



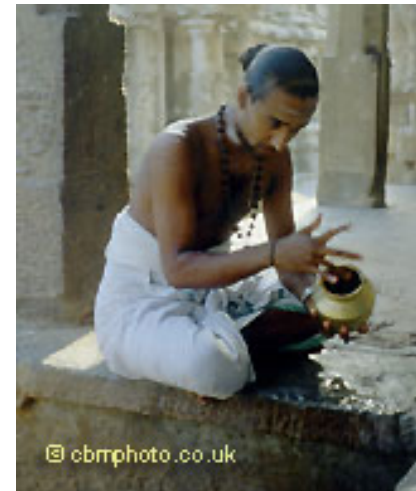
# The Priesthood of Judaism

*Leadership in the  
Old Testament*

# Introduction



**one authorized to perform the sacred rites of a religion, especially as a mediatory agent between humans and God**



# A Hindu Priest's Day



**6am: Rise and prayer**

**7am: 1<sup>st</sup> bath followed by morning duties (washing and cleaning)**

**8am: Breakfast (lower ranks to feed gods and bathe them)**

**9am: Teaching and meeting of people's or other matters on hand**

**11am: 2<sup>nd</sup> bath and prayers**

**12pm: Lunch followed by rest and feeding of gods**

**1pm: Other duties (funerals, prayers, advice)**

**3pm: 3<sup>rd</sup> bath plus washing and dressing of gods**

**4pm: Priestly rites (sacrifice)**

**6pm: Dinner and further meditation (feeding of gods)**

**7pm: Closing and cleaning of temple**

A close-up photograph of an ancient Egyptian mummy's face, showing the eyes, nose, and mouth. The mummy is wrapped in traditional yellow and black striped bandages. The word "Egyptian" is written in a white, stylized, cursive font across the center of the face. The entire image is framed by a white border with a grey shadow effect.

Egyptian

# Egyptian Priesthood

- **Election and types of priests**
- **Purification laws**
- **Duties**



# Election & Types

## **Egyptian belief:**

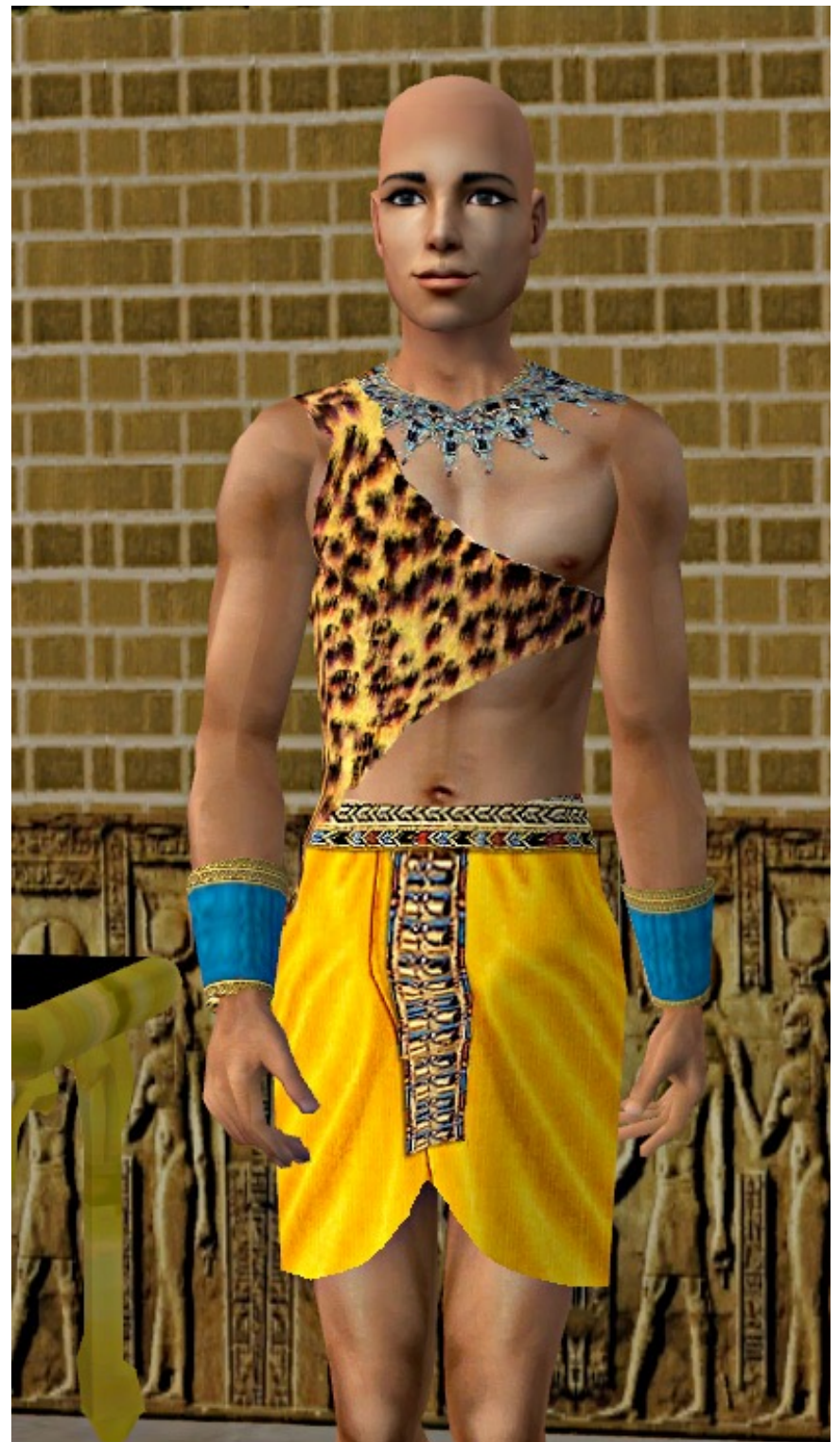
- **World created, ordered and governed by gods through pharaoh**
- **A god for every aspect of life, even in putting on make-up**
- **The gods must be honoured and attended to every day or life is threatened**

# Election & Types

**Priesthood may be:**

- **Conferred by the pharaoh**
- **Inherited from father by son, grandson or other family member**
- **Purchased**

**Priesthood coveted for its privileges & prestige**



# Election & Types

- **Chief priest – Pharaoh**
- **High priest – Pharaoh's political advisor; oversees magical rites and ceremonies**
- **Lector priest (*kher heb*) – recites sacred ritual and religious texts**
- **"Specialist" priests – in charge of horology, astrology and healing**

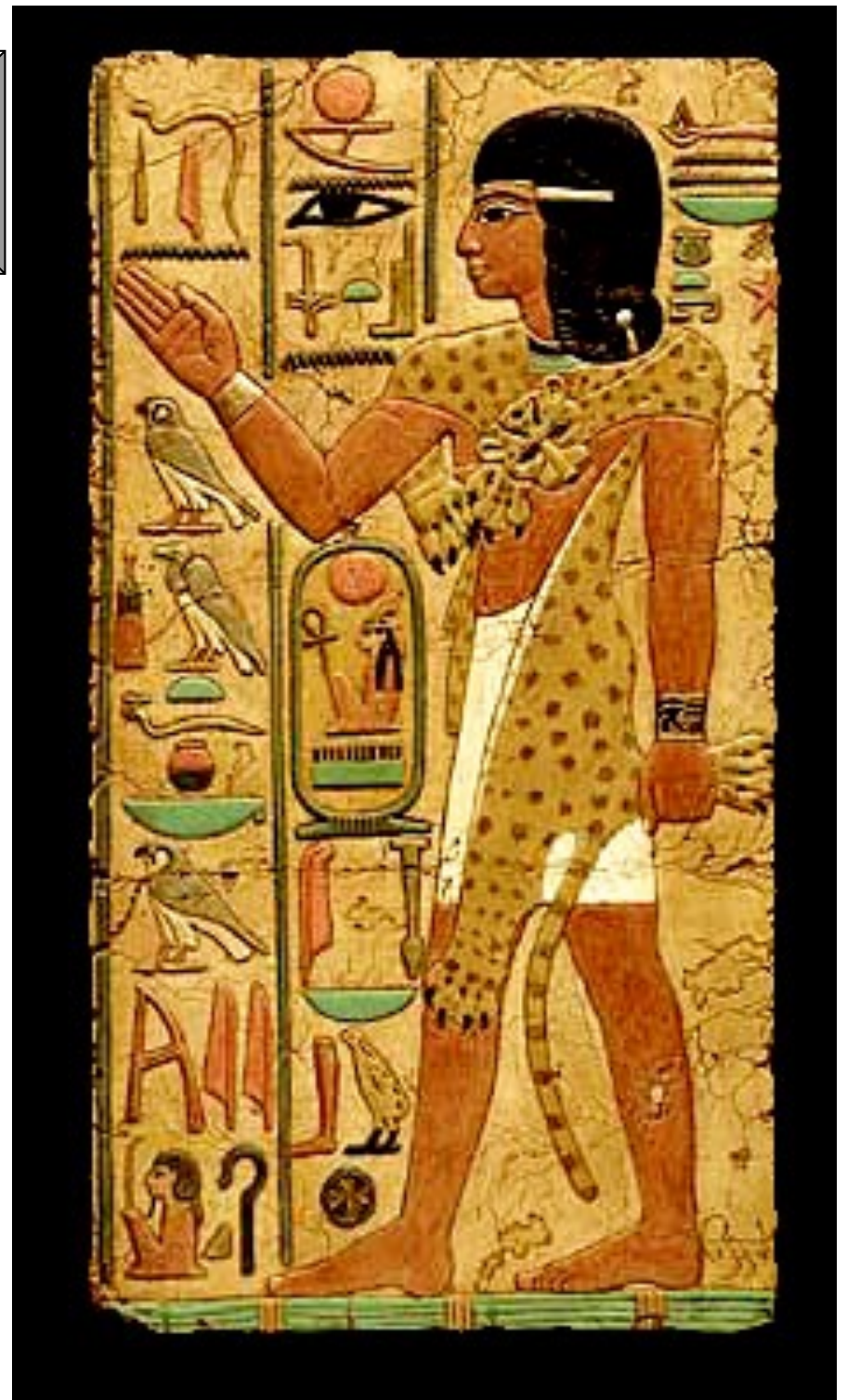


- **Lay magicians – community service providers (e.g. counseling, magical arts, healing)**
- **Scribes – writing magical texts, issuing royal decrees, maintaining records**
- **Priestesses – singing, music and dance**



# Election & Types

- **Priests had secular careers**
- **May marry and have children**
- **Called to duty one month in three**
- **Organised in four phyles**



# Purification Laws

## **Before temple service:**

- **Must wash**
- **Must shave**
- **Must abstain from sexual activity**
- **Must avoid certain food (e.g., fish)**
- **Must avoid wearing wool or leather**



# Duties

- **Not to proselytise**
- **Not to spread teaching about god's superiority**
- **Not to oversee people's spiritual or moral welfare**
- **Not to perform acts of appeasement or sacrifice for the benefit of people**

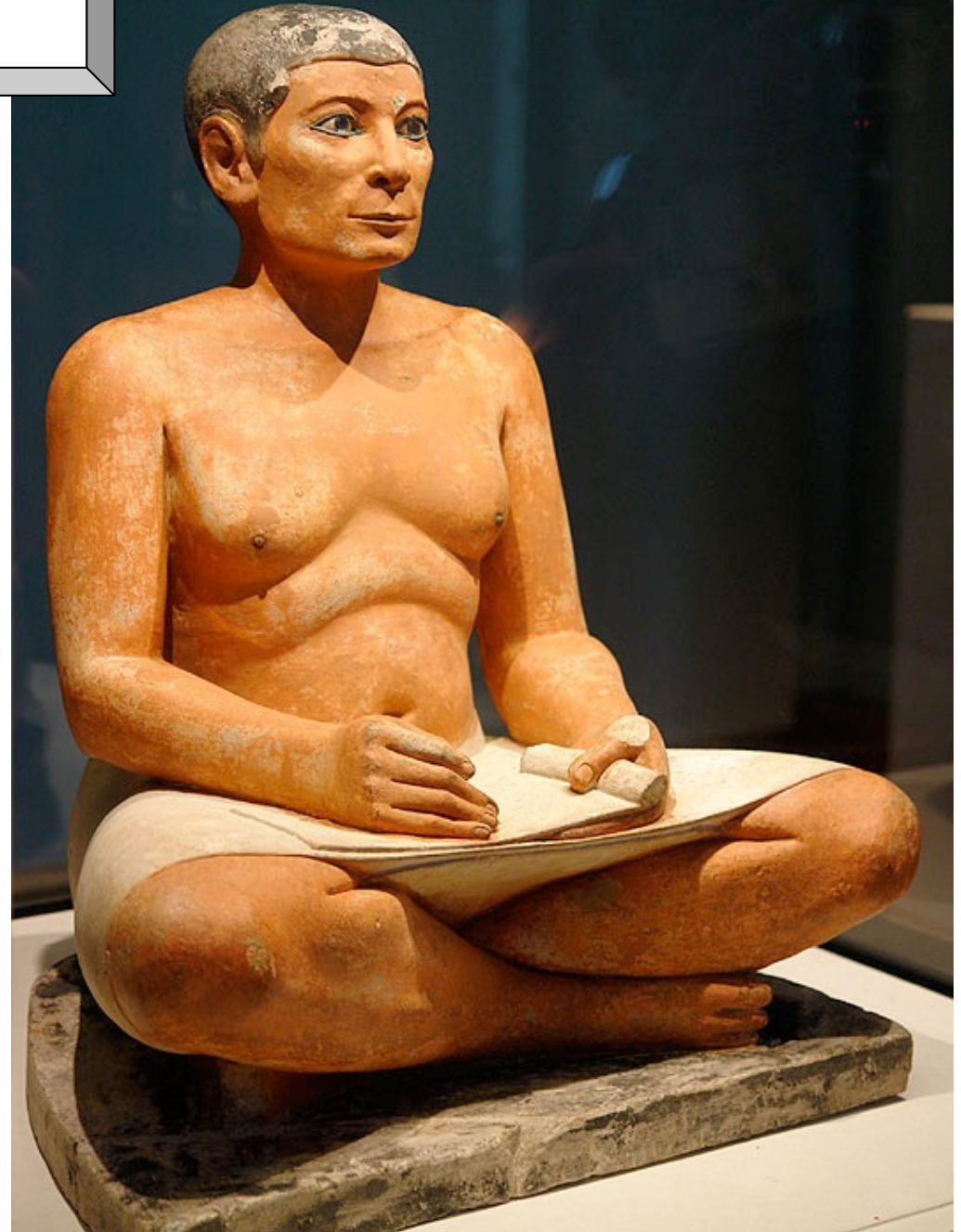


# Embalming of Priests



# Duties

- **To honour and attend to gods every day**
- **Festivals and feast days ceremonies**
- **Non-religious duties**



# Zoroastrianism



# Singapore

SOUVENIR COVER



Golden Jubilee of  
**THE \*PARSI  
ZOROASTRIAN  
ASSOCIATION**  

---

SOUTH EAST ASIA \* SINGAPORE  

---

1954 - 2004



3000th Anniversary  
of Zoroastrian Culture

■ Atharvans (Fire priests)

■ Magi



**Priestly Hierarchy**

## ***Initiation***



- 1. Acquired occupation and not a hereditary profession.**
- 2. Aspirant (young/old, male/female) could train for the priesthood.**
- 3. Rigorous training required.**

# Religious Duties

- **Priestly training began at the age of 7.**
- **Learning to recite the Avesta and other texts of the Yasna Liturgy.**
- **Feeding the Avesta fire in temple perpetually with sandalwood whilst reciting the Avesta from heart.**





