

Distinction between Levitical Priests as “Pastors,” and New Testament Pastoral Office

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- A) The Levitical Priests (Levites) a pattern of the Pastoral ministry in the Church:

Numbers 16:9 “Does it seem but a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord and to stand before the congregation to minister to them.”

- B) Old Testament Worship Sanctuary gives the pattern adapted by the historical Church:

2Chronicles 31:2-10 “And Hezekiah appointed the priests and the Levites after their divisions, each man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the camp of the Lord.”

- C) The Levitical Priests were local “Shepherds” of the congregations throughout Israel:

Numbers 1:50-53 “But thou shalt appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that *belong* to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle. (51) And when the tabernacle sets forward, the Levites shall take it down: and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death. (52) And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts. (53) But **the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony**, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: **and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle.**”

- D) Levitical Priests Ministered Spiritually as Pastors to God’s People:

2Chronicles 30:22-27 “And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all **the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD**: (25) And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. (26) So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel *there was* not the like in Jerusalem. (27) **Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.**

- E) What Happens When There is a Failure of Pastoral Care of the Congregation:

Jeremiah 10:20-21 “**My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children**

are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none (*Levitical Priesst/Pastor Shepherds*) **to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains.** (21) For **the pastors** (*Levitical Priests/Shepherds*) are become brutish, and **have not sought the LORD:** therefore they shall not prosper, **and all their flocks shall be scattered.**" (When the Pastor/Shepherds suffer a failure, the sheep are scattered: (*Matthew 26:31* "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, **I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.**")

F) **What Happens When the Pastors Fail to Feed & Care for the Local Flock (Congregations):**

Jeremiah 23:1-3 "Woe be unto **the pastors** that destroy and **scatter the sheep of my pasture!** saith the LORD. (2) Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel **against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited** (cared for) **them:** behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD."

G) **Jeremiah Prophecies of Jesus Restoring the Gift of Pastor/Teacher and Ministry Gifts for the Church (And as was the Case in the Old Testament: Prophets (Called Also to be Apostles & Evangelists/Preachers) Preceded Pastors, So Was the Order of Gifts Given by Christ to the Church (Apostles, Prophets, Evangleishts (Heralders of the gospel preceded Pastors):**

Jeremiah 23":4-5 "And I will set up **shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.** (5) Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that **I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth (Jesus).**"

Ephesians 4:8, 11-12 "Wherefore he saith, When he (*Jesus*) ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and **gave gifts unto men.** (11) And he gave some, **apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;** (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

H) **Key Differences in Old Testament Between the Pastors/Shepherds (Levitical Priests) and the Prophets Ministry:**

a) **The Old Testament Pastor/Shepherd (Levitical Priest) Cared for (Shepherded) the Local Congregation; While the Prophets Cared for (Shepherded) the Nation (as a whole), even as in the Church, the Pastor/Shepherd Cares for (Shepherds) the local Congregation; While the "Apostle/Prophet/Evangelist" Gifts Care for (Shepherds) the Overall Corporate Body of the Church (as a Whole):**

b) After Moses and Joshua (the two founding National Shepherds of Israel) were gone, Samuel, the Prophet, became the new “Arch-Type” National Shepherd of God’s Corporate people, Israel and as such, was given the power to oversee and distribute God’s Care of the Nation. Once the People Prevailed Upon God for a King, Samuel (so long as he was alive) remained the Prophet (At-Large) and “National Shepherd; anointing the kings of Israel, (including King Saul and King David as National Shepherds), However Once Israel set up the reign of Kings, it wasn’t long before the Nation was backslidden Spiritually, and there were no “National Shepherds” over Israel to Spiritually Care for the Nation as a Whole, only the (Major) Prophets whom God Continued to Raise Up to Speak to the Nation and Attempt God’s Care over them, i.e. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, etc.

