

## *SYLVIA'S CORNER*

### THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

Mormon men become what they believe to be Aaronic priests. Are they priests of the living God of the Bible? Let's see.

First, we need to look at how the priesthood was conferred on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. May 15, 1829, according to the Doctrine & Covenants 13, they claim to have been visited by John the Baptist.

Now according to what the church teaches, before receiving the priesthood, members must be baptized. And think about it, wouldn't John the Baptist be the perfect man for the job? After all, he certainly had the experience!

Yet this is what the church historians claim happened. They claim that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were both ordained by John, but not baptized. This would have rendered their priesthood invalid right there. They had not been baptized first as required by the church. So after being ordained, Joseph Smith baptized Oliver Cowdery, and Oliver Cowdery baptized Joseph Smith. Then they went through the whole process of Aaronic ordination AGAIN. Wasn't it good enough when John the Baptist did it the first time?

Can you see the fallacy here? If the Aaronic priesthood had no validity, how could Joseph have received the Melchizedek priesthood?

In contrast, how did the Aaronic priests in the Old Testament receive their priesthood? In Exodus 29:1-7, we have our answer. First, there had to be a sin offering of a bullock by the door of the tabernacle, in front of the congregation. This was to atone for the sins of Aaron and his sons. Then he had to be anointed with oil, symbolizing consecration. Moses was the one that consecrated Aaron as the first high priest of Israel. Think about it, wouldn't he have been the likely person to have conferred this priesthood on Joseph and Oliver if it was legitimate.

The Bible is very clear. No one could minister in the temple of God but the descendants from the tribe of Aaron. When the temple was rebuilt, and the Israelites returned from Babylon, there was doubt about which tribe many of them were from. That had to be

determined by Urim and Thummim. Until then, they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean. You can look up the scripture reference in Nehemiah 7:64 & 65.

When Jesus came to earth, He became our Great High Priest. More about that next time.