## Conducting of Ceremonies:

- Navzote (new initiation ceremony)
- Burial
- Sacrifices

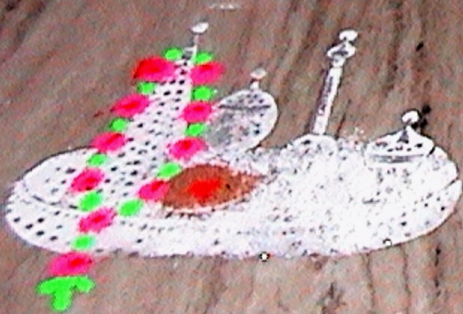


NAVJOTE  
MUBARAK

USHTA TE

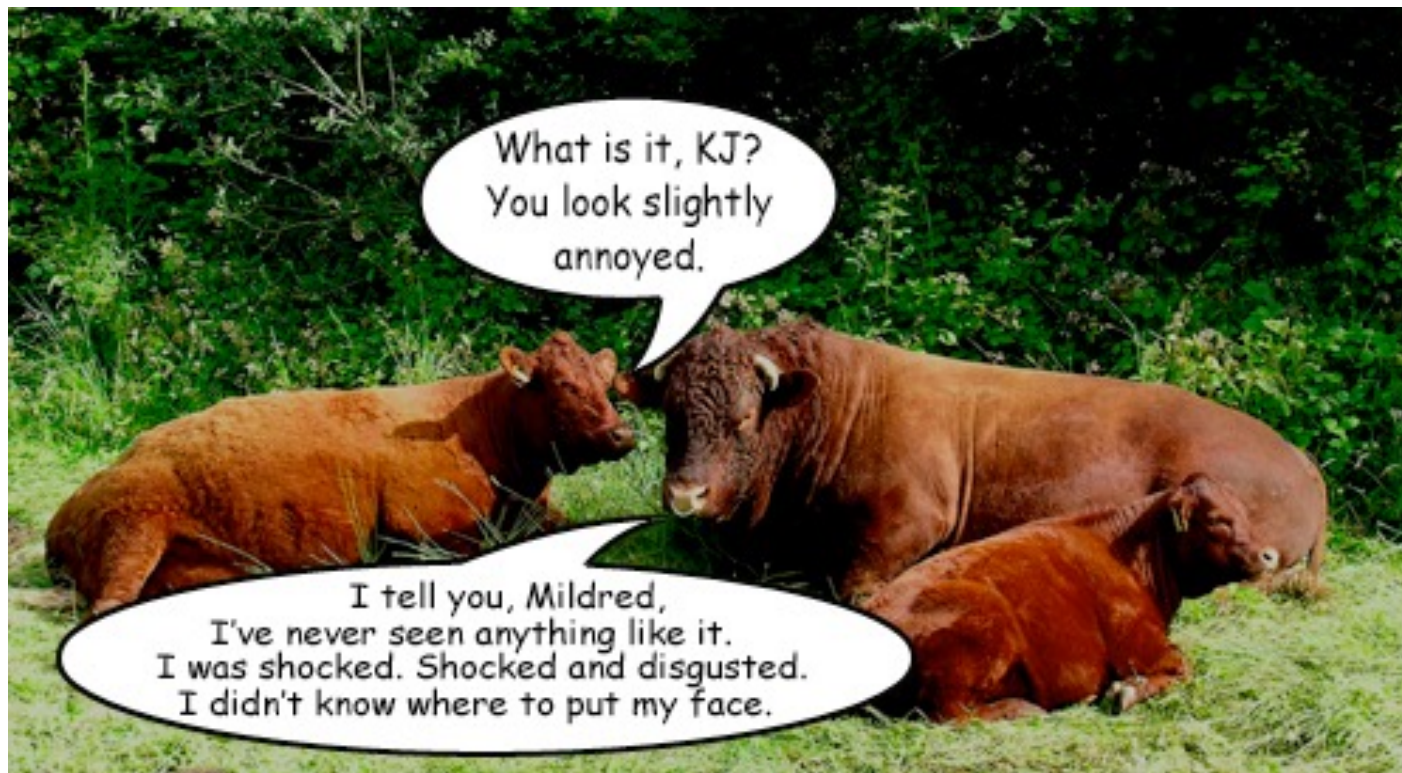


USHTA TE



# Laws

- Great focus on purity and cleanliness:**
- **Food, clothes and bathing**
  - **Drinking of "consecrated bull" urine**
  - **No unclean animals**



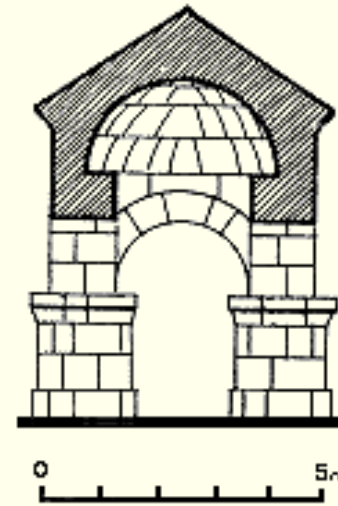
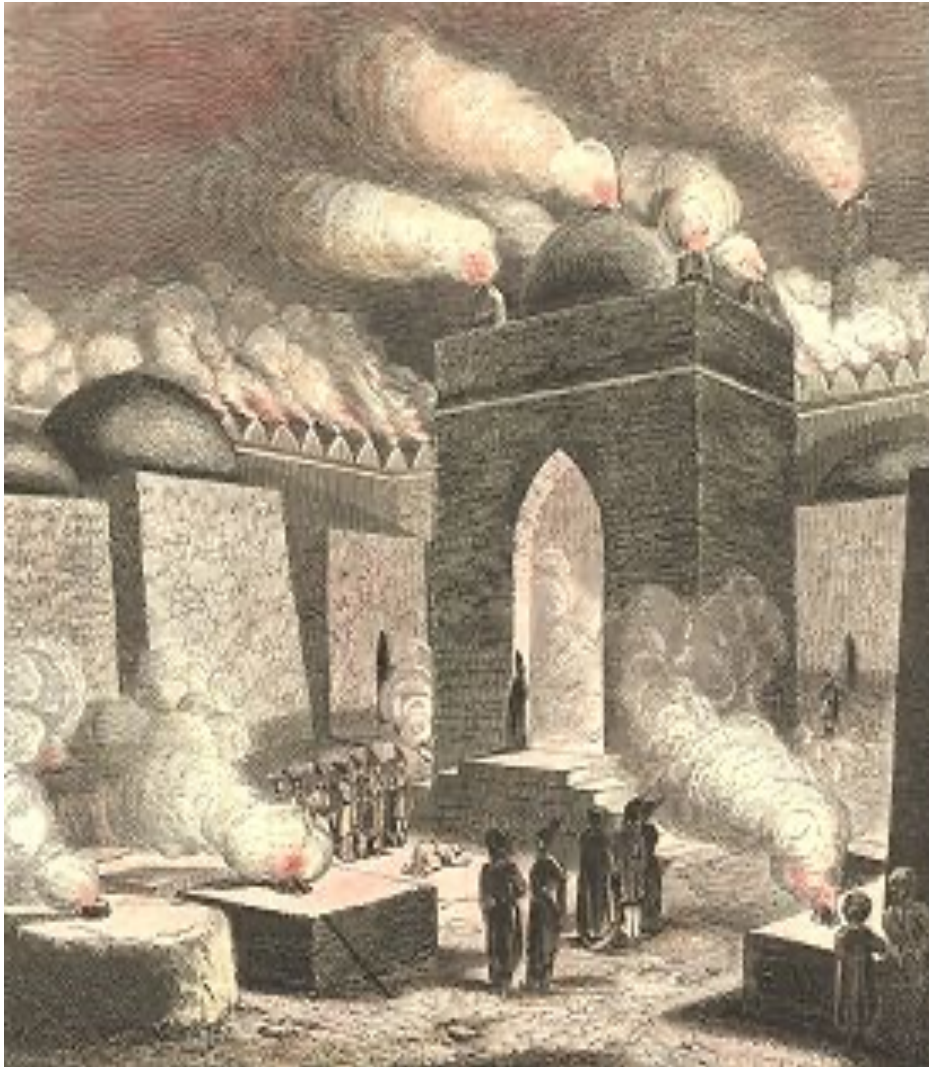
- **Wearing of the white Sudreh to indicate purity**
- **Kusti made of lamb wool to remind us to respect the animal Kingdom**
- **Like a barrier which protects because of spiritual energy in them**
- **Whilst tending the fire, one has to wear a veil to prevent the spittle from polluting the fire.**



- **Marriage is a must due to the high regards of marriage to the religion**
- **Must be kept away from the dead.**



# Dwelling



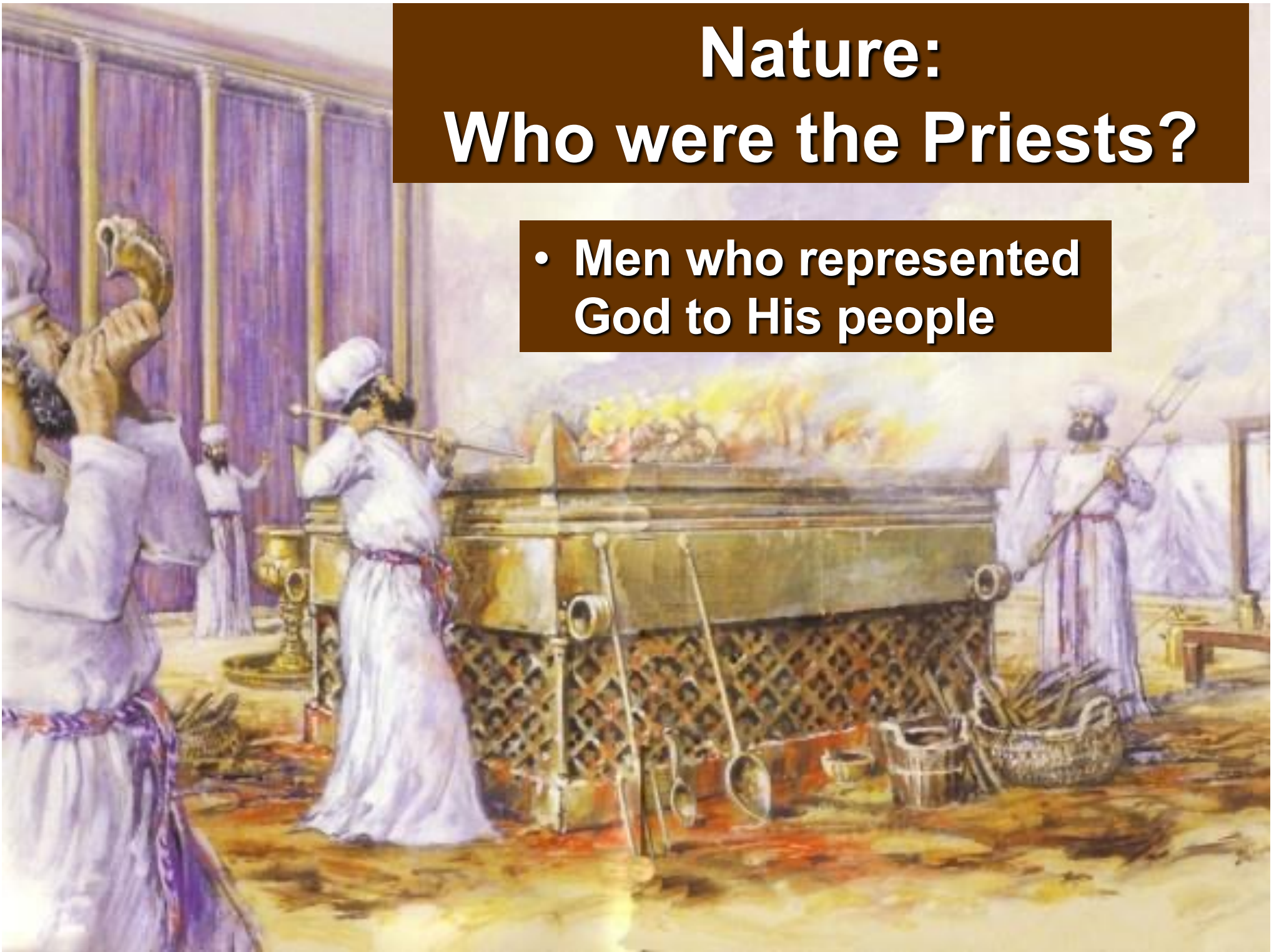
# The Levitical Priesthood

- Nature
- Requirements
- Uniqueness



# Nature: Who were the Priests?

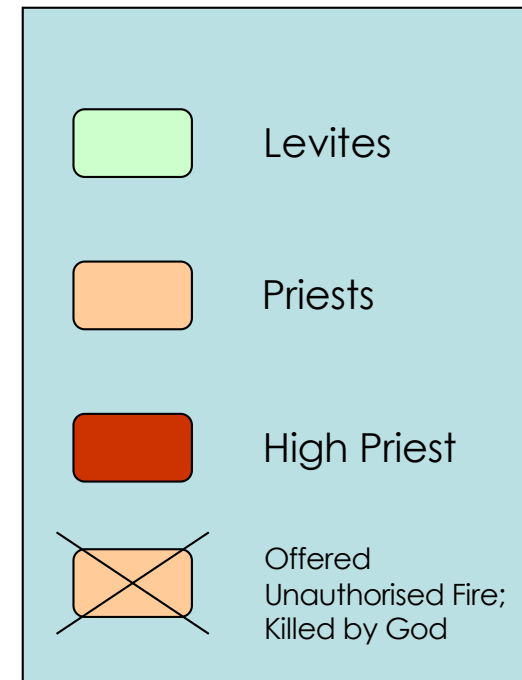
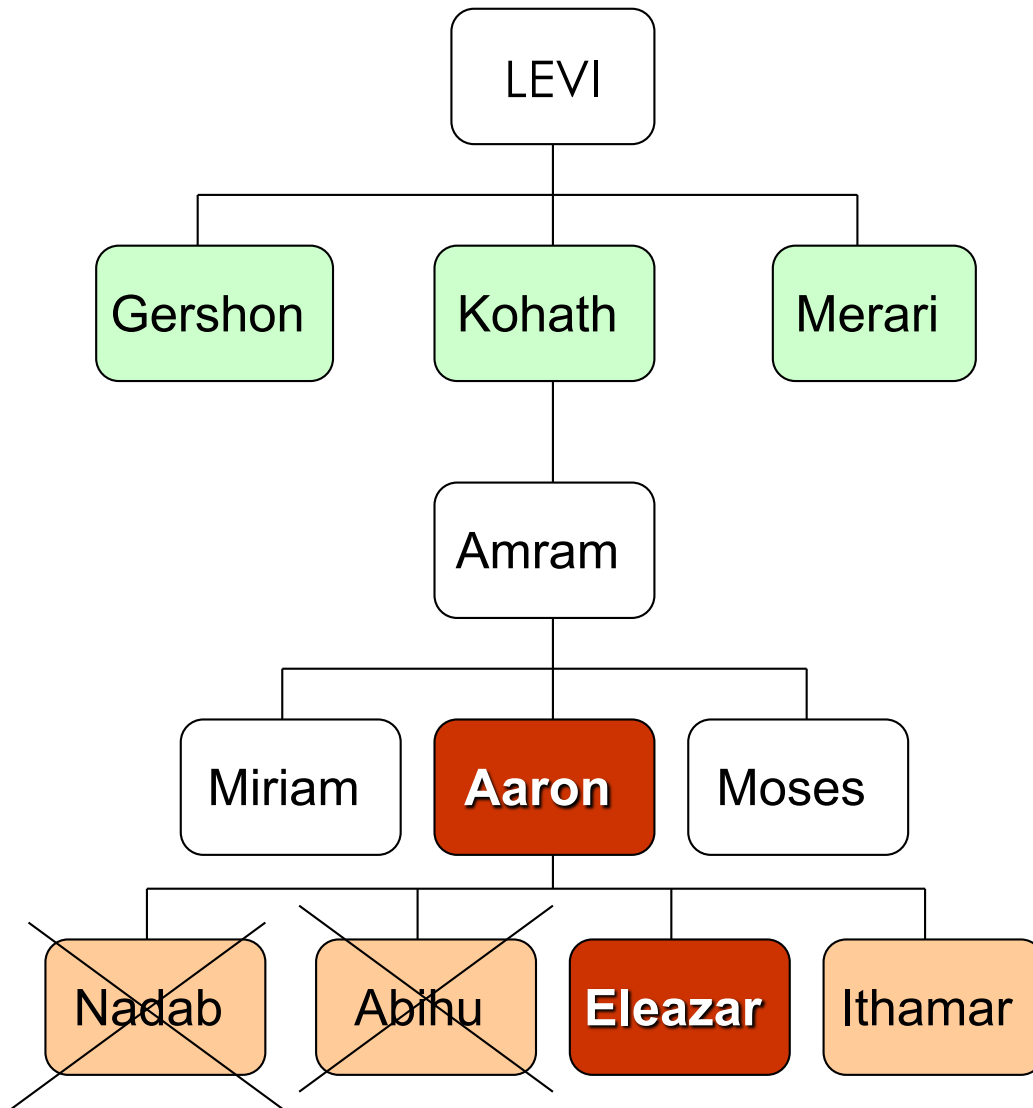
- Men who represented God to His people





