

Order & Anointing: How Numbers 1-3 prove these go hand-in-hand

Parashat B'midbar ([B'midbar/Numbers 1-4:20](#)) 5782 B"H

[Numbers chapter 1](#) begins in the wilderness of Sinai. We are given the very *specific* date when the LORD spoke to Moses regarding a census.

It is a very orderly book, with very specific details and instructions. Truly, all of God's Word and, especially the Torah, is well-ordered, and I hope you will be able to see how the divinely-established orderliness goes hand-in-hand with the anointing upon the Israelites.

There was to be a census of those men who could fight for Israel.

Simply, every Israelite son aged 20+ would have to serve in the Israelite army ([Numbers 1:3](#)).

It had been 2 years after the Exodus from Egypt. Specifically, the first day of the second month, 2 years later.

The encampment at Mount Sinai would have been taking shape as a full-fledged community meaning Israelite families and their assets would require protection as the community grew.

Men were looked to as protectors. They were numbered so that they could be assigned to their military divisions.

I am aware of feminist interpretations of this passage suggesting that God is somehow "unfair." Feminists make the mistaken claim that the LORD "ignored" all the women because [Numbers 1](#) only talks about men. Well, I grew up under feminist

theology, so let me tell you plainly: **it's a bunch of nonsense**. *If God didn't value women, He wouldn't have gathered up the men to do the protecting: women would've been left to fend for themselves.*

Men are naturally stronger. This doesn't make women inferior, just different. We have different roles, that's all. We do well to live in the order YHWH has established. We will experience the anointing of the LORD on our households when we live as He has prescribed.

The Bible says there were 603,550 men able to go out with the army of Israel ([Numbers 1:46](#)).

Certainly, that would suggest a large number of women and children! What a blessing that so many men would be able to protect them.

Numbers 2 defines the expected order for each of the military groups.

I love how the Scriptures are very **orderly**.

The fact that the Scriptures are so orderly reflects the **orderliness of our Heavenly Father**.

He has everything well thought out, organized, and He cares about how each facet of how His creation functions.

Sometimes passages like these from Numbers seem tedious or irrelevant, but if you will slow down and look at the wider context, you will discover many treasures even in these words. Likewise, for [what to do when the Scriptures make you squirm](#), check out this recent post on "[The Value of Human Life](#)".

[Numbers 3](#) gives greater depth to a theme introduced in [Leviticus 1:47-51a](#) regarding the roles of the Levites. Here is

that passage:

The Levites, however, were not counted by the tribe of their ancestors, for ADONAI told Moses saying, “Definitely you are not to number the tribe of Levi, nor take the sum of them among *Bnei-Yisrael*. Instead, you are to appoint the Levites over the Tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its implements and all pertaining to it. They are to carry the Tabernacle and all its utensils, tend to it and camp around it. Whenever the Tabernacle sets out, the Levites are to dismantle it, and whenever the Tabernacle is pitched, the Levites are to set it up. Leviticus 1:47-51a

Numbers 3 addresses the duties assigned to the Levites (and *their families*). See, the women weren’t neglected or ignored!

The tragic death of Aaron’s two oldest sons

Before the specifics of the Levitical assignments are addressed, we find out in Numbers 3:2 about the tragic death of Aaron’s two oldest sons, Nadab and Abihu.

Numbers 1 and 2 had us thinking about the military, but these two young men didn’t die in battle.

They were Levites, so they weren’t fighting in the army.

Instead, Nadab and Abihu offered “unauthorized fire” before the LORD. (Numbers 3:4)

The New Living Translation (NLT) simplifies this to the “wrong kind of fire.” (Num.3:4)

Nadab and Abihu died before the presence of the LORD that day due to carelessness. They didn’t do their assigned task in the **orderly** manner required.

How often are we guilty of something similar?

The LORD had given specific instructions, but Nadab and Abihu somehow made a mistake that cost them their lives.

I am thankful for the LORD's grace today! I am also thankful that **ADONAI is a God of order (1 Corinthians 14:33)**. Order has to do with understanding and lack of confusion. **He has redeemed us so we do not have to live confused, disordered, disoriented lives.**



We must also be careful that we **honor the Holy Spirit**. When we **worship**, we must **seek to be filled with the Holy Fire** that comes from heaven alone and reverence His glorious presence.

