Kingdom. Another and probably more compelling parallel argument is that although we will be rulers in His Kingdom, we will not qualify to be the King of Yisrael, or even to be one of the Twelve rulers (Mat. 19:28) whom will rule over Yisrael.

Here is where my answer becomes more in-depth. Yeshua does come from the line of Levi through Aharon. See the following article for more detail on this subject: (http://www.geocities.com/fellowshipofthemessiah/parashahmessages/bmidbar_kingspriestsandboth.pdf). Messiah is said to be after the order of Malki-Tzedek because He uniquely qualifies to be both King and a Priest as He is from both the tribe of Levi and Yehudah and will have a perfect unity of both King and High Priest (Zekharyah 6:13). It also doesn't hurt that He is HaMashiach and the Word of Elohim made flesh as this also helps with the whole being a Priest forever thing. But, in the book of Yechezkel the Prince/Priest of Yisrael is making offerings in connection with the Levitical Priesthood that we is also see operating (Ezek. 45:16-17). And, there is Biblical promise that alot of people conveniently overlook. The Levi'im have an everlasting covenant to minister as Cohenim before Adonai in Beit HaMikdash (Temple) when it is standing.

Shemot (Exodus) 29:9 states, “You shall clothe them with belts, Aharon and his sons, and bind turbans on them: and they shall have the priesthood by a perpetual statute: and you shall consecrate Aharon and his sons.”.

Again in Shemot 40:13-15 we read, "Put the holy garments on Aharon, anoint him, and consecrate him, so that he can serve me in the office of cohen. You shall bring his sons, and put coats on them. You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to me in the priest's office. Their anointing shall be to them for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.".

And again in B'midbar (Numbers) 25:10-13 it states, "Hashem said to Moshe, "Pinchas the son of El'azar, the son of Aharon the cohen, has deflected my anger from the people of Yisrael by being as zealous as I am, so that I didn't destroy them in my own zeal. Therefore say, 'I am giving him my covenant of shalom, making a covenant with him and his descendants after him that the office of cohen will be theirs forever.' This is because he was zealous on behalf of his God and made atonement for the people of Yisrael".

Because the gifts and calling of Adonai are irrevocable (Romans 11:29) and we believe that the Messianic covenant is "everlasting" and "forever"...than we have to be consistent in our theology and how we approach the covenants of Adonai and take Him at His word, or our faith is in vain. He is faithful, even when we are not. In our previous passage we see that the High Priesthood was given to Pinchas' family forever. In connection with this scripture we see the following in the future as found in the book of Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 48:11-13,

"It shall be for the cohanim who are sanctified of the sons of Tzadok, who have kept my charge, who didn't go astray when the children of Yisrael went astray, as the Levites went astray. It shall be to them an offering from the offering of the land, a thing most holy, by the border of the Levites. Answerable to the border of the Cohanim, the Levites shall have twenty-five thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length shall be twenty-five thousand, and the breadth ten thousand."

Now, what we have to understand is that "Tzadok" is of the house of "Pinchas". Thus, we see that Adonai will be true to His promise and covenant with Levi. And, Adonai takes this covenant with Levi quite seriously...

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 33:14-22 - "Here, the days are coming," says Hashem, "when I will fulfill this good promise which I have proclaimed for the house of Yisrael and the house of Y'hudah. When those days come, at that time, I will cause to spring up for David a Branch of Righteousness. He will do what is just and right in the land. When those days come, Y'hudah will be saved, Yerushalayim will live in safety, and the name given to her will be HaShem Tzidkenu [YHVH our Righteousness]." For this is what Hashem says: "There will never be cut off from David a man to occupy the throne of the house of Yisrael. Nor will there ever be cut off from the cohanim who are L'vi'im a man before me to offer burnt offerings, burn grain offerings and offer sacrifices every day." This word of Hashem came to Yirmeyahu:

"Here is what Hashem says: 'If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that daytime and nighttime no longer come when they are supposed to, then my covenant with my servant David also can be broken, so that he will not have a descendant to reign from his throne or L'vi'im who are cohanim to minister to me. To the

degree that the armies of heaven are past counting and the sand by the sea past measuring, I will increase the descendants of my servant David and the L'vi'im ministering to me.".

The passage in Yirmeyahu connects the Messianic/Davidic Covenant with the Levitical covenant. If you rend one, you rend both. Therefore, to answer part of the question, unless a believer is of the house of Levi than they will not be serving as Cohenim in the Beit HaMikdash (The Temple). There although may be another avenue where someone may be able to enter into this particular role of a Levi Cohen. The following is conjecture but could be a possibility. Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 47:21-23 states, "So shall you divide this land to you according to the tribes of Yisrael. It shall happen, that you shall divide it by lot for an inheritance to you and to the strangers who sojourn among you, who shall father children among you; and they shall be to you as the home-born among the children of Yisrael; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Yisrael. It shall happen, that in what tribe the stranger sojourns, there shall you give him his inheritance, says Adonai HaShem."

So there are some Goyim whom will come into the commonwealth of Yisrael and will actually take up their inheritance with the Levi'im. Keep this scripture passage in mind as we go to Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 66:18-21;

"For I know their works and their thoughts: the time comes, that I will gather all nations and languages; and they shall come, and shall see my glory. I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tuval and Yavan, to the isles afar off, who have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. They shall bring all your brothers out of all the nations for an offering to HaShem, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Yerushalayim, says HaShem, as the children of Yisrael bring their offering in a clean vessel into the house of HaShem. Of them also will I take for Cohanim and for Levites, says HaShem."

As we read the above passage in context we have to ask ourselves who is "they" and "them" in this passage? And, it becomes evident that "they" and "them" are the Goyim bringing Yisrael back to their land. Therefore, because "they" and "them" are the Goyim, than it also tells us that Adonai will take some of those whom have taken hold of Yisrael to become Cohenim...that is; "Levites".

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