# The Priestly Line

166d





# Levites

## Election

- **Age of Service**
  - **25-50**
  - **After 50 years old:**  
semi-retired,  
serving limited duties
  - **20-50**
    - **After David established  
permanent site for the ark**

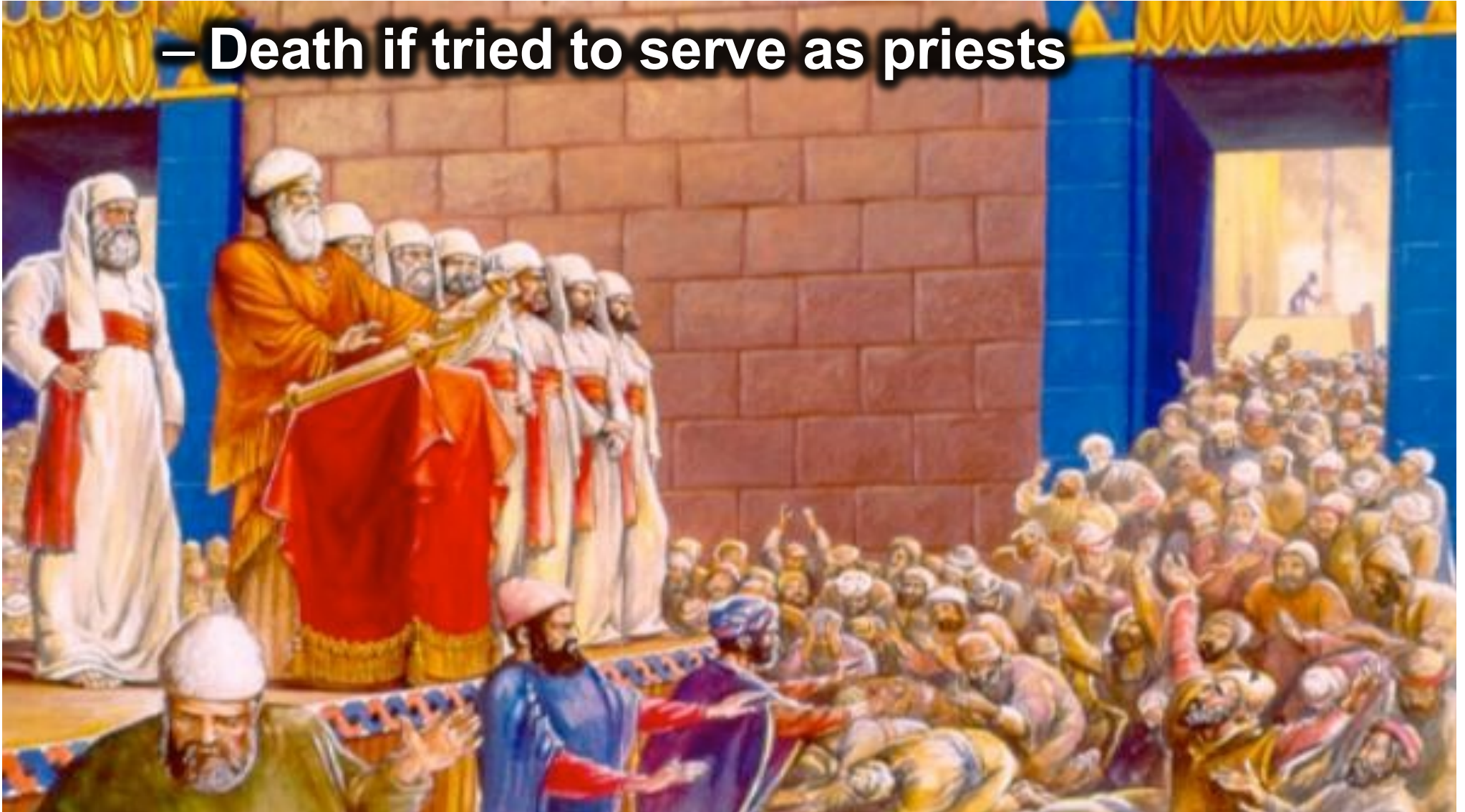


# Levites

- **Duties**

- Set apart from other Israelites

- Death if tried to serve as priests



# Levites

- **Service of the Tabernacle:**

- **Sons of Kohath carry furniture of the tabernacle**



- **Sons of Gershon care for the covering, screen, and hangings**

- **Sons of Merari carry and erect the frame of the court and tabernacle**

# Levites

## In David's reign:

- Musicians/Singers
- Gatekeepers - ministering in the temple of the LORD
- Treasurers and Other Officials



# Priests



- **Introduction/Background**
  - **From days between conquest of Canaan and establishment of Monarchy**
  - **general laxness of worship**
    - e.g., Samuel was an Ephraimite  
Micah's priest (Judges 17, 18)

# Leviticus 21 Requirements: What Did it Take to Be a Priest?

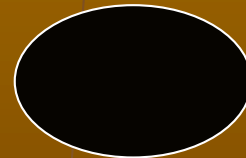
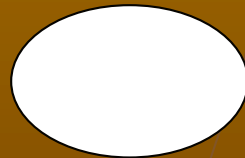
1. Ritually clean (1-4)
2. No shaven heads, beards, or bodies (5)
3. Marriage to a divorcee or former harlot prohibited (7, 14)
4. Not physically disabled (17-21)



# Garments of the High Priest



- Turban (gold plate over forehead)
- Tunic (white fine linen shirt)
- Undergarments (linen from waist to thigh)
- Robe (blue with bells & pomegranates)
- Ephod (gold, blue, and purple with onyx stones)
- Sash (belt to hold the garments together)
- Breastpiece
- Urim & Thummin



Exodus 28

# The Jewish High Priest

- Atoned for sins of the people on the Day of Atonement
- Type of Christ



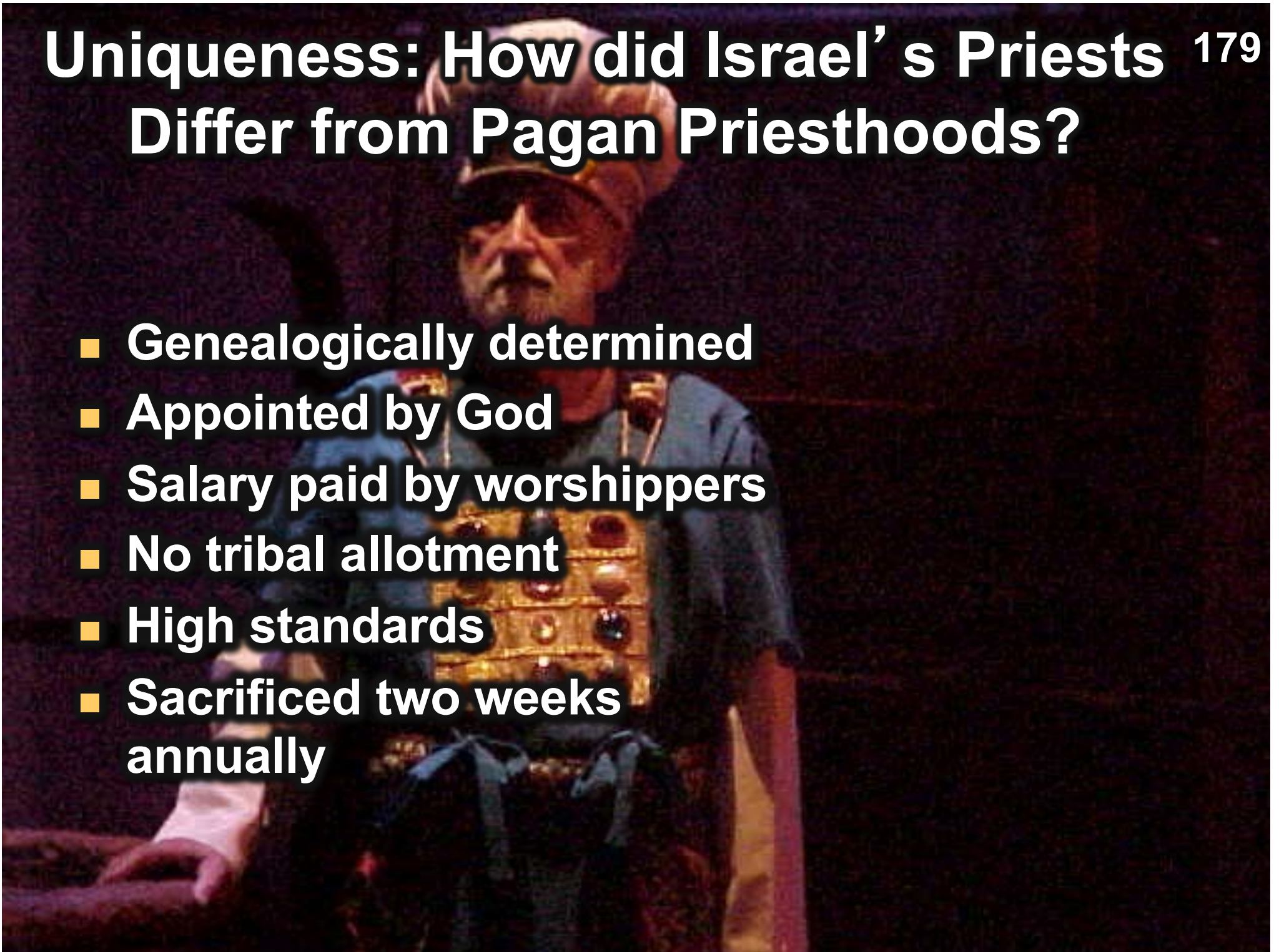
# Contrasting Levites and Priests

166d

	<b>Levites</b>	<b>Priests</b>
<b>Descendants of...</b>	Levi	Aaron (also a descendant of Levi)
<b>Population</b>	Many (the larger group)	Few (a subset of the Levites, Josh. 21:4)
<b>Role</b>	Assisted priests and supervised religious activities permitted outside of the sanctuary: teaching, singing, leading worship, officials, administration, judges & gatekeepers	Mediators between God and Israel
<b>Sacrificial Role</b>	Couldn't offer sacrifices nor incense (Num. 16:2-7, 38)	Offered sacrifices and incense (Deut. 33:10b)
<b>Location of Homes</b>	Extensive—in 35 cities throughout the tribes in the central, northern, and eastern parts of Israel (Josh. 21:5-7)	Limited to 13 cities in Judah, Simeon, & Benjamin that were near the temple (Josh. 21:4, 9-13)

# Uniqueness: How did Israel's Priests <sup>179</sup> Differ from Pagan Priesthoods?

- Genealogically determined
- Appointed by God
- Salary paid by worshippers
- No tribal allotment
- High standards
- Sacrificed two weeks annually



# Uniqueness: How did Israel's Priests <sup>179</sup> Differ from Pagan Priesthoods?

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- High standards
- Sacrifices annually

**The point:  
Israel's priesthood did not  
follow the patterns of the  
pagan nations**

# Priests

- **Introduction/Background**
  - **In Numbers**
    - Known as "the sons of Aaron"
  - **In Deuteronomy**
    - Known as "the priests, who are the Levites" (NIV) or "the priest the Levites" (KJV).
    - In view that different portions are ascribed to the priests and Levites
      - Priests and Levites were still distinct
  - **In Joshua**
    - Distinction between the priests and Levites is clearly maintained



# Priests



- **Introduction/Background**
  - **In Numbers**
    - Known as "the sons of Aaron"

– **In Deuteronomy**

**Male descendants of Levi & Aaron**

of the  
priests and

– **Priests and Levites were still distinct**

– **In Joshua**

- **Distinction between the priests and Levites is clearly maintained**

# Priests

- **Ordination of Aaron and sons**
  - whole process took seven days
  - Aaron and his sons were not to leave the sanctuary
  - Includes preparation, anointing the priests and offering of sacrifices



"Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock."—Gen. viii. 14

# Priests

- **Priests' Responsibilities**
  - To maintain ceremonial cleanliness
  - To teach God's law to the Israelites



# Priests

- **Duties in addition to care of sanctuary:**
  - function as judges in difficult decisions
  - regulate the control of lepers
  - guard the book of law
  - assist Moses with the ceremony of covenant renewal



# Priests

- receive restitution for wrong if the victim has no next of kin
- conduct test for an unfaithful wife
- teach God's law to Israelites

**In Joshua's time, the priests carried the ark of the Lord.**



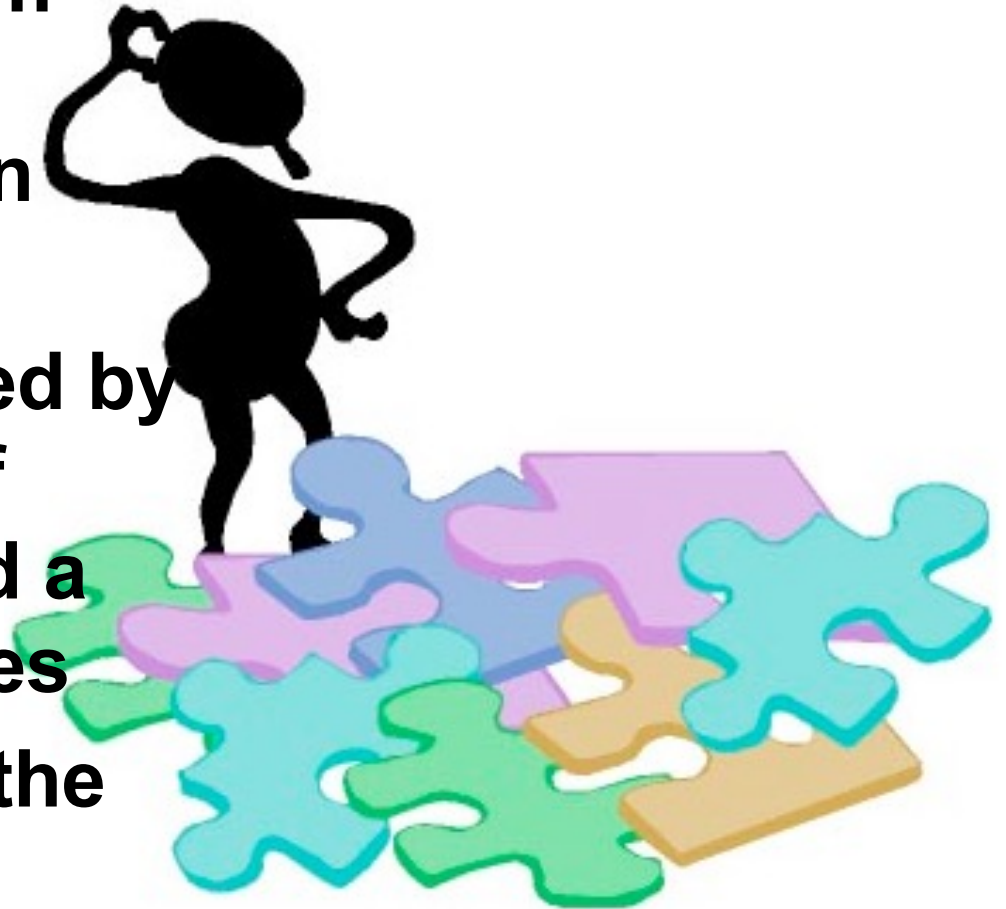
# Priests

- **Consecration rules:**
  - **Must be holy because they present the offering made to the LORD**
  - **Must not shave their heads or edges of their beards or cut their bodies**
  - **Must not marry divorcees or prostitutes**
  - **Must be without any defects**
  - **Must refrain from alcohol before duty in the sanctuary**



# Priests

- **Privileges**
  - had no land inheritance but had 13 towns from the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin
  - received parts of the offering not consumed by sacrifice, firstlings of flocks and herds, and a tenth of Levitical tithes
  - sometimes received the spoil of battles



# Priests

- **Ordination:**
  - anointing oil poured on his head
  - wore priestly garments
- **Rules:**
  - must not uncover his head or tear clothes
  - the woman he marries
    - must be a virgin of his own people
    - must not be a widow or divorced or defiled by prostitution
- **Duties:**
  - routine duties like other priests
  - on the Day of Atonement
    - Represented people of Israel, sprinkling the blood of sacrificial goat on the mercy seat



Aaron

Eleazar

Eldest Rep.