1) The Gift (Office) of Pastor/Teacher is Never Merged with Apostle. Prophet and Evangelist, Whereas the Apostle, Prophet and Evangelist Gift Offices are Often Comingled, (i.e. Apostle and Prophet and Evangelist Gifts Merged into One Ministry):

Romans 1:1-7 “Paul, a servant (gift) of Jesus Christ, **called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,** (5) By whom **we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith AMONG ALL NATIONS,** for his name: (6) Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: (7) **To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1Corinthians 9:1-2 “Am I not **an apostle?** am I not free **[no boundaries of ministry]?** have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? **are not ye my work in the doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.”**

1Timothy 2:7 Whereunto **I am ordained a preacher (Evangelist, ie. Herald of the gospel),** and **an apostle,** (I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not;) and **a teacher of the Gentiles** (at large, the whole as differing from just a local congregation) in faith and verity.”

l) Old Testament Prophets Were Often Merged together as Evangelists (Heralders of the OT Messages) and Apostles (Raising up and Overseeing and Mentoring other Prophets as Apostles do with At-Large ministers in the Church at large today):

a) Evangelists (in Type) Traveling and Preaching God’s Instructions At-Large):

Ezra 5:1 “NOW THE prophets, Haggai and Zechariah son [*grandson*] of Iddo, prophesied **to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of**

Israel, Whose [Spirit] was upon them.”

b) Apostles (A Type of): Prophets Raising up schools of the Prophets and Mentoring them:

2Kings 2:3-7 “And **the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?** And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. (4) And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. (5) **And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?** And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. (6) And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and *as thy soul liveth*, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. (7) **And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off:** and they two stood by Jordan.”

1) Jamieson, Faussett & Brown Commentary –

- a) **“When the Lord would take up Elijah** — “A revelation of this event had been made to the prophet; but, unknown to him, it had also been revealed to his disciples (Apostleship), and to Elisha in particular, who kept constantly beside him.
- b) **“Gilgal“**— This Gilgal (Jiljil) was near Ebal and Gerizim; **a school of the prophets was established there (More evidence of Apostleship) . At Beth-el there was also a school of the prophets, which Elijah had founded; and at Jericho there was another [2Ki 2:4].** In travelling to these places, which he had done through the impulse of the Spirit (2Ki 2:2, 2Ki 2:4-6), **Elijah wished to pay a farewell visit to these several institutions (Raised up under Elijah’s Apostleship),** which lay on his way to the place of ascension and, at the same time, from a feeling of humility and modesty, to be in solitude, where there would be no eye-witnesses of his glorification. All his efforts, however, to prevail on his attendant to remain behind, were fruitless. **Elisha knew that the time was at hand, and at every place the sons of the prophets spoke to him of the approaching removal of his master.** Their last stage was at the Jordan. **They were followed at a distance by fifty scholars of the prophets,** from Jericho, who were desirous, in honor of the great occasion, to witness the miraculous translation of the prophet.”

J) As Seen in the Old Testament Examples, God’s plan and purpose for the New Testament Church was Founded on the Same Arch-Type of the Old Testament Leaders, i.e. Levitical Priests as Pastors/Shepherds/Teachers of the (Local) Flock of the Congregation of Israel and (At-Large) Ministries made up of the Office of Prophet with gifts of mentoring and preaching to the Nation of Israel At-Large.

a. In the New Testament, God’s gifts of Apostle, Prophet and Evangelist (At-Large) and Pastors/Teachers (Shepherds of the Local Congregation), i.e. Local Flock:

Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” *

*Pastors (as Local Shepherds) are called to feed and provide care for the local congregation over which they have been called to serve.

1Peter 5:2-4 “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (3) Neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (4) And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.” *

*Paul not suggesting that He was a “Local Shepherd/Pastor,” rather that he was also “more mature” in his calling, as he was also paying honor to the Pastors He was exhorting as being more mature (elders).

Addendum # 1

Illustrated Dictionary of Bible Life & Times

Excerpts from Pages 284 & 351

“The Levitical Priests of Israel supervised public worship in the Temples and local Synagogues which included offerings, sacrifices, keeping the Temple and its furnishings, settling disputes among the people, administering blessings, dedications, conducting formal worship services, appointing musicians, gatekeepers, etc. For their services at God’s sanctuary, they were entitled to receive the tithe (10%) of all the increase of the worshippers’ money, crops, livestock, etc. They taught the people how to worship and obey God’s commands [the primary objective of the Tithe remained always the same: to support the Levitical Priests in charge of the regular Temple worship.

The Levites’ ministry function most closely parallels that of the local church minister in Christian worship. The Jewish Prophets roamed the countryside freely as did the Pharisees who were Rabbinical Teachers of the Law, but the Levites remained in place near the Sanctuary and served as shepherds over the Congregations of Israel.”

