

LESSON 8 – THE FUNCTIONARIES



Assignments: Tapes 15
Textbook – Chapter 14
Bible: None

C) Religious Functionaries

1) Priestly hierarchy

- (a) High Priests - line of Zadok (1 Chr. 24:6)
- (b) Ordinary Priests - line of Aaron (1 Chr. 24:1)
- (c) Levites - line of Levi (1 Chr. 24:20)

2) After persecution of Antiochus (ca. 174 BC), the Zadok line ceased to rule as High Priests

- (a) During Herod's rule, the High Priest was appointed. Oftentimes "family dynasties" were favored through bribery
- (b) The "Hasmoneans" and the "dynasty of Annas" in New Testament times were prominent
- (c) "Chief priests" (cf. Acts 4:6) probably were the priestly aristocracy of Zadok

3) Divisions and responsibilities

- (a) The 24 divisions of David's day (1 Chr. 24:1-31) continued "unto this day" (Josephus). (cf. Luke 1:5ff)
- (b) Each division served either one or two weeks, no one served at the most only twice a year

Priests and Levites had their own residences and professions, but were still maintained by the offerings (Lk. 10:31 ff.; Acts 4:36)

4) The High Priest.

(a) From time of Herod through the New Testament period, the High Priest was appointed by the ruling officials--either one of the Herods or the Roman procurator

(b) Annas, who held office 6-15 AD, also dominated office until his death in 35 AD through his four sons and son-in-law

(1) Caiaphas, son-in-law (18-36 AD)

(2) Jonathan, Annas' son (36-37 AD)

(3) Theophilus, Annas' son (37-41 AD)

(4) Matthias, Annas' son (42-43 AD)

(5) Annas II, Annas' son (62 AD)

The temple business was referred to as "the bazaar of the sons of Annas" in later Jewish sources.

(c) The High Priests' power was limited by Rome as signified by the fact that from 6-36 AD his vestments were kept in the Fortress of Antonia.

(d) His duties included:

(1) Representing Jews before the God of Israel, especially on the festivals

(2) Representing people of Judea before the Roman procurator

- (3) Presiding over the Sanhedrin--the religious-political ruling body of the Jews worldwide-- the "council" in the AV.

(NOTE: Mt. 26:3; John. 18:24; Acts 4:5,6; 5:21; 22:5)

Sanhedrin was the later development of the "Men of the Great Assembly" during Ezra's time

Composed of 70 members plus the High Priest
(cf. Num. 11:16)

They met in the "Chamber of Hewn Stone" in the Temple, but minor committees might meet elsewhere

(cf. "night sessions" during the "trials" of Jesus)

Had authority over all religious and even political issues of the Jews as long as not contradicting Roman laws and taxes.

D) Development of the "Oral Law"

- 1) Most scholars today (Jewish and Gentile) recognize that the oral law originated with Ezra and the "Men of the Great Synagogue" after the captivity during the 5th Century BC
- 2) An attempt was made to build a "hedge" around the Mosaic law by additional regulations and commands to help prevent the breaking of the original command.
- 3) These regulations were still "oral" in Jesus' day and are referred to by Him as "the tradition of the elders."
(see Mk. 7:1-13 and also Mt. 5:21-48).
- 4) Later generations traced the authority of this "oral law" back to Sinai.

- (a) Chapters of the Fathers (Pirke Avot) describes the following "chain" of tradition:

"Moses received Torah from Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets delivered it to the Men of the Great Synagogue. These said three things: Be deliberate in judging, raise up many disciples, and make a hedge for the Torah." (1:1)

(b) The following verses of Pirke Avot are summarized below:

Moses

Joshua

Elders Prophets

Men of Great Synagogue

Simeon the Just

Jose ben Joezer, Jose ben Johanan	} ---- Pairs
Jehoshua ben Perajah, Nittai the Arbelite	
Judah ben Tabbai, Simeon ben Shetah	
Shemaiah, Abtalion	
Hillel, Shammai (ca. 1 AD)	

Rabban Gamaliel	} ---- Pairs
Rabban Simeon I	
Rabban Gamaliel II	
Rabban Simeon II	
Rabbi Judah ha Nasi (ca. 200 AD)	

(c) The most notable of these were Hillel and Shammai

(d) Judah ha Nasi reduced the burgeoning “oral law” to writing--it was called the Mishna, the “core” of what was later called the “Talmud.”

Mishna in Hebrew (200 AD)

Gemara in Aramaic (400 AD)



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