# The Priesthood of Jesus Christ



# Election

- 1) Appointed by God yet is God (Heb. 5:5)
- 2) Appointed by God's oath (Heb. 7:21)



# Duties

- 1) **Atoned for sin to reconcile man and God**
- 2) **Intercedes for God's people (Heb. 7:25)**



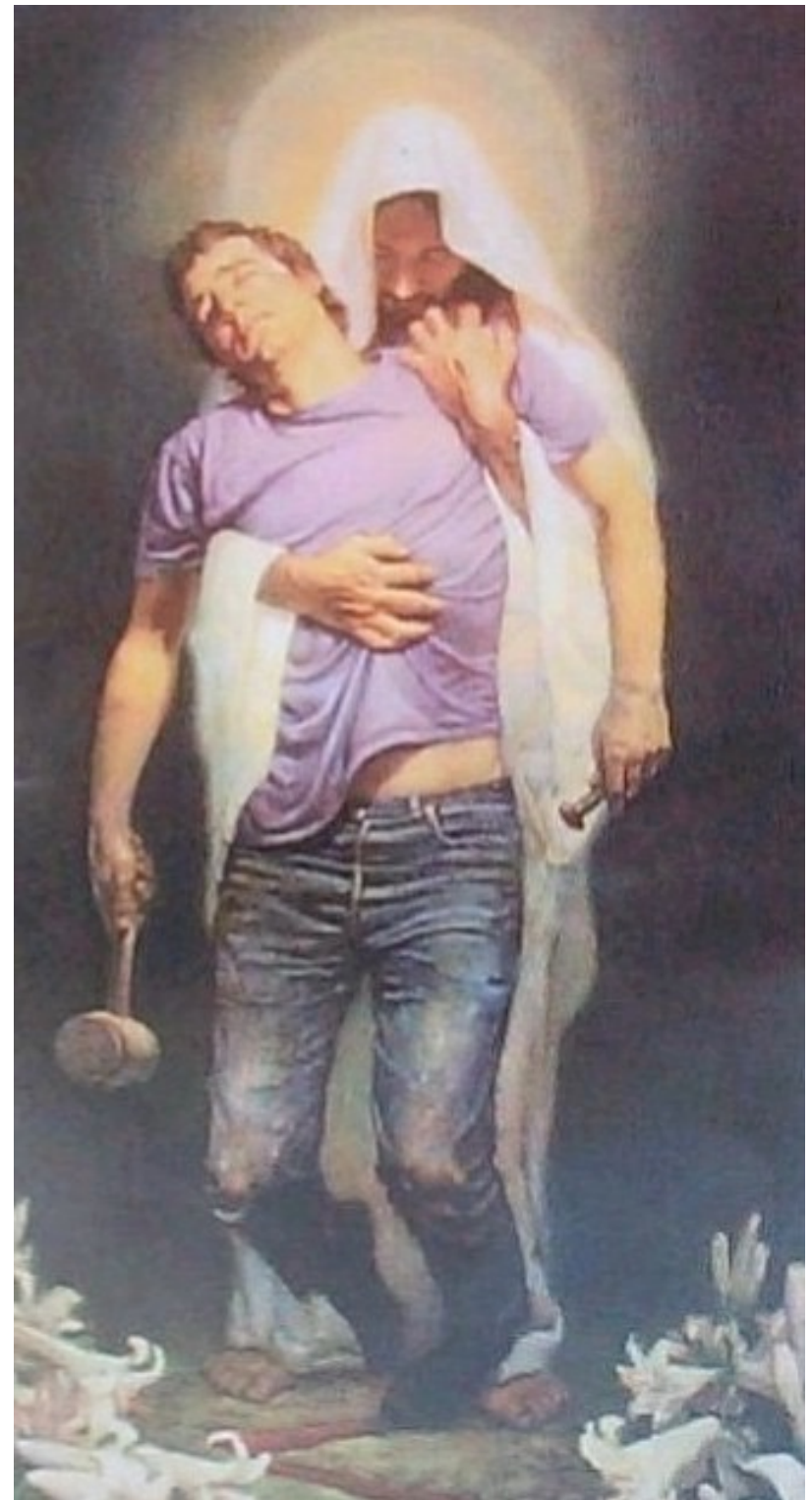
	<b>Aaronic priests</b>	<b>Jesus Christ</b>
<b>Heredity</b>	<b>Must descend from Aaron from the tribe of Levi</b>	<b>Descendant of Judah</b>
<b>Priestly order</b>	<b>Aaron</b>	<b>Melchizedek</b>
<b>Appointed</b>	<b>by God without oath</b>	<b>by God on oath</b>
<b>Personality</b>	<b>Sinful man</b>	<b>Sinless Son of Man</b>
<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Life</b>	<b>Eternity</b>
<b>Duties</b>	<b>Offered animal sacrifices for atonement of sins</b>	<b>Offered himself for atonement of sins</b>
<b>Place of service</b>	<b>Itinerant tabernacle or temple in Jerusalem</b>	<b>Outside Jerusalem</b>
<b>Efficacy of sacrifice</b>	<b>Annual offering</b>	<b>Once for all</b>
<b>Effect of service</b>	<b>Obtained forgiveness for the sins of the Jews annually</b>	<b>Obtained forgiveness for the sins of the world forever Opened access for all believers to God</b>
<b>Current work</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Intercession for believers at the right hand of God</b>

# The Priesthood of believers



# Our Election

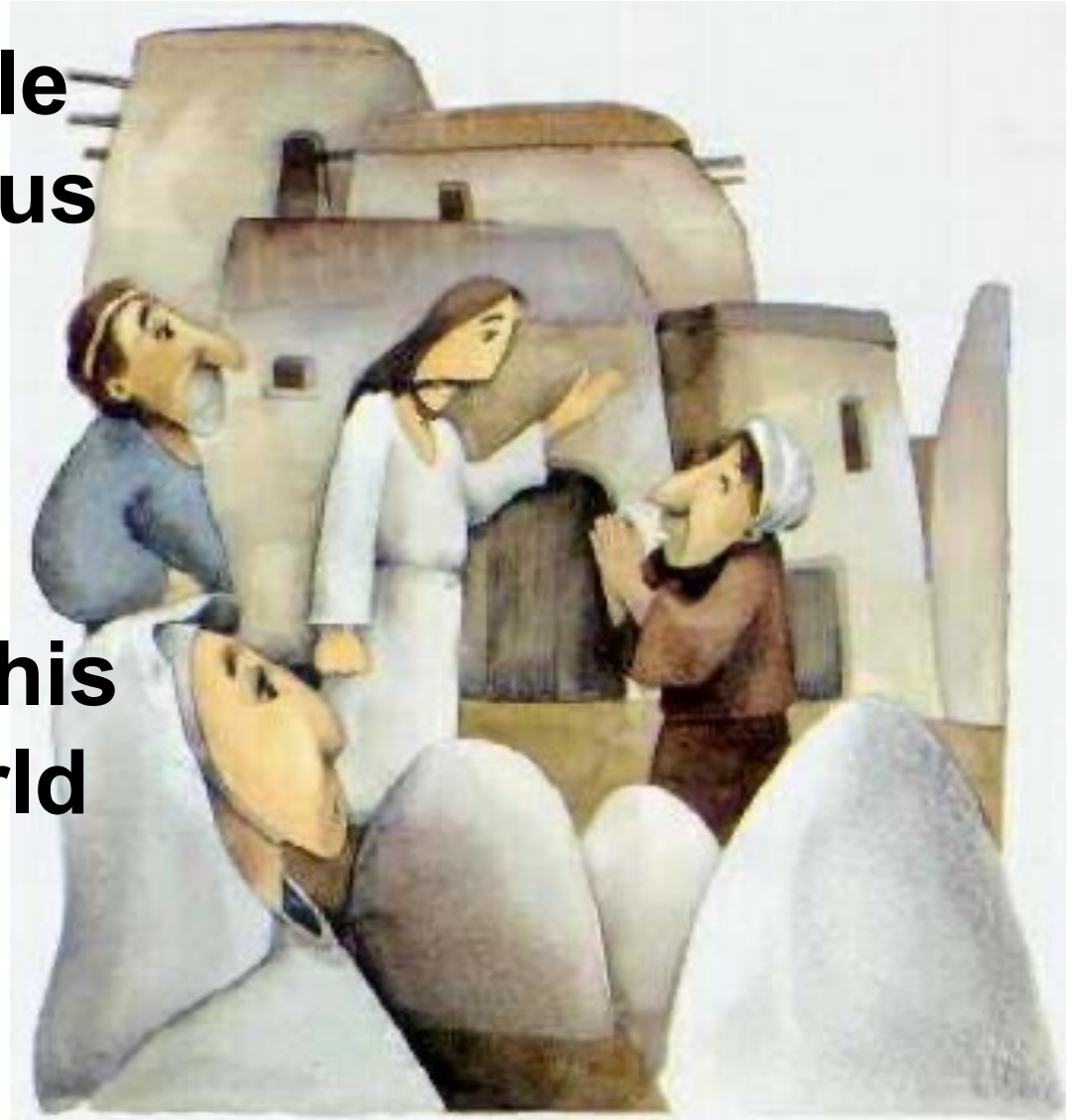
- 1) Heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his purpose (Heb. 6:17)
- 2) Royal Priesthood and chosen (1 Pet. 2:9)



# Our Duties

**1) To offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:5)**

**2) To declare God's wonderful deeds (1 Pet. 2:9) and share his salvation to the world (Matt. 28:19-20).**



# Our Laws



**1) Inward purification of the believer by indwelling of Holy Spirit.**

**2) Outward purification of the believer by Spirit-led living.**

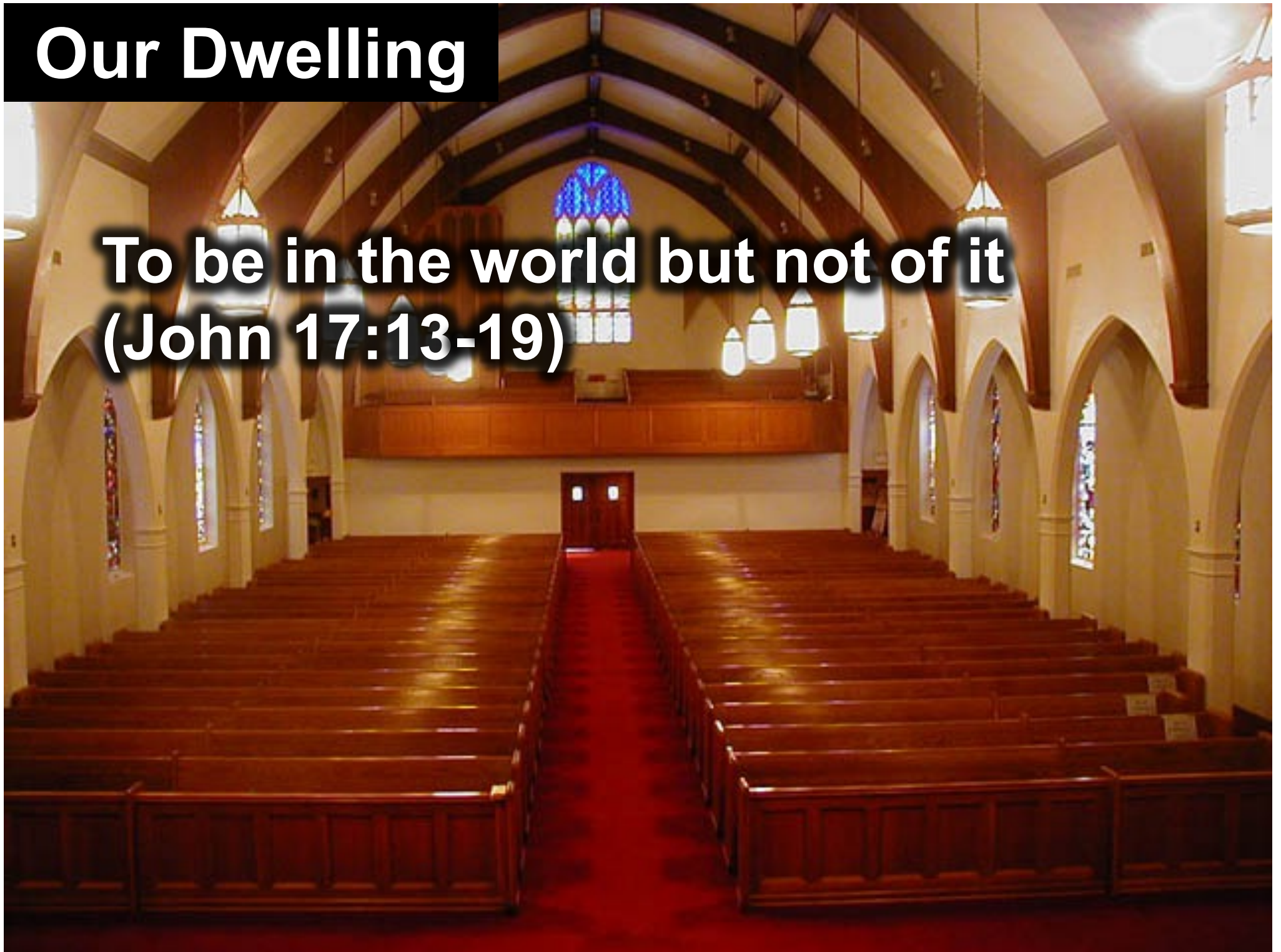
**The believer is exhorted to:**

**(a) Live for righteousness (1 Pet. 2:24)**

**(b) Live for holiness (1 Pet. 1:14-16)**

# Our Dwelling

**To be in the world but not of it  
(John 17:13-19)**



# Conclusion

- 1. Christians, male and female, are called believer priests today.**
- 2. The NT priesthood functions are simpler than those of pagan and OT priesthoods.**

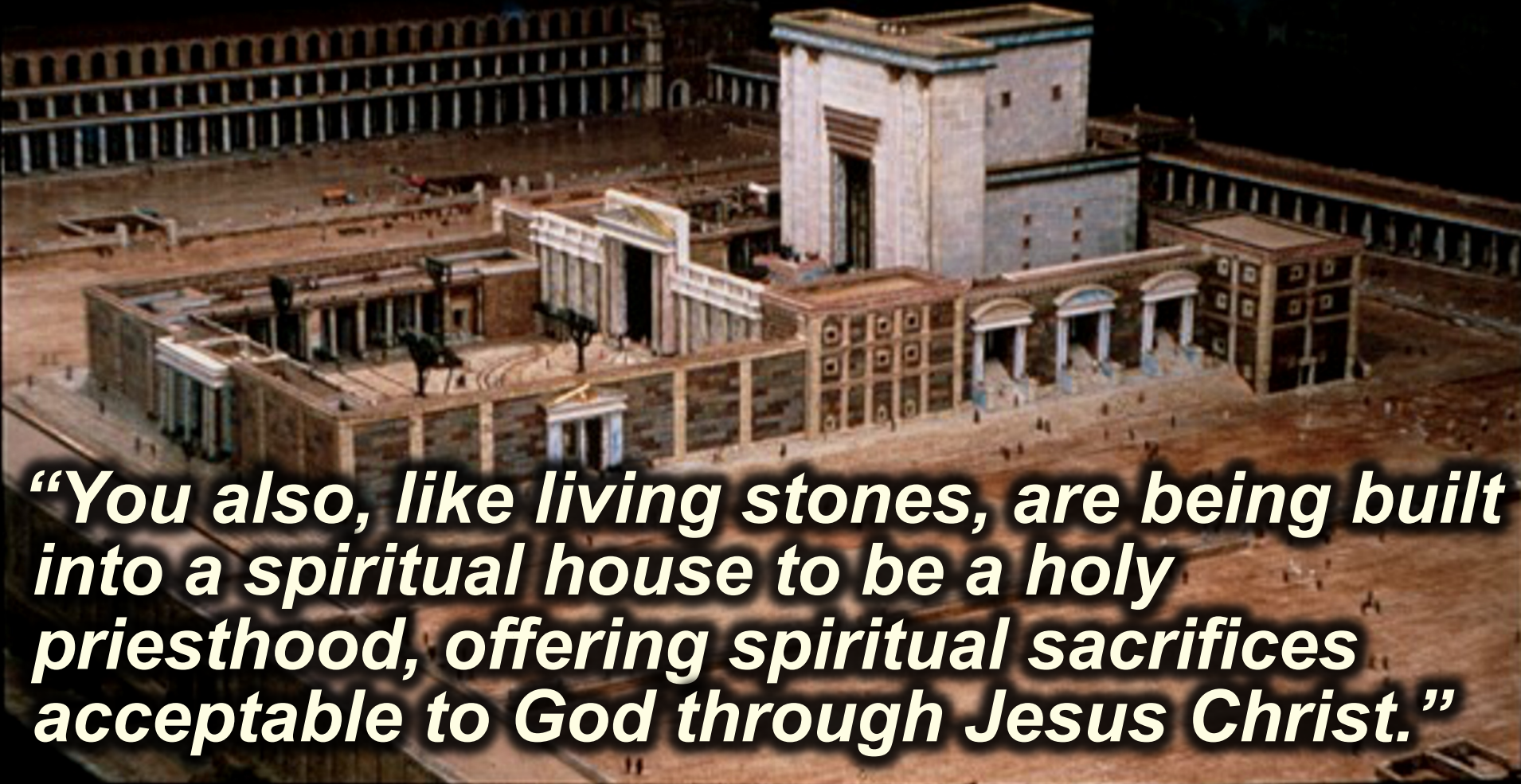
## **Essentials of the NT priesthood:**

- a) No need for human mediator between man and God**
- b) Direct and personal relationship with God**
- c) Serve one supreme God, not a pantheon of gods**
- d) Moral standing from a moral God who justifies**
- e) No need for animal sacrifices to atone for sins;  
sacrifices are praise and prayer and godly living**
- f) A priesthood that celebrates life as a sacrifice, not death**
- g) The duty and privilege to keep in step with the Spirit**



**Christ's yoke was heavy, but the yoke he gives to us is easy and the burden light. May we in our busy schedules and lifestyles find rest even as we serve God in our lives.**

## 1 Peter 2:5 (NIV)



***“You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”***

# Two Questions:

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church?
2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?