Because Nadab and Abihu died, Aaron's younger sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, served as priests under Aaron, their father ([Numbers 3:4b](#)).

Nadab and Abihu were *replaced* because the community still needed priestly leaders. May we learn from this tragedy to be faithful in all of our ways and to seek God's guidance in every action we take. If we allow our lives to be ordered by the LORD, we will make right decisions and live in *shalom*.

The Levite families' unique giftings



Each Levite family was assigned different duties that ranged from caring for the implements of the sanctuary (such as the menorah, the Ark of the Covenant, and the altars) to the Tent of Meeting and its coverings to the care of the sanctuary itself.

Each family seems to have been anointed with a particular gifting, because as you read, you can observe that they were responsible for **specific areas**.

The Gershonites

If we analyze it plainly, the **Gershonites** were responsible for the fabrics. They were responsible for the curtains and the ropes used around the Tabernacle and altar ([Num.3:25-26](#)). They had an anointing for working with textiles.

The Kohathites

The **Kohathites** were responsible for “caring for the sanctuary.” ([Numbers 3:28](#)). They were assigned to care for the implements including the menorah, the Ark of the Covenant, and the altars. Perhaps they were anointed in metalworking, able to polish and repair any utensil as needed.

The Merarites

The **Merarites** held the responsibility to care for the structure of the Tabernacle. Their anointing was in engineering! They were to care for the posts and frames and crossbars, bases, pegs, and ropes.

Each clan had to follow the orderly instructions given by the LORD. If they didn't, a job would go undone. A mistake could be made.

And we know from Nadab and Abihu that mistakes can prove instantly fatal.

If a non-Levite approached the Tabernacle area, the consequence was also death.

["You are to appoint Aaron and his sons to maintain the priesthood; any commoner who approaches must be executed." Numbers 3:10](#)

[That's another one of those verses that makes me say, "WHAT?"](#)

But we must understand. The Tabernacle was set-up to teach us about the holiness of God. He is unapproachable without our [Mediator \(1 Timothy 2:5\)](#).

["For there is one God and there is one Mediator between God and men - a human, Messiah Yeshua, who gave Himself as a ransom for all -the testimony at the proper time." 1 Timothy 2:5-6](#)

Had our Messiah never come, we would still bear the consequence of death. But praise be to our LORD who has sent His Son, *Messiah Yeshua*, (Jesus Christ) to save us from sin and death!

Anointing and giftings today

Throughout the Bible, we find all sorts of examples of people having received special anointing and giftings. The purpose of the anointing was so that a person would be [divinely empowered](#) or inspired to carry out a task that would be of blessing. The Spirit of the LORD rested on people for a time, and today, the Spirit of the LORD infills believers to accomplish the Great Commission!

God remains a God of order.

If we seek the blessings of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach haKodesh*), we must do so in an orderly manner, with a spirit of gentleness. He will fill us with His supernatural giftings if we seek to use those gifts to bless the Kingdom of God.

Perhaps there is no census of believers taken on tablets of stone or sheets of papyrus, and we haven't all had to enlist for military service. But we *are* (as believers) members of the royal priesthood, and [even the hair on our head has been numbered \(Luke 12:7\)](#).

Today, I encourage you to seek to order your life, your every step, on the Biblical pattern God has established for a full and abundant life!

And I believe if you submit to His vital instructions and guidance, He will surely anoint you with His Holy Spirit to serve Him with success and joy!

Thanks so much for reading today! Please leave a comment below and subscribe to our monthly newsletter!

Kohanim & the Priesthood of all Believers

Parashat T'tzaveh (Exodus 27:20-30:10)

[Hebrews 5:1](#) tells us ["For every *kohen gadol* \[high priest\] taken from among men is appointed to act on behalf of people in matters relating to God, so that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins."](#)

This verse shows that every priest

1. is chosen/set apart from others
2. is appointed
3. serves as an intermediary between people and G-D
4. offers gifts and sacrifices for sins

Worthiness

The priest has garnered a level of favor making him "more worthy" than others to stand before the throne of the Most High.