Here's a summary of this document:

The document discusses the distinction between Levitical priests in the Old Testament and the pastoral office in the New Testament, highlighting roles, responsibilities, and the evolution of pastoral care.

- **Levitical Priests as Pastoral Ministry:** The Levitical priests served as a pattern for pastoral ministry in the church, ministering to the congregation and performing services for the tabernacle.
- **Old Testament Worship Sanctuary:** The Old Testament worship sanctuary provided a pattern adapted by the historical church, with priests and Levites appointed for various offerings and to minister, give thanks, and praise.
- **Local Shepherds:** Levitical priests acted as local shepherds for the congregations throughout Israel, responsible for the tabernacle and its vessels, and ministering to the people.
- **Spiritual Ministry:** Levitical priests ministered spiritually to God's people, teaching the knowledge of the Lord and blessing the congregation.
- **Failure of Pastoral Care:** When pastoral care fails, the congregation suffers, as seen in the warnings from Jeremiah about pastors who become brutish and do not seek the Lord, leading to scattered flocks.
- **New Testament Pastoral Gifts:** Jeremiah prophesied about Jesus restoring the gift of pastors, and teachers given for the edifying of the body of Christ.
- **Distinction Between Roles:** The document highlights the distinction between the roles of pastors/shepherds (Levitical priests) who cared for local congregations and prophets who shepherded the nation as a whole, similar to the New Testament structure.

ADDENDUM #2

Why the Tithe belongs solely to the Pastoral Ministry

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1Corinthians 9:9-14 AMP “For in the Law of Moses it is written, You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the corn. Is it *[only]* for oxen that God cares? [Deu 25:4] (10) Or does He speak certainly *and* entirely for our sakes? [*Assuredly*] it is written for our sakes, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher ought to thresh in expectation of partaking of the harvest. (11) If we have sown *[the seed of]* spiritual good among you, *[is it too]* much if we reap from your material benefits? (12) If others share in this rightful claim upon you, do not we *[have a still better and greater claim]*? However, we have never exercised this right, but we endure everything rather than put a hindrance in the way *[of the spread]* of the good news (the Gospel) of Christ. (13) Do you not know that those men who are employed in the services of the temple get their food from the temple? And that those who tend the altar share with the altar *[in the offerings brought]*? [Deu 18:1] (14) **[On the same principle] the Lord directed that those who publish the good news (the Gospel) should live (get their maintenance) by the**

Gospel.”

Luke 10:7-12 And stay on in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for **the laborer is worthy of his wages**. Do not keep moving from house to house.

[Deu 24:15] (8) Whenever you go into a town and they receive *and* accept *and* welcome you, eat what is set before you; (9) And heal the sick in it and say to them, The kingdom of God has come close to you. (10) But whenever you go into a town and they do not receive *and* accept *and* welcome you, go out into its streets and say, (11) Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we are wiping off against you; yet know *and* understand this: the kingdom of God has come near *you*. (12) I tell you, it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that town. [Gen 19:24-28]

1. In this Corinthian scripture, a revelation is given for the appropriate manner in which those devoted to fulltime ministry should receive remuneration. Two pictures are given relating the income of the minister to an oxen grinding out corn, and that of a “plowman and thresher.”

Let’s take each of these for a closer look:

We will liken each of these as they might apply to the different ministries within the body of Christ, i.e. Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, and Pastor and Teacher.

- a) Imagine, the late Billy Graham as his team plans for a large crusade in a local city. Careful work is done to secure a facility, contracts are signed for the costs that will be expended and paid team members are hired along with coordinators to assemble volunteers for the crusade members.

The week’s nightly meetings prove to be a great success. The stadium is filled to capacity each meeting, and a free-will offering is received each service.

Also attending the service is a young evangelist, who happens to be in the city during the crusade. Normally, he travels throughout different regions holding small revival services. He too, receives an offering during each of his meetings, however, because the attendance is much smaller, his offerings are much less than Reverend Graham’s meetings.

After the service the young evangelist makes his way to front to speak to one of the

staff members. He introduces himself and begins, "I'm here because I would like some of the offering that was taken, I have bills to be paid, and my offerings from my services are not enough to support the lifestyle I have chosen. If you could please, I would like \$10,000 from tonight's offering."