International  
Baptist Church Singapore

Sharing the Love of God

# I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation



# Congregational Authority

- In Church Discipline (Matt. 18:17)

*“Take it to the church...”*

- In Leader Selection (Acts 6:3)

*“Choose... from among you...”*

- In Maintaining True Doctrine:

*“For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you...” (1 Cor. 11:23)*

*“Friends... test the spirits” (1 John 4:1)*

*“Contend for the faith” (Jude 3)*

# Episcopal Church Structure (Simplified)



**Bishop**

**Vicar**

**Vicar**

**Vicar**

**Deacons**

**Deacons**

**Deacons**

**People**

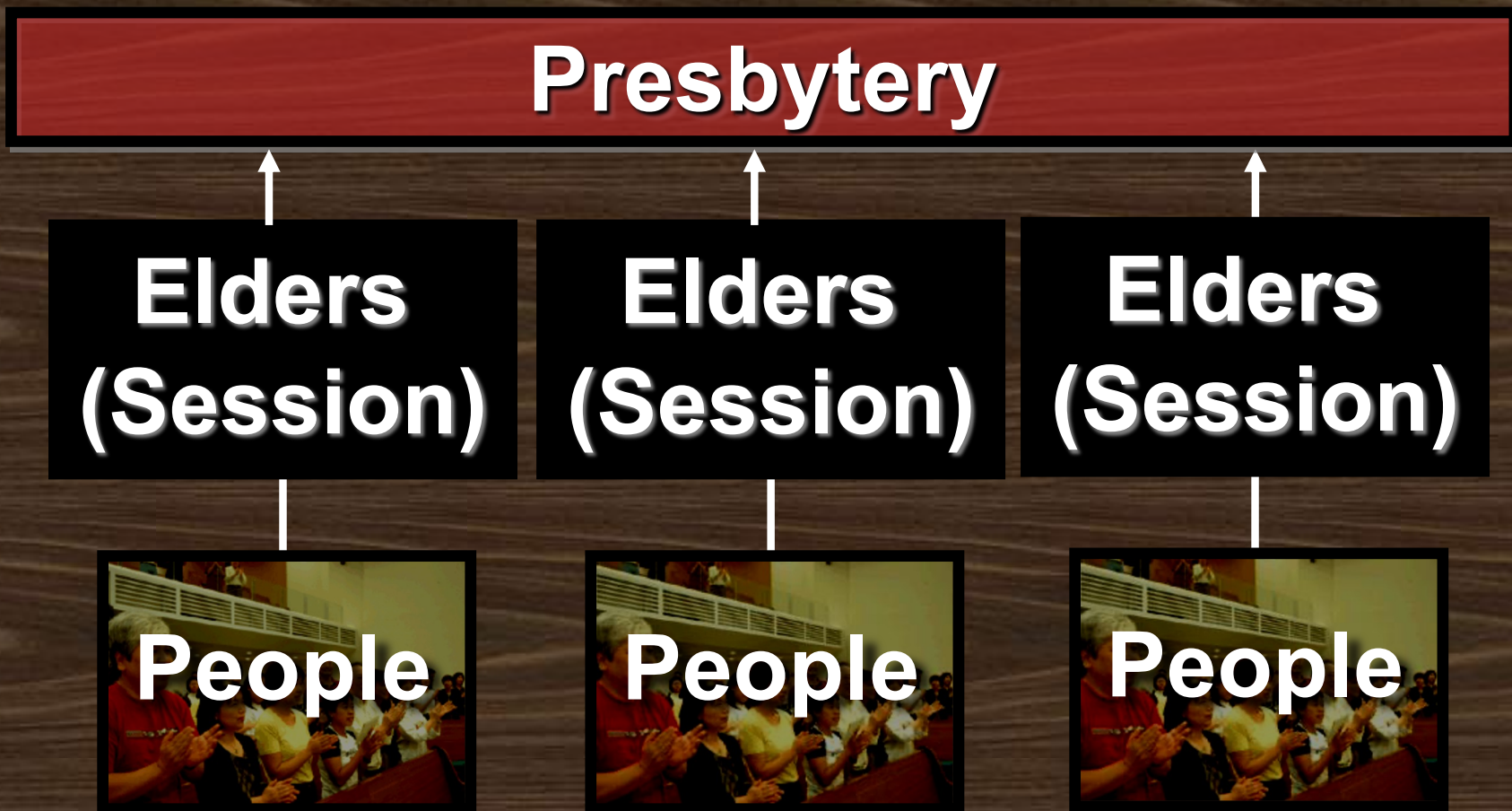
**People**

**People**

Anglican  
Lutheran  
Methodist  
Orthodox  
Catholic



# *Lower Presbyterian Structure*



# *Middle Presbyterian Structure*

**Synod**

**Presbytery**

**Presbytery**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**Elders  
(Session)**

**People**

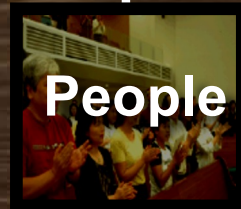
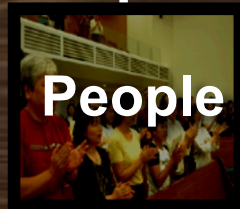
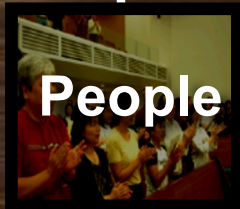
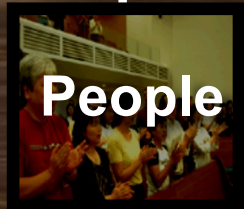
**People**

**People**

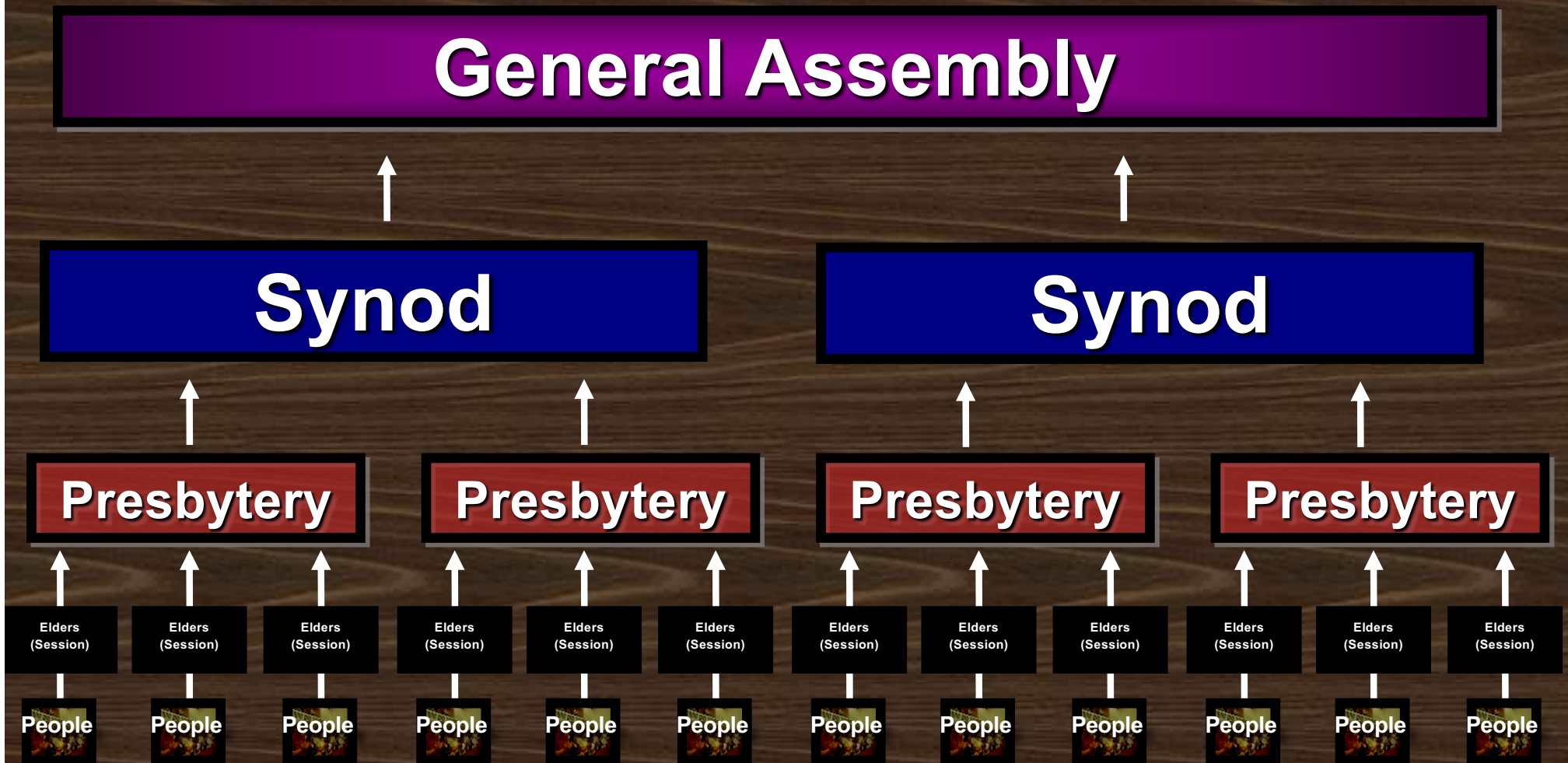
**People**

**People**

**People**



# Highest Presbyterian Structure



# What About Baptists?



The Autonomy of  
the Local Church

# Two Questions:

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church?
2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?



International  
Baptist Church Singapore

Sharing the Love of God

## II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by elders.



# Scriptural support for a plurality of elders: plurality plurality

Not One Elder...



But Many...



# Elders led from the time of Moses

**Elders  
led with  
Moses  
1400 BC**

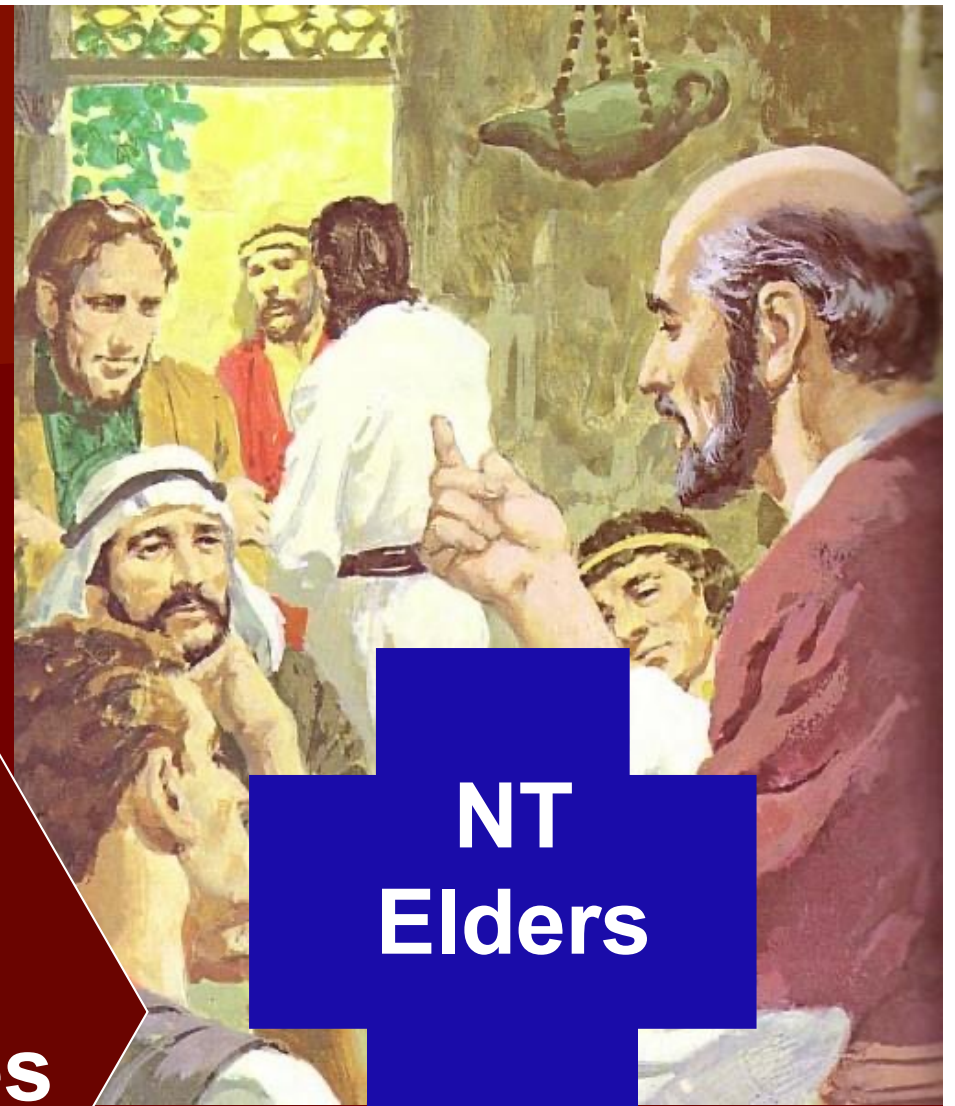
**“Go, assemble the  
elders of Israel and  
say to them...” (Exod.  
3:16)**

# Who Led the Synagogue?

**Elders  
led with  
Moses  
1400 BC**

**Elders  
led  
Synagogues  
600 BC**

# God has advocated group leadership through the ages



**Elders  
led with  
Moses  
1400 BC**

**Elders  
led  
Synagogues  
600 BC**

**NT  
Elders**

# Places Mentioning Elders

**Jerusalem (AD 47):**

**NIV Acts 11:30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.**



# Places Mentioning Elders

Jerusalem (AD 47):

Ephesus (AD 57):

NIV Acts 20:17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church.



# Places Mentioning Elders

Jerusalem (AD 47):

Ephesus (AD 57):

Galatia (AD 48):

NIV Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders  
{or Barnabas ordained elders; or Barnabas had elders  
elected} for them in each church



# Places Mentioning Elders

Jerusalem (AD 47):

Ephesus (AD 57):

Galatia (AD 48):

Crete (AD 66):

**NIV Titus 1:5** The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint {or ordain} elders in every town, as I directed you.