We must realize that to be the appointee means there is an Appointer. In Torah, we see that the LORD Himself chooses who will serve as His priests. In the B'rit Chadasha (New Testament), the Eternal One reveals that His Son, Yeshua, (Jesus), is the Great High Priest for us, the divine and perfect *kohen gadol*.

While Aaron, Eleazar, and the other priests (*kohanim*) certainly did their best in their human capacity to serve this important role of standing between the people and God, they

would never be “worthy *enough*” to completely save the people from their sin. Every year, on Yom Kippur, atonement would be made, but after that appointed hour, sin would continue to hold a grasp on the people and guilt would never be fully eradicated. The sacrificial system was in place to help cleanse an imperfect people of their sin, but a perfect sacrifice was needed: the perfect Lamb of God.

[1 Peter 2](#) exhorts followers of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) to understand that they are now part of the royal priesthood.

Yeshua (Jesus) came for us, served as our Great High Priest, died for us, and is resurrected in eternal new life and is seated at the right hand of God our Father. He lived on the earth in this way to teach us how to live. He served as High Priest not only to save us, but to empower us in our new roles as among the divinely-appointed priesthood. Peter describes our role as to be “pleasing” to God. We obey the LORD, not because we must or should, but because we love Him.

Now, let us consider what is truly remarkable!

From unworthy to made worthy

Formerly, we were **all** completely *unworthy*.

We could not be appointed to such a noble task as standing between earth and heaven in the Holy Place.

No sacrifice we would have offered could have ever been enough to earn forgiveness.

No gift, no gold, nothing on this earth could have served as a gift fine enough to present before the King of kings in exchange for His favor and forgiveness.

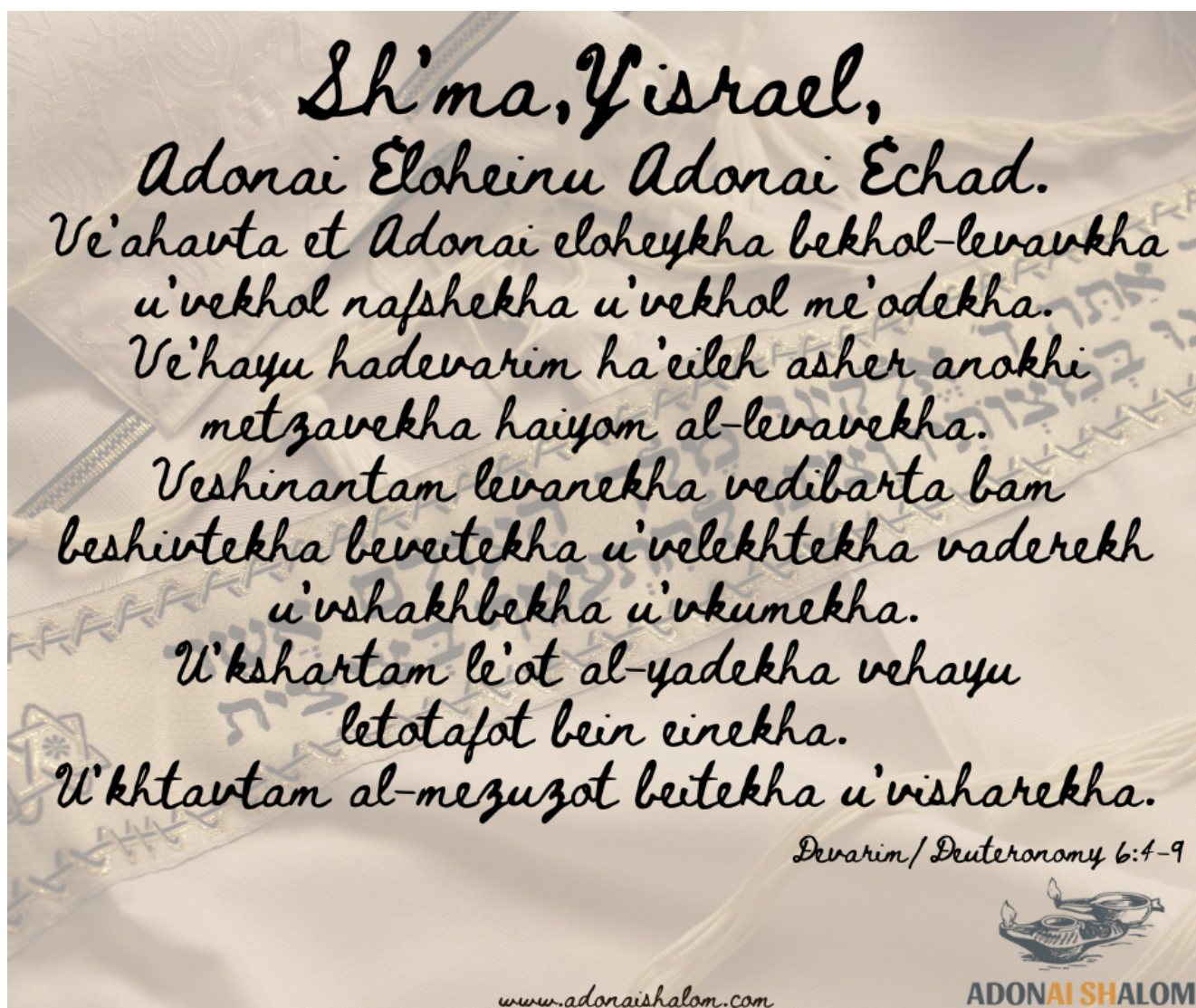
Nothing.