What do you think would happen? Of course, they would not give Billy Graham Crusade's offering to him. Why not? Because each "oxen is to eat of the corn he is grinding." He is not to grind his corn but eat the corn another oxen is laboriously working. Apostle Paul indicates that each oxen is to eat of the corn he is grinding.

- b) Now let's reverse the scenario. Let's say that a local pastor and his church attended the Graham crusade. Everyone was excited to see the amazing results of multitudes came to Christ. Excited, the pastor and his congregation return home and on Sunday morning the "tithes and offerings" are received. The Pastor has personal bills needing to be paid as well as expenses incurred under his direction in managing the needs of the Church, i.e. church maintenance, supplies, etc.

After a weekend of services, he goes into the church office on Monday for a day of pastoral work. He customarily goes into his secretaries office where the receipts from the tithes and offerings are kept in a secure place. He asks her to prepare the bank deposit and deliver the ledger of receipts and the deposit to him.

She says, I'm sorry Pastor, but the Church deacons were so excited about the Billy Graham crusade results, they decided to give this week's tithes and offerings to his organization. They picked them up earlier today to deliver to the Crusade team. "But, I have church responsibilities to pay this week," he says to his secretary, plus I must have my salary in order to pay my bills. I expected to have the church funds to allocate what is needed for my family and the church this week."

2. Imagine, a farmer plows and cultivates his field and prepares it excellently for a great crop. He plants and waters and cares for his crop until time for harvest. At harvest, he gathers his crop from the fields and prepares to take it to market. The county Agricultural department comes out to see him. They explain that several of the other farmers haven't been as successful as he was, and they are going to seize his harvest and distribute it to the other farmers.

- a) Nothing more important the duties of a Pastor to "care for the families of the Congregation." That is the "field of his work," and his wages are "the Tithe" of the Congregation. Notice the very pointed Word to Israel regarding their care for the

Pastoral office of the Levitical Priests:

Deuteronomy 12:19 "Take heed not to forsake *or* neglect the Levite [*God's minister*] as long as you live in your land."

- b) We see in this picture given by Apostle Paul, the fallacy of the Tithe of the Church being used for other ministries besides the Pastoral office. The purpose for which the Tithe was instituted was clear: The Levitical Priest's duties were strictly "pastoral." He was charged with the responsibility of making his home convenient to one ministry location (the sanctuary) in order to spiritually feed, provide worship and care provide care, i.e. spiritual help, counseling, visiting sick, marry, bury, provide emotional/spiritual/ faith support, etc. He does not have the privilege of being at-large where he can "tread the corn" or "tend a crop" in many fields, as the other of the five-fold ministries can. Because the Tithe is connected to the pastoral ministry, the Pastor is required to remain in place. His corn is the local congregation and their tithes. The at-large ministries corn (and their altar that they tend) represents their at-large ministries, meetings, etc.
- c) The minister is due the "gifts" left at the "altar of his ministry," not the altar of another minister, i.e. ["altar the evangelistic service," belongs to the Evangelist; vs. "altar of the Apostle's ministry belongs to the Apostle at the Simply , etc.] Simply put, when other ministries try and influence and get the tithe from those in the local congregation for their ministry, they are taking "corn," "harvest crops," and "gifts that are supposed to be left at the altar" by the local congregation and church for the Pastor, as Apostle Paul explained:
- "Do you not know that those men who are employed in the services of the temple get their food from the temple? And that those who tend the altar share with the altar [*in the offerings brought*]?"
- d) The concept is clear: In ministry, whichever altar you tend, the gifts left are your reward. If you are not tending the "church Tithe altar" you don't get the Tithe which is specifically directed to be placed there. You are not to ask church members to send you their Tithe. If, as an at-large minister, your altar is a "free-will offering altar" that's your reward. You are to develop that in your ministry, not manipulate congregants in the church to place their Tithe on your ministry altar.
3. In our other key scripture of Luke 10:7-12, Jesus words define a minister as a "laborer." Although he instructed to "heal the sick in it and say to them, The kingdom of God has come close to you," nonetheless, he is defined by Jesus as "a laborer" who is "worthy of his hire (wages)."