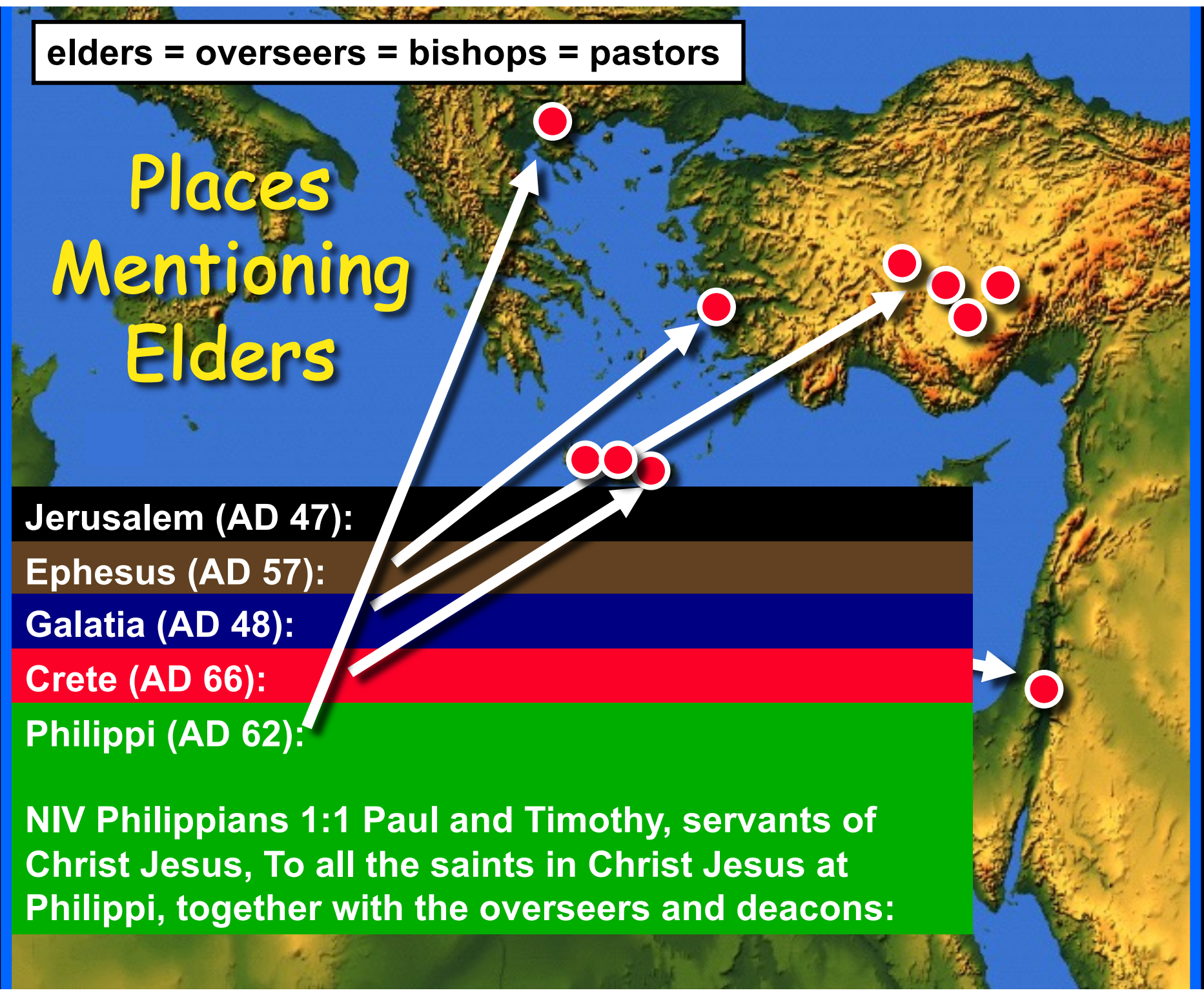


elders = overseers = bishops = pastors

# Places Mentioning Elders

- Jerusalem (AD 47):
- Ephesus (AD 57):
- Galatia (AD 48):
- Crete (AD 66):
- Philippi (AD 62):

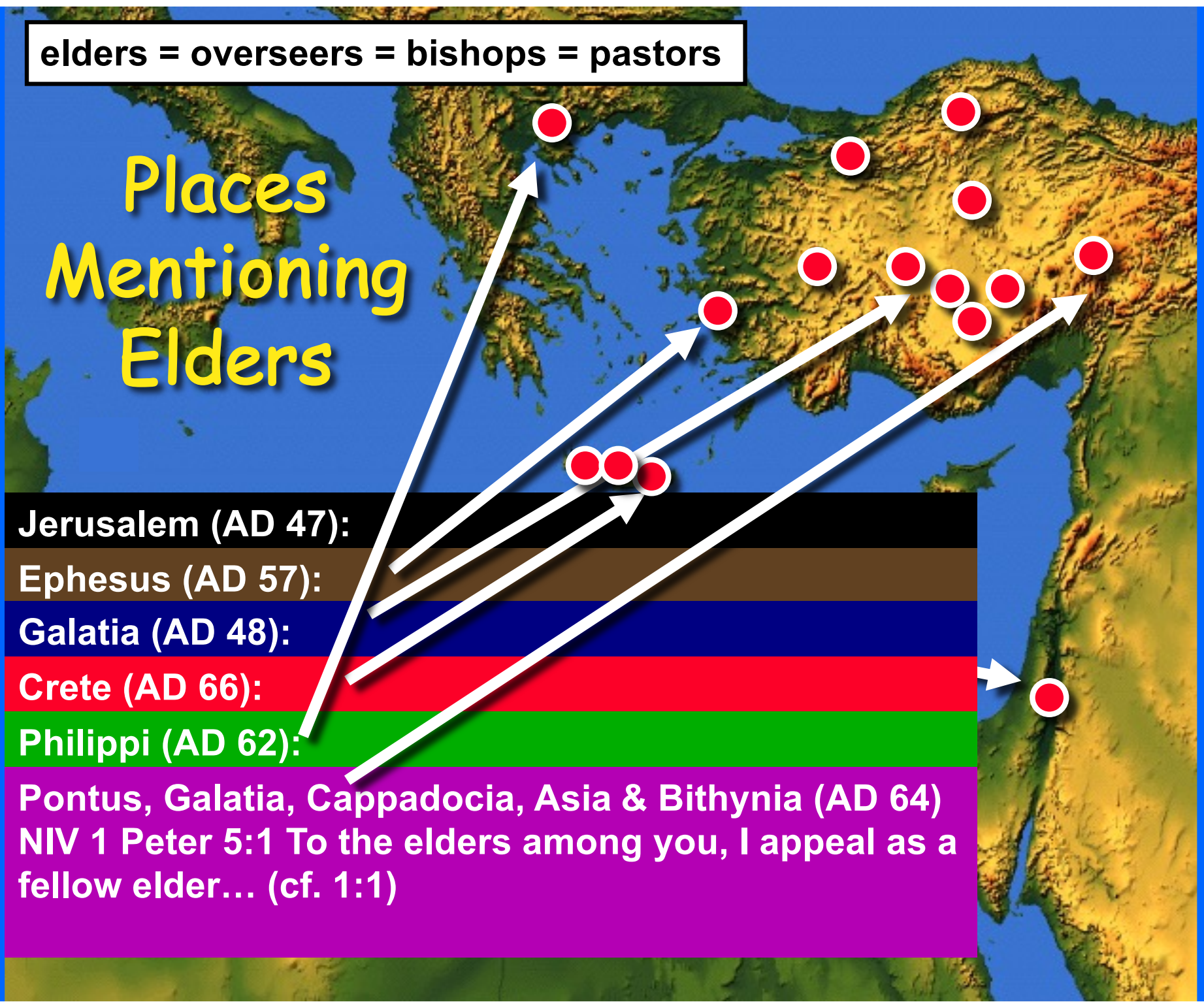
NIV Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:



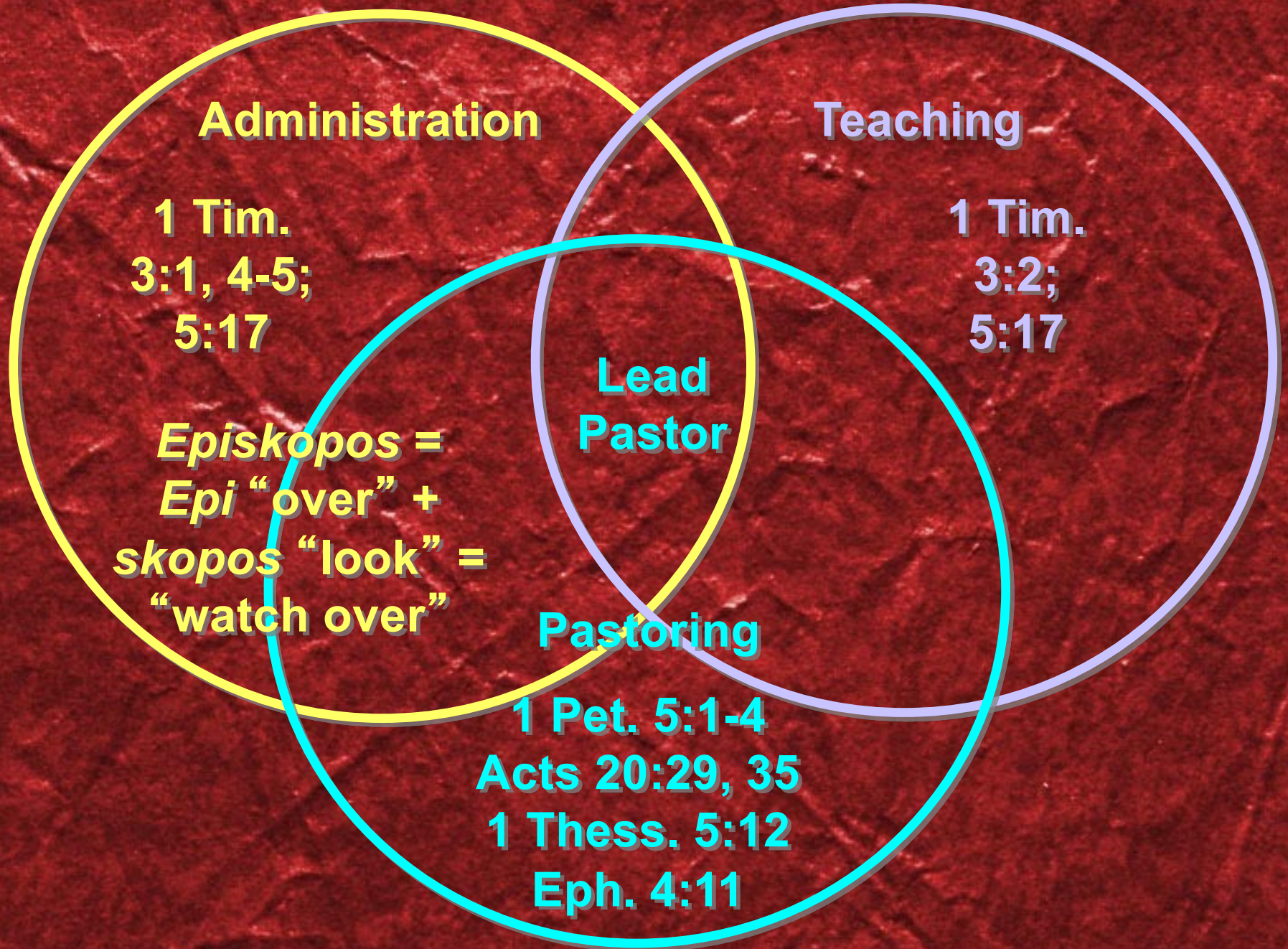
elders = overseers = bishops = pastors

# Places Mentioning Elders

- Jerusalem (AD 47):
- Ephesus (AD 57):
- Galatia (AD 48):
- Crete (AD 66):
- Philippi (AD 62):
- Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia & Bithynia (AD 64)  
NIV 1 Peter 5:1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder... (cf. 1:1)