We were without hope. We were completely dependent upon the

mercy of God and the obedience of an earthly priest.

Now, **we** are appointed as priests, and not just any old priest: **we are priests of the royal lineage**. We are princes and princesses, sons and daughters of the King of kings, and He delights that we serve Him. No longer does an earthly man stand between us and our Creator. We need only turn to Yeshua (Jesus), who makes intercession for us, and He Himself welcomes us, for He and the Father are One. ([John 10:30](#)).

It was *revolutionary* for our Lord Yeshua to say this. Every day, Jews would recite [the Sh'ma](#), that the LORD our God, the LORD is One ([Deut.6:4](#)). So when He said, ["I and the Father are One"](#) in [John 10:30](#), many eyes would have been opened to the Truth of His identity. [Truly, this is the Son of God!](#)



*Sh'ma, Y'Israel,
Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.
Ve'ahavta et Adonai eloheykha bekol-levavkha
u'bekhol nafshekha u'bekhol me'odekha.
Ve'hayu hadevarim ha'eileh asher anokhi
metzavekha hayom al-levavekha.
Veshinantam levavekha vedibarta bam
beshivtekha beveitekha u'velekhtekha vaderekh
u'vshakhekha u'vkumeikha.
U'ksharta le'ot al-yadeikha vehayu
letotafot bein eireikha.
U'khtarta al-mezuzot beitekha u'vshareikha.*

Devarim/Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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Sh'ma Y'Israel

Priestly garments

The vestments of YHVH's priests were very specific. Today, when many people think of priests, they think of the Catholic or Mormon religion or pagan priesthods. The fact that there are so many different religious groups that have their own priesthods and priestly rituals shows that humanity in general understands its need for a priestly function, a moderator between us and the divine. Deep down, we know that we ourselves can do nothing and are in desperate need of a spiritual connection with the Holy One.

Unfortunately, everything *outside* of Scripture is errant, so we must look to what the Bible actually required and instituted. Roman Catholic priests, for example, base their apparel and actions on papal directives, not on Biblical mandate. One most obvious difference – Roman Catholics priests are famously not allowed to marry or have children, but **Biblically**, we know that **Aaron the priest married Elisheba and had four sons.**

Let's look further at what the Bible describes as related to Biblical priesthood.

The priesthood garments of the Bible were made specifically to endow “splendor and beauty.”
(Shemot/[Exodus 28:2](#))

You are to make holy garments for your brother Aaron,
for splendor and for beauty.

