**The Order and Function of the Temple Service**

Concordia Theological Seminary Faculty Forum

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**1. Introduction**

1. Paul’s claim in Rom 9:4

* Heritage of church from Israel
* *Latreia*: temple service as one of 7 items
* Exposition in Hebrews
  + Tabernacle service as shadow of heavenly service: 8:5
  + Service of living God with cleansed conscience: 9:14
  + God-pleasing service in heavenly Jerusalem: 12:28

1. The problem
   * Piecemeal data from Pentateuch
   * Modern assumptions
     + Abolition by Jesus
     + No continuity
     + No original unified order
     + Tabernacle as a fictional entity
   * No distinction between national and personal offerings
2. Data for an order of service
   * Legislation for daily offering: Ex 29:38-46; Num 28:3-8
   * Inaugural service in Lev 9
   * Language
     + The *ōlat tāmîd :* the regular burnt offering
     + The *minchāh*: the grain offering
     + The *tāmîd:* the regular ritual
   * Fixed sequence: Ex 28:43; 30:20; 40:32
     + Entry into Holy Place
     + Approach to altar
   * Summaries in Chronicles: 2 Chron 2:4; 13:11; 29:7
   * Description in Sirach 50:5-21: 200 BC
   * Tamid: Mishnah
3. Proposal by Haran: unified order with fixed sequence

**2. The Order for the Daily Burnt Offering**

1. The preparation
   * Altar: removal of ashes and fire for coals
   * The slaughter of the male lamb
     + Meat
     + Blood
   * Grain offering

* Fine wheat flour
* Olive oil mixed with flour
* Incense
  + Libation of wine
  + Ingredients for festive meal

1. The rite of atonement: high priest

* Splashing of blood against the altar
* God’s provision of atonement as in Lev 17:11: *the life of the flesh is in the blood and I myself have given it to you on the altar to perform atonement for you lives, for it is the blood that atones by means of the life*.
* Purpose
  + Cleansing from impurity
  + Release from sin: forgiveness

1. The entry into the Holy Place: high priest

* Washing of hands and feet from basin: Ex 40:30-32
* Clothing with priestly vestments: Ex 28:43
  + Blue robe over tunic with bells
  + Ephod over chest: two stones with names of tribes
  + Breastpiece on shoulders: twelve stones and lots
  + Diadem over turban: ‘YHWH’s holiness’
* Trimming of lamps: Ex 27:21
* Burning of incense with coals from the altar: Exod 30:7-8
* Purpose
* Light during the night
* Representation of twelve tribes: shoulders and heart
* *Memorial* as divinely instituted act of intercession
* *Bearing the* *judgment* of the Israelites on the heart: Ex 28:30
* *Bearing the iniquity* of the Israelites and gaining the Lord’s *favour* for them: Ex 28:38

1. The ‘smoking up’ of the daily offering by the high priest
   * Washing of hands and feet from laver
   * Placement of meat from the lamb over the altar
   * Throwing of flour mixed with olive oil and incense on the altar
   * Pouring out of wine as libation
   * Performance of Aaronic benediction in front of the altar
   * Ritual purpose
     + Production of an aroma that pleases as a gift for the LORD: Ex 29:41
     + Performance of Lord’s song with the singing of psalms: 2 Chron 29:25-30
     + Consecration of the congregation for personal offerings: 2 Chron 29:31
       - Theological purpose: Ex 29:42-45 and Lev 9:6,23
         * Lord’s meeting with the priests and Israelites: audience
         * Lord’s speaking to the high priest or Israel
         * Consecration of tent, altar and priests by his glory
         * Dwelling among the Israelites to serve as their God
         * Regular theophany in the column of smoke: Lev 9:6
         * Bestowal of blessing: (Lev 9:23; cf. Ex 20:24; Num 6:22-27; Deut 10:8; 21:5; 1 Chron 23:13)

1. The holy meal

Eating of bread from flour in the court by the priests: Lev 6:14-18

Guests who eat ‘God’s bread’: Lev 21:22; cf. Lev 21:6,8,17,21;

22:25; Num 28:2

* Purpose
  + God’s provision most holy food for his servants as their ‘perpetual due’: Lev 6:17
  + Consecration by the most holy bread: Lev 6:18

**3. Our Inheritance of the Service**

1. Minimal evidence of direct historical influence

* Gospel of Luke: beginning and end in temple
* Acts: ongoing involvement
* Hebrews

1. Theological influence

* Divine service as audience with heavenly King
* Presentation of offerings
* Holy meal
* Ministry of Jesus as our high priest
* Intercession with Jesus as holy priesthood
* Performance of the Lord’s song
* Use of holy name in benediction