# Three Major Tasks of Elders



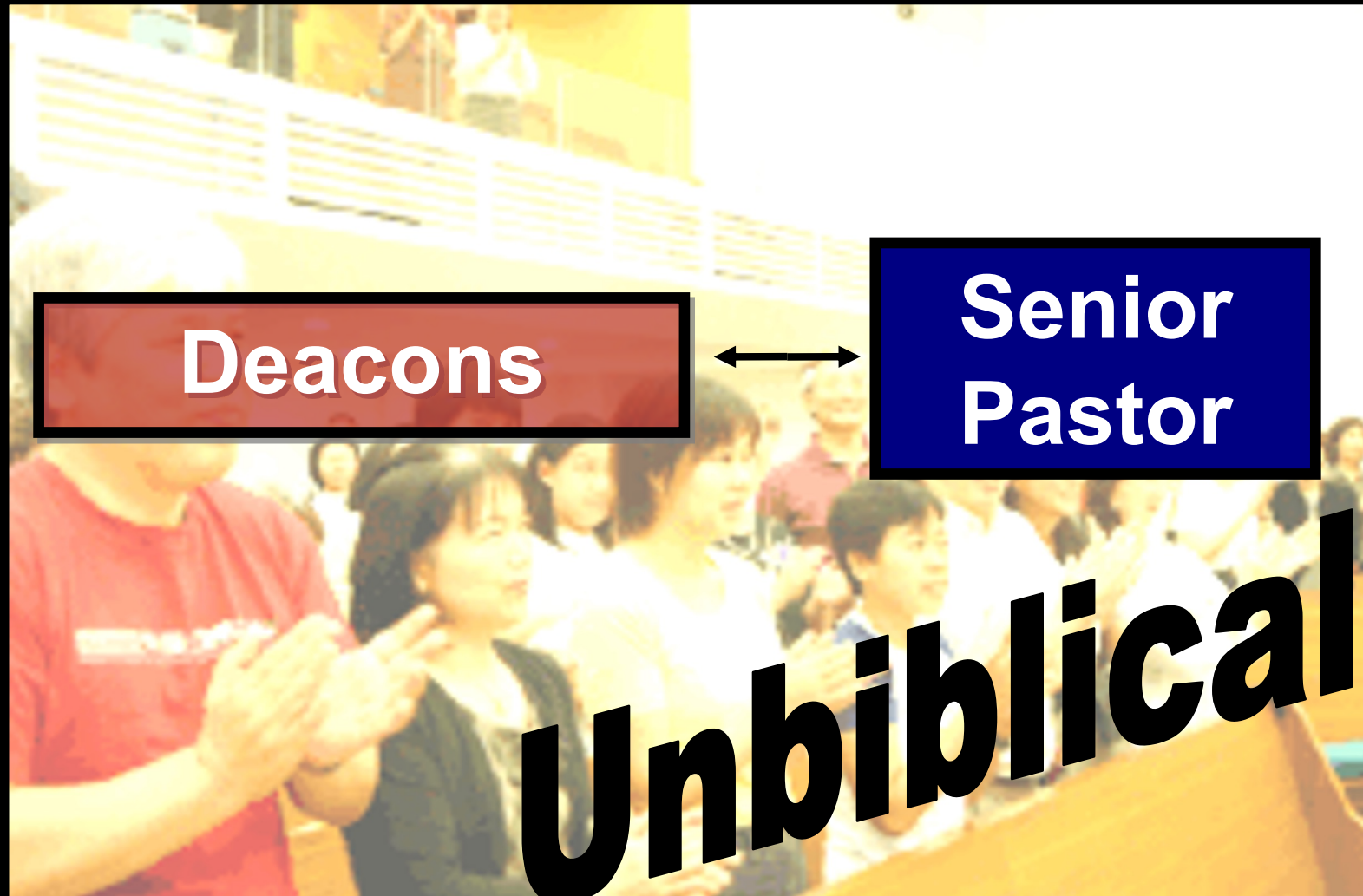
# How Elders Relate to Deacons

## Model 1: Senior Pastor over Deacons



# How Elders Relate to Deacons

## Model 2: Senior Pastor alongside Deacons



# How Elders Relate to Deacons

Model 3: Deacons lead elders/pastors



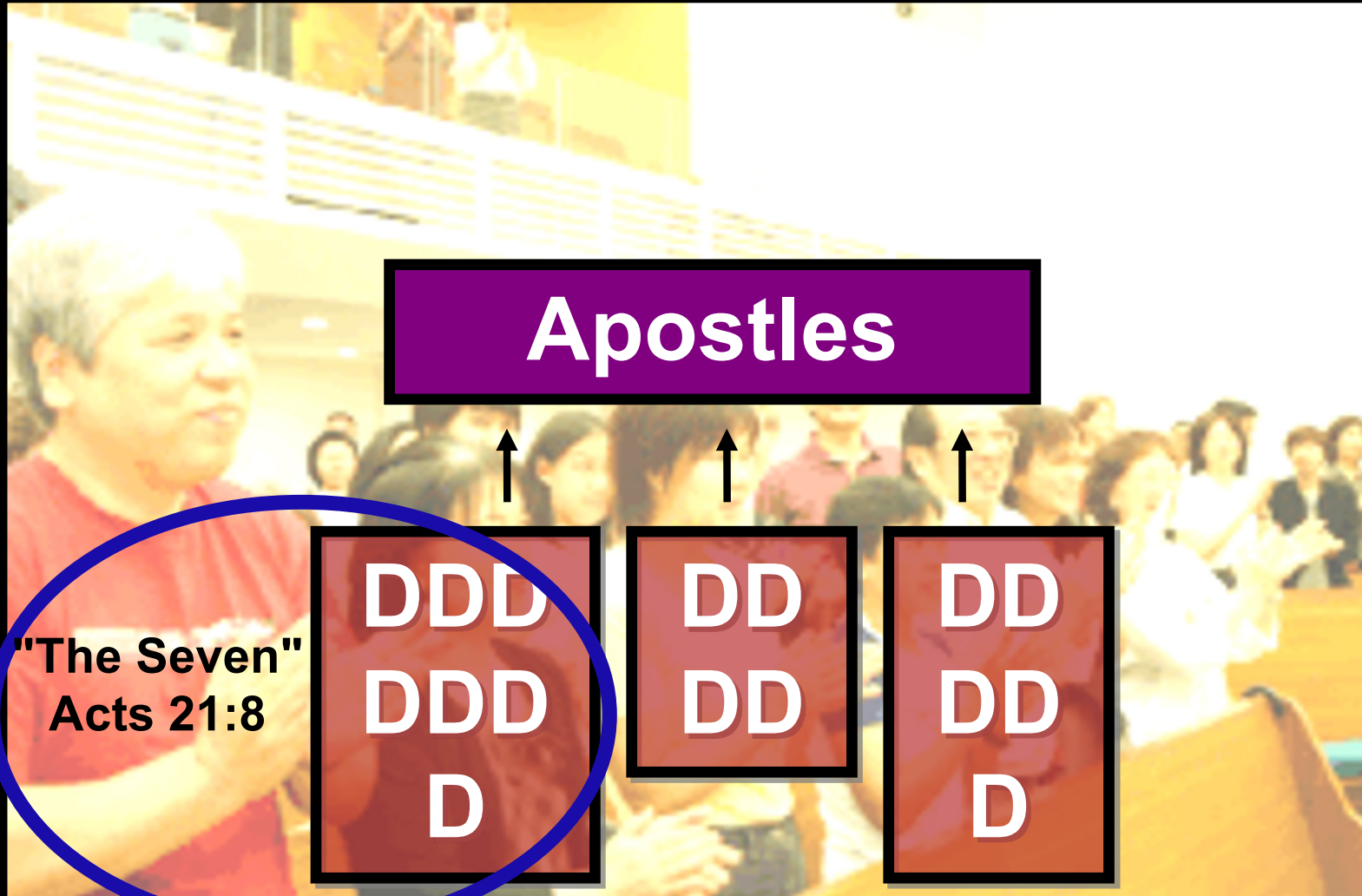
# How Elders Relate to Deacons

## Model 4: Elder Board leads Deacon Board



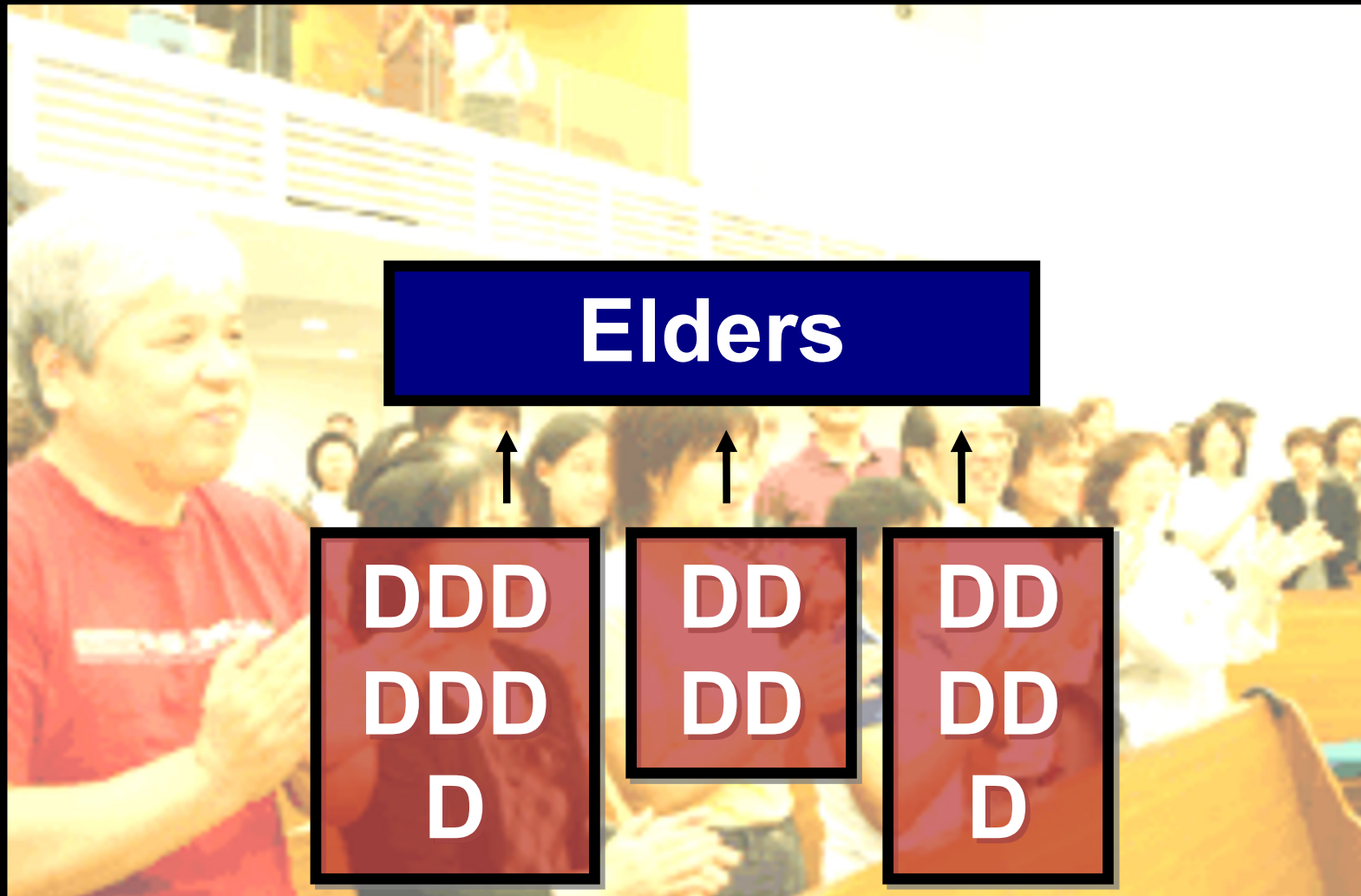
# How Elders Relate to Deacons

## Apostles over "The Seven"

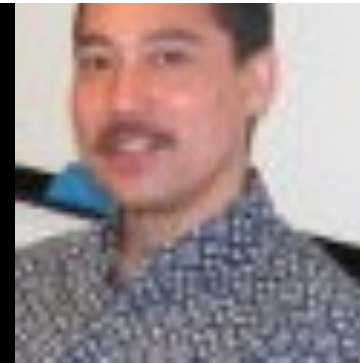


# How Elders Relate to Deacons

## Model 5: Elders with Deacon Committees



Can't we just call current  
deacons "elders"?



# No. There are many differences between them...



Qualifications

Character

Character + Teaching

Role (Gifting)

Administration

Pastoral

Time Involved

Much

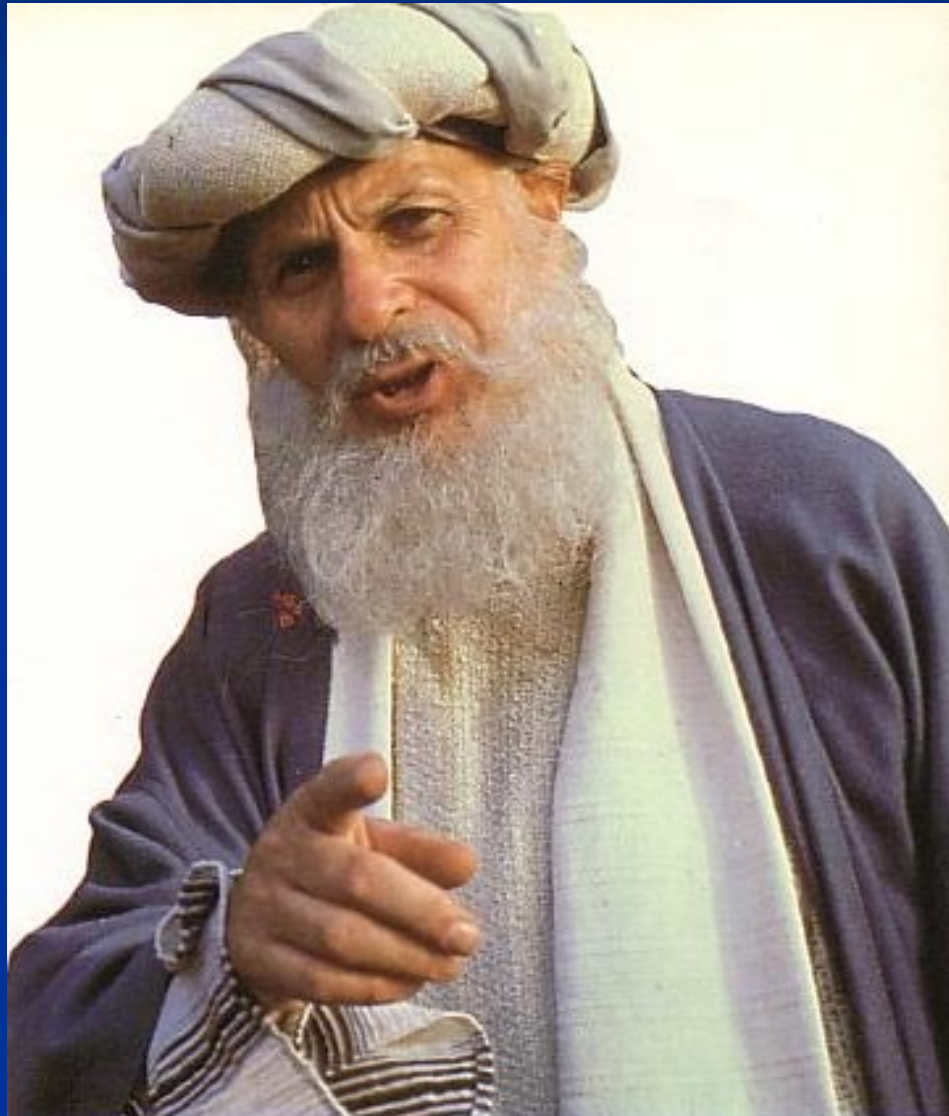
Even more extensive

Age

Younger

Older

**OK, lah... But...**



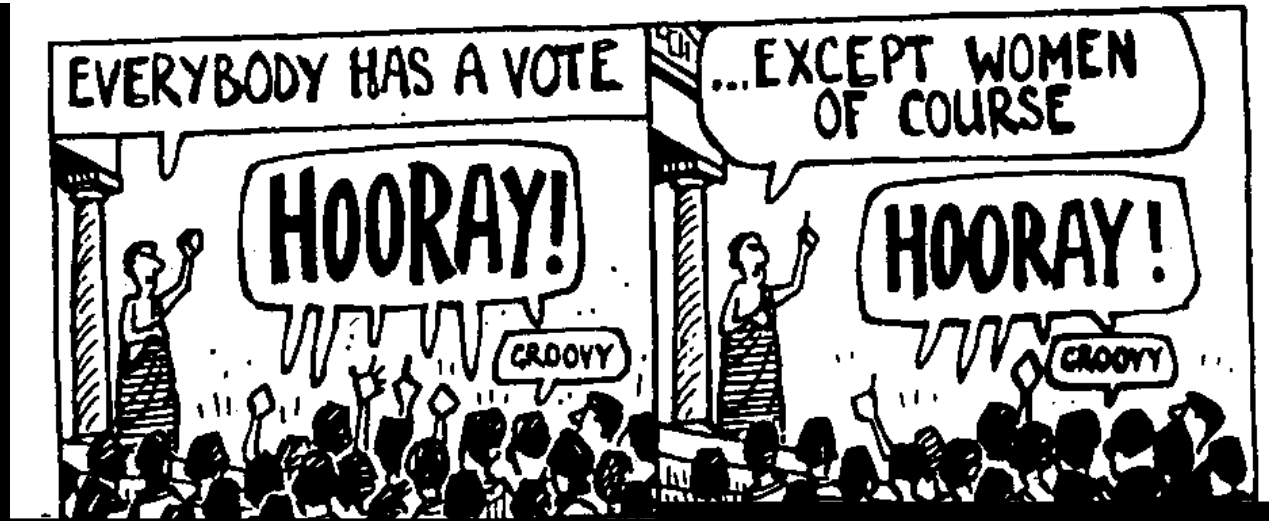
**Leadership by elders and  
congregational authority are not  
contradictory**

Balancing  
leadership with  
congregational  
involvement

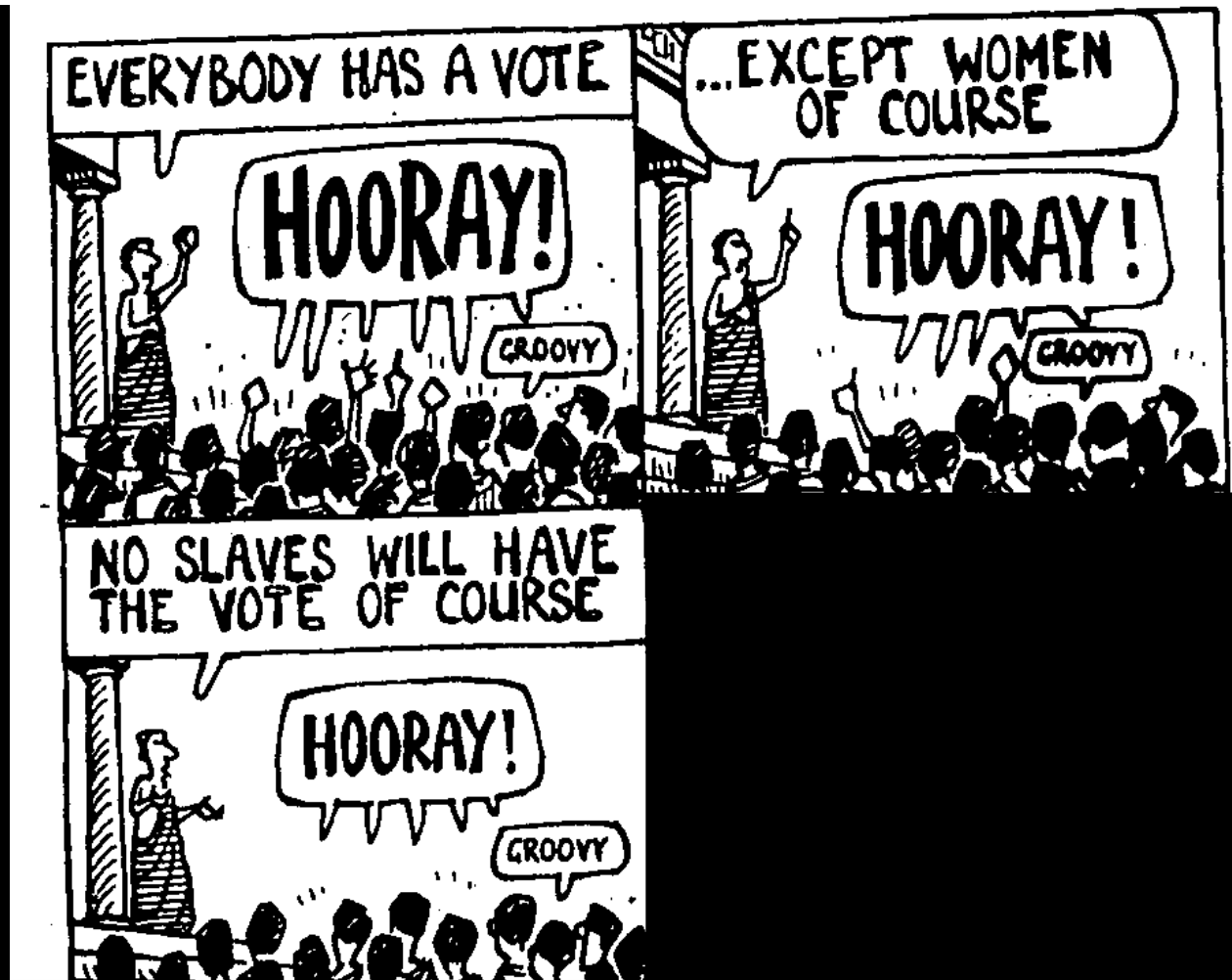
# Balancing leadership with congregational involvement