It is important to God that whatever type of ministry we allow to “feed” us, we should reciprocate with remuneration for that minister. For example: It’s one thing if you happen across the ministry of someone in changing channels, or it comes up on your social media screen, etc. But it is another thing if you regularly partake of the teachings of a minister, and use that ministry to help feed you spiritually, then you should take the time to bless them financially for their “labor” to you, must as you would the mechanic that services your car or the doctor that tends to your health. Remember, God is watching and taking note of these things, and it will affect how your faith works for things both spiritual and financial. Always remember, God deems the “laborer” in ministry “worthy of his hire.” In one place, Paul taught:

1Corinthians 9:11 “If we have sown [*the seed of*] spiritual good among you, [*is it too*] much if we reap also from your material [financial] benefits?”

4. With respect to the Levitical Priests, the principle that ministry is considered “labor” worthy of a reward of wages is demonstrated in this scripture setting:*

Numbers 18:26-32 Moreover, you shall say to the Levites, When you take from the Israelites the tithe which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present an offering from it to the Lord, even a tenth of the tithe [*paid by the people*]. (30) Therefore you shall say to them, When you have lifted out *and* held back the best from it [*and presented it to the Lord by giving it to yourselves, the Levites*], then **it shall be counted to [you] the Levites just as if it were the increase of the threshing floor or of the winepress.** (31) And you may eat it in every place, you and your households, **for it is your reward for your service** in the Tent of Meeting. (32) And you shall be guilty of no sin by reason of it when you have lifted out *and* held back the best of it; neither shall you have polluted the holy things of the Israelites, neither shall you die [*because of it*].”

*Keep in mind that as the Church grows, the Pastoral Ministry may become a “Pastoral Team,” where the Pastor God has called needs assistants such as Praise Teams & Musicians, etc., and others to help with the care of the congregation. When the church is smaller that may be made up of volunteers, that as the church grows may become paid Pastoral Staff, remunerated as is appropriate out of the Tithe. This is also in accordance with the pattern of the Levitical Priests.

ADDENDUM #3

At-Large Ministries in the Old Testament

Melchizedek – Priest Received the Tithe from Abraham

Genesis 14:18-20 Melchizedek king of Salem [*later called Jerusalem*] brought out bread and wine [*for their nourishment*]; he was the priest of God Most High, (19) And he blessed him and said, Blessed (favored with blessings, made blissful, joyful) be Abram by God Most High, Possessor *and* Maker of heaven and earth, (20) And blessed, praised, *and* glorified be God Most High, Who has given your foes into your hand! And [*Abram*] gave him a tenth of all [*he had taken*]. [Heb 7:1-10]

Elijah & Elisha the Prophets – Elisha Left His Secular Labor to Become Part of the Prophetic Ministry of Elijah

1Ki 19:19-21 So Elijah left there and found Elisha son of Shaphat, whose plowing was being done with twelve yoke of oxen, and he drove the twelfth. Elijah crossed over to him and cast his mantle upon him. (20) He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, Let me kiss my father and mother, and then I will follow you. And he [*testing Elisha*] said, Go on back. What have I done to you? [*Settle it for yourself.*] (21) So Elisha went back from him. Then he took a yoke of oxen, slew them, boiled their flesh with the oxen's yoke [*as fuel*], and gave to the people, and they ate. Then he arose, followed Elijah, and served him. [2Ki 3:11]

The scripture also relates several instances of God feeding the prophets, such as by sending ravens to feed Elijah, (1 Kings 17:4), or Elisha's miraculous multiplying of loaves (2 Kgs. 4).

1 Kings 17, demonstrated where God directs Elijah to the house of a widow, who is expected to provide food and lodging.

Samuel the Prophet – Custom in Israel was to Bring the Man of God “a gift”

1Samuel 9:6-10 “The servant said to him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, a man held in honor; all that he says surely comes true. Now let us go there. Perhaps he can show us where we should go. (7) Then Saul said to his servant, But if we go, what shall we bring the man? The bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no gift for the man of God. What have we? (8) The servant replied, I have here a quarter of a shekel of silver. I will give that to the man of God to tell us our way-- (9) (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, Come, let us go to the seer, for he that is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.) (10) Saul said to his servant, Well said; come, let us go. So they went to the city where the man of God was.”