Exodus 28:2



Exodus 28:2

The garments were skillfully woven ([Ex.28:8](#)), made of finely twisted linen ([Ex.28:6, 8](#)), and crafted of the beautiful colors of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet ([Ex.28:5, 6, 8](#)). The colors are repeated and reflect the same color scheme used for the Tabernacle. Gold surely reminds us of the Glorious nature of HaShem. Blue was an incredibly expensive color sourced using exotic snails.

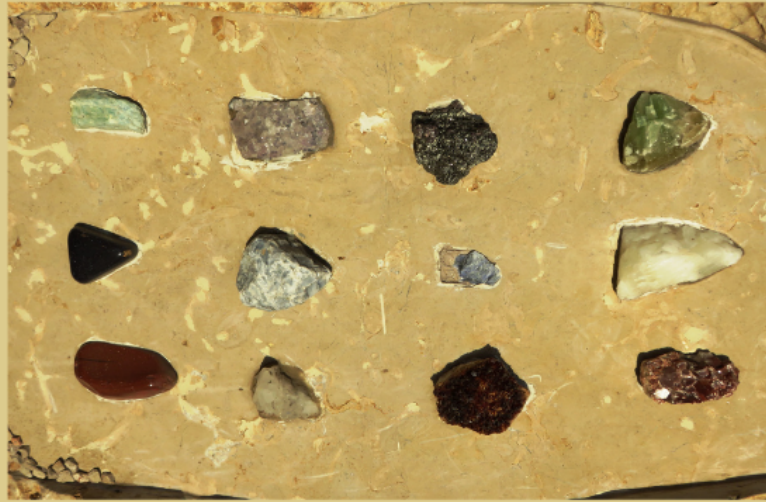
I recently saw a documentary that reminded me of this. In it, the presenter explained that the land of Phoenicia translates to the “land of purple,” as the people there were famous for their dyes. Did you know it took more than 20,000 snails to source the ink just to make *one* purple-dyed Roman toga! It was a costly process and not just anybody could afford purple or blue clothing and tapestries.

The Israelites were a people familiar with oppression and hardship. Can you imagine the self-esteem boost the LORD was giving them by instructing them to use the most expensive of products to prove their esteemed status as the chosen people?

The crimson red reminds us of course of the costly sacrifice Yeshua made, a reality foreshadowed by the tabernacle and priestly vestments and paid for in full on the cross of Calvary.

The priests wore a breastplate covered in precious jewels engraved with the names of the children of Israel (*B'nei-Y'israel*) ([Ex.28:15ff](#)). Notice that in [Exodus 28:15](#), this is a breastplate of *judgment*. It is reasonable to say here judgment is synonymous with such an expression as *discernment* rather than a more punishing role.

Yeshua's people are exhorted to use the full armor of God in [Ephesians 6:10ff](#). Here, the breastplate of the royal priesthood of all believers is called the breastplate of *righteousness* ([Eph.6:14](#)). Good judgment can be termed "right-thinking," "right-decision-making," but that which makes us righteous is the shed blood of the Righteous One alone. The breastplate is intended as a protection for the heart – so discernment and judgment become tempered and perfected by the righteousness imputed to the saved ones.



"Make a breastplate of judgment, the work of a skillful craftsman.
 You are to make it like the design of the ephod—of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen.
 It is to be square and doubled over, a span in length and a span in width.
 Set within it four rows of jewels: a row of ruby, topaz and emerald for the first row;
 a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond for the second row;
 a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst for the third;
 and a beryl, an onyx and a jasper for the fourth row.
 They are to be enclosed in gold filigree settings.
 The stones are to be engraved in the order of the names of Bnei-Yisrael,
 twelve according to their names,
 like the etchings of a signet seal,
 one corresponding to each name of the twelve tribes."

SHEMOT/EXODUS 28:15-21



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Shemot/Exodus 28:15-21

Today, we wear the breastplate of righteousness and our feet present the Good News of peace. Scholars believe the Israelite priests entered barefoot into the Holy of Holies. We too, ought be bare of anything except the glorious message of salvation. The garments of the priesthood were intended to display splendor and beauty.

May your life be reflective of the splendor and beauty that is yours as a child of the Most High!

We'd love to hear your thoughts about the Biblical priesthood and the priesthood of all believers! Please leave a comment, like, and share with your friends!