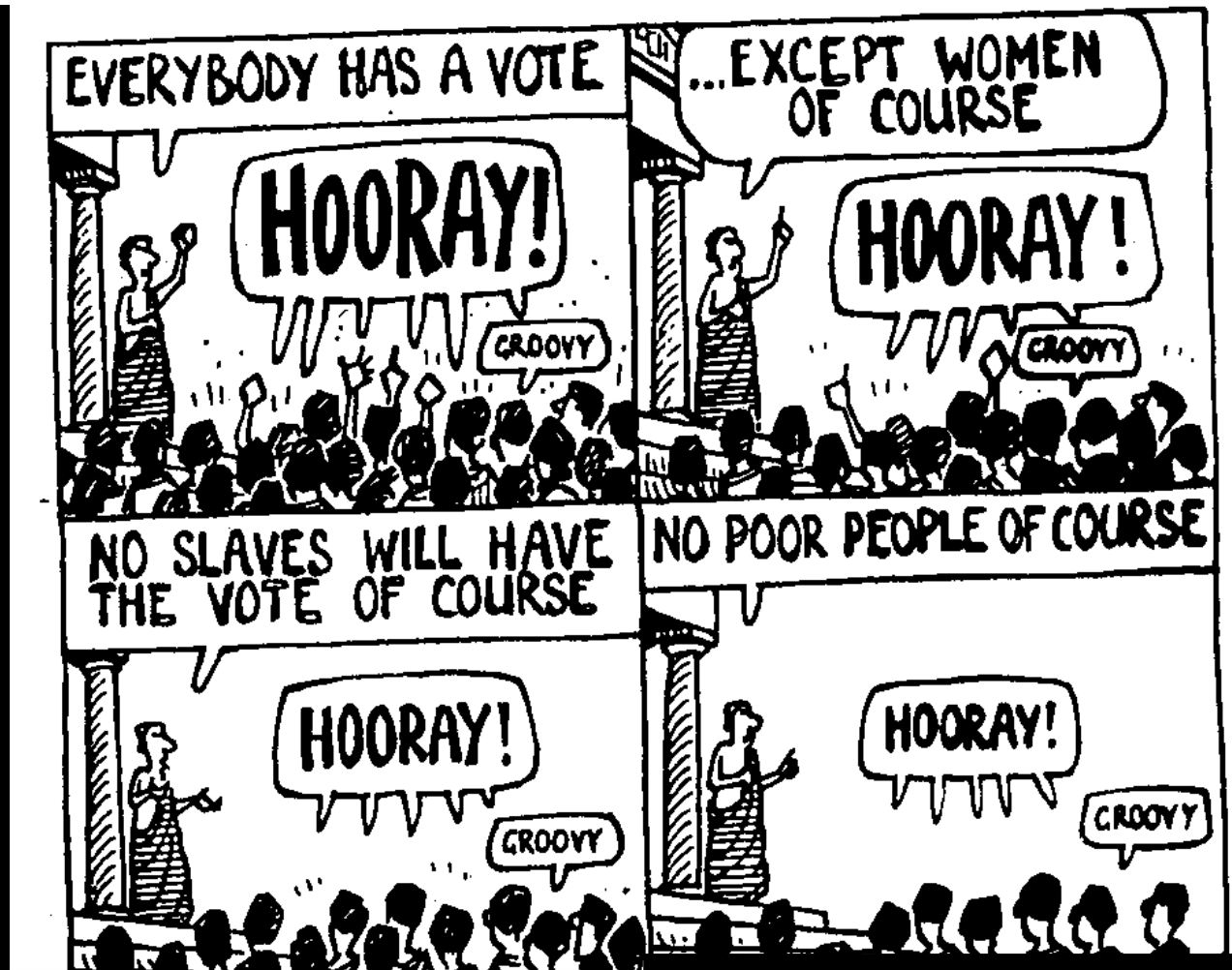
# Balancing leadership with congregational involvement



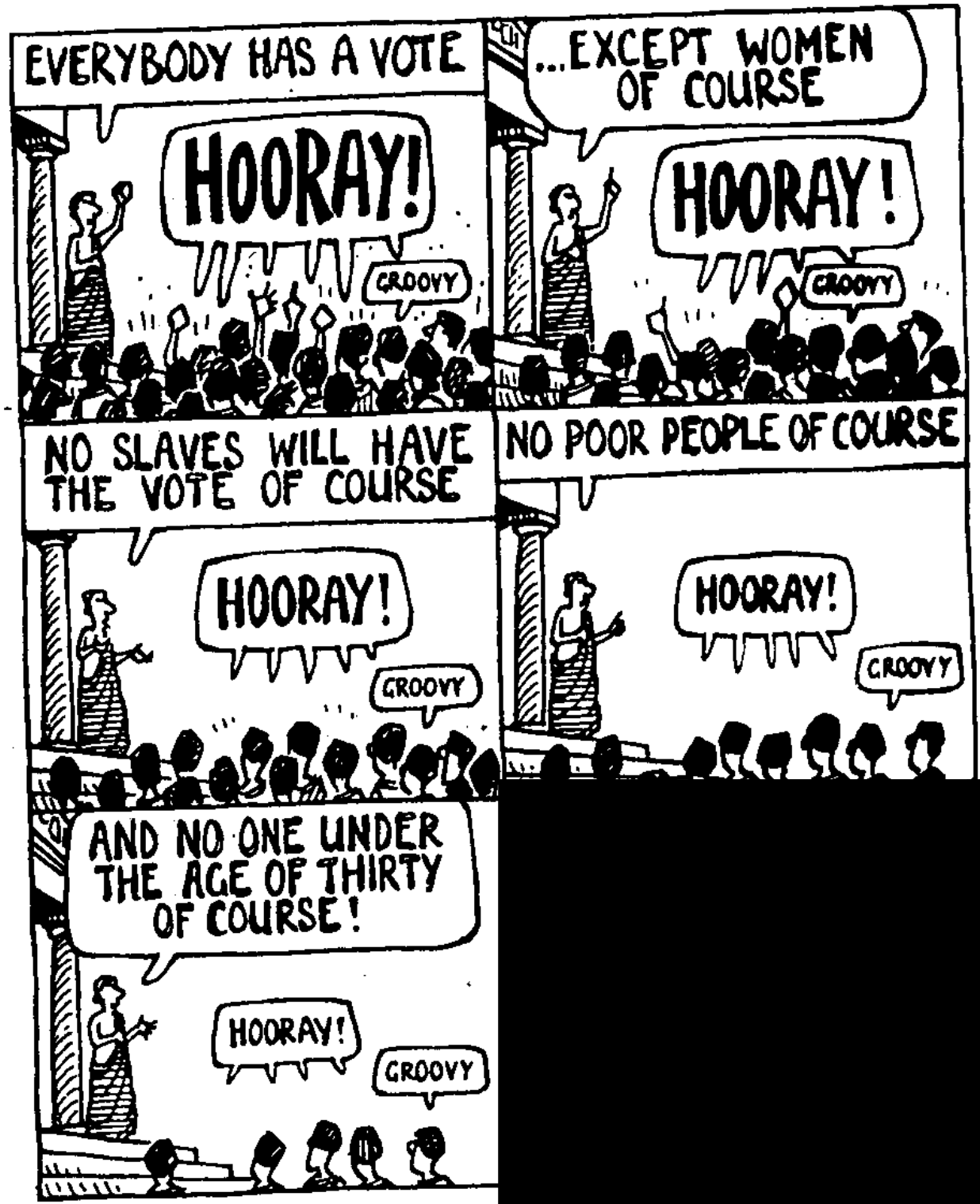
Balancing leadership with congregational involvement



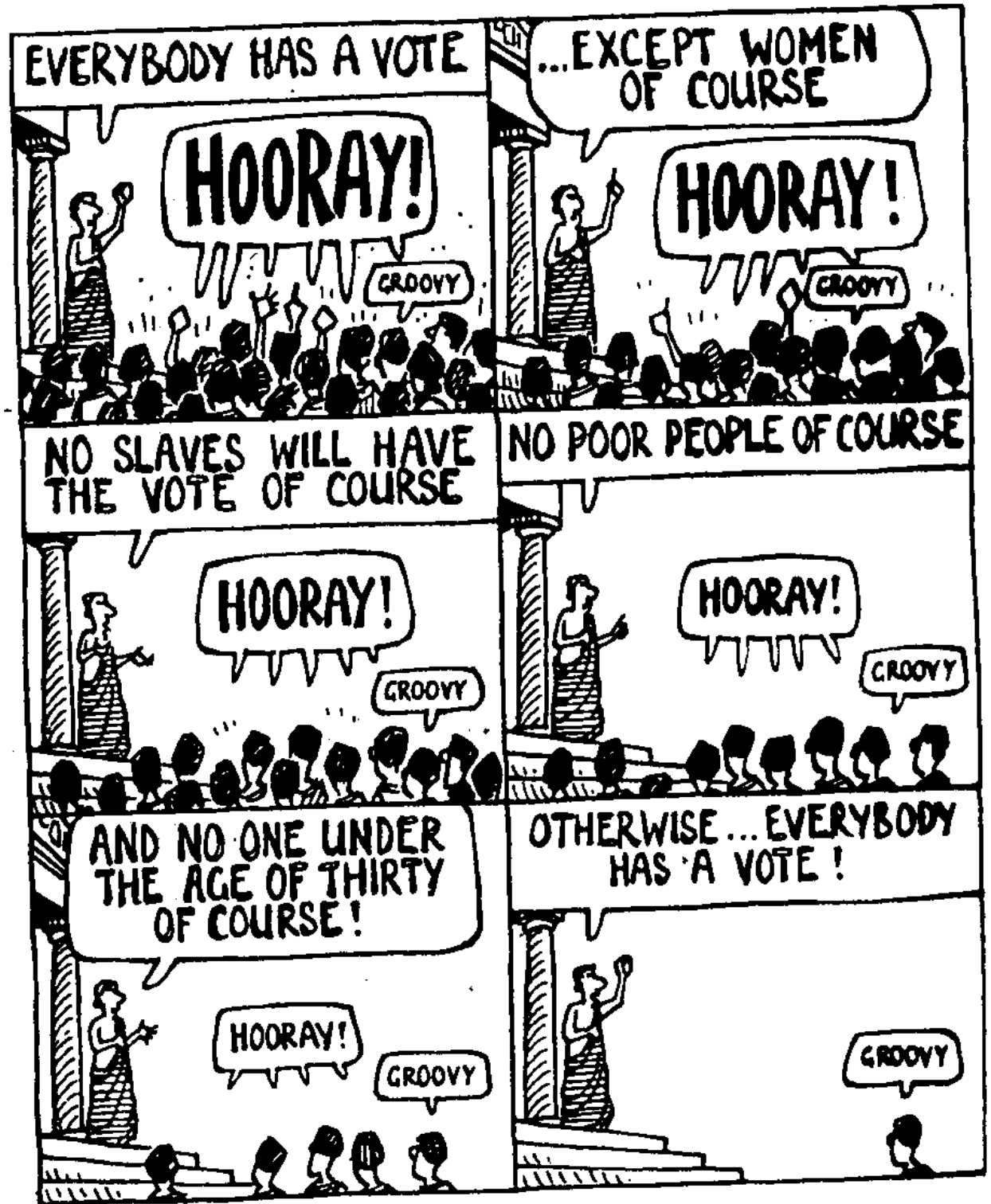
# Balancing leadership with congregational involvement



# Balancing leadership with congregational involvement



# Balancing leadership with congregational involvement





**—Main Idea—**

***Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation but these people should be led by elders***



**So what?**

# *Action Points:*

## ⊕ Congregational Authority means...

⊕ This is *my* church...

⊕ So what is *your* unique role in your church?

## ⊕ Elder Leadership means...

⊕ I must have realistic expectations of who will pastor me...

⊕ My greatest need is for a shepherd--not an organizer

# WHAT ABOUT LEADERS TODAY?



**A GOOD MAN FOR A TOUGH JOB**

# **GOD'S DEACON CHECKLIST: 1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13**



# 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13

## OVERVIEW

**Elder  
Qualifications  
1-7**

**Deacon  
Qualifications  
8-13**

**Deacons 8-10  
Wives 11  
Deacons 12-13**



# WORTHY OF RESPECT

1 Timothy 3:8



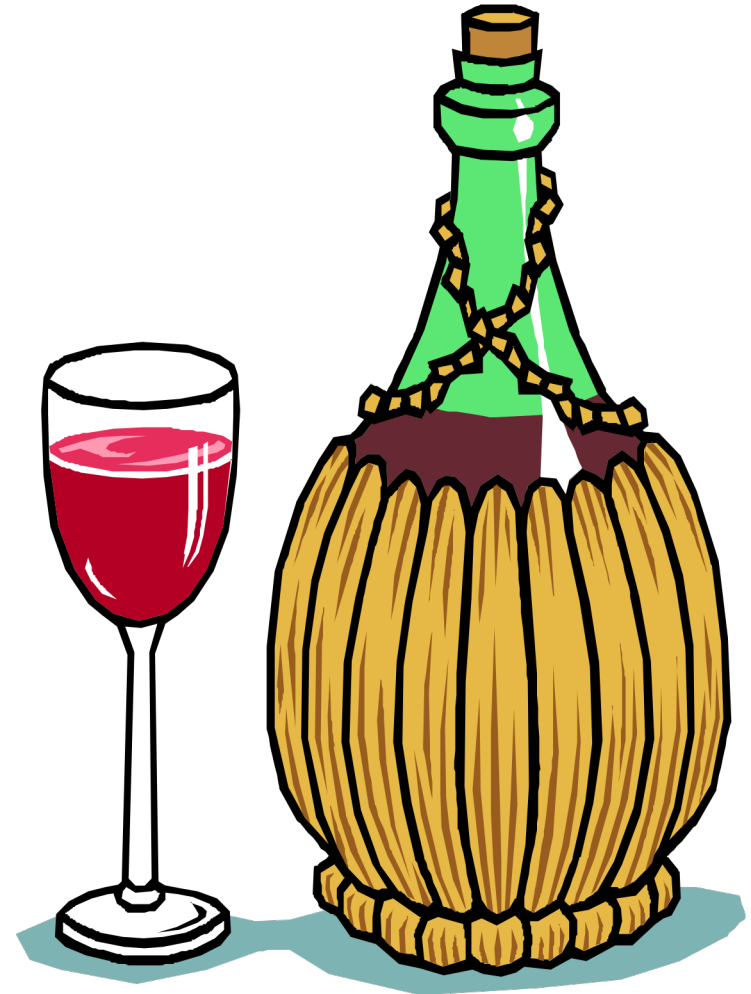
# SINCERE

- “NOT DOUBLE-TONGUED”



# NOT GIVEN TO DRUNKENNESS

- “ONE WHO SITS LONG AT WINE”
- FERMENTED GRAPE JUICE
- NOT INTOXICATED
- IN SCRIPTURE STRONG DRINK AND DRUNKENNESS ARE FORBIDDEN



# NOT PURSUING DISHONEST GAIN

- **“NOT FOND OF SILVER”**
- **NOT GREEDY - THE DESIRE FOR MORE**
- **1 PETER 5:2**
- **MATERIALISM IS NOT HIS PRIORITY**
- **NOT A MERCENARY - SERVES FOR MONEY**



# HOLDS TO DEEP TRUTHS

- **KNOWLEDGE OF WORD OR GOD**
- **BECOMING MORE LIKE CHRIST**
- **HEBREWS 7:26**
- **EPHESIANS 4:15 - 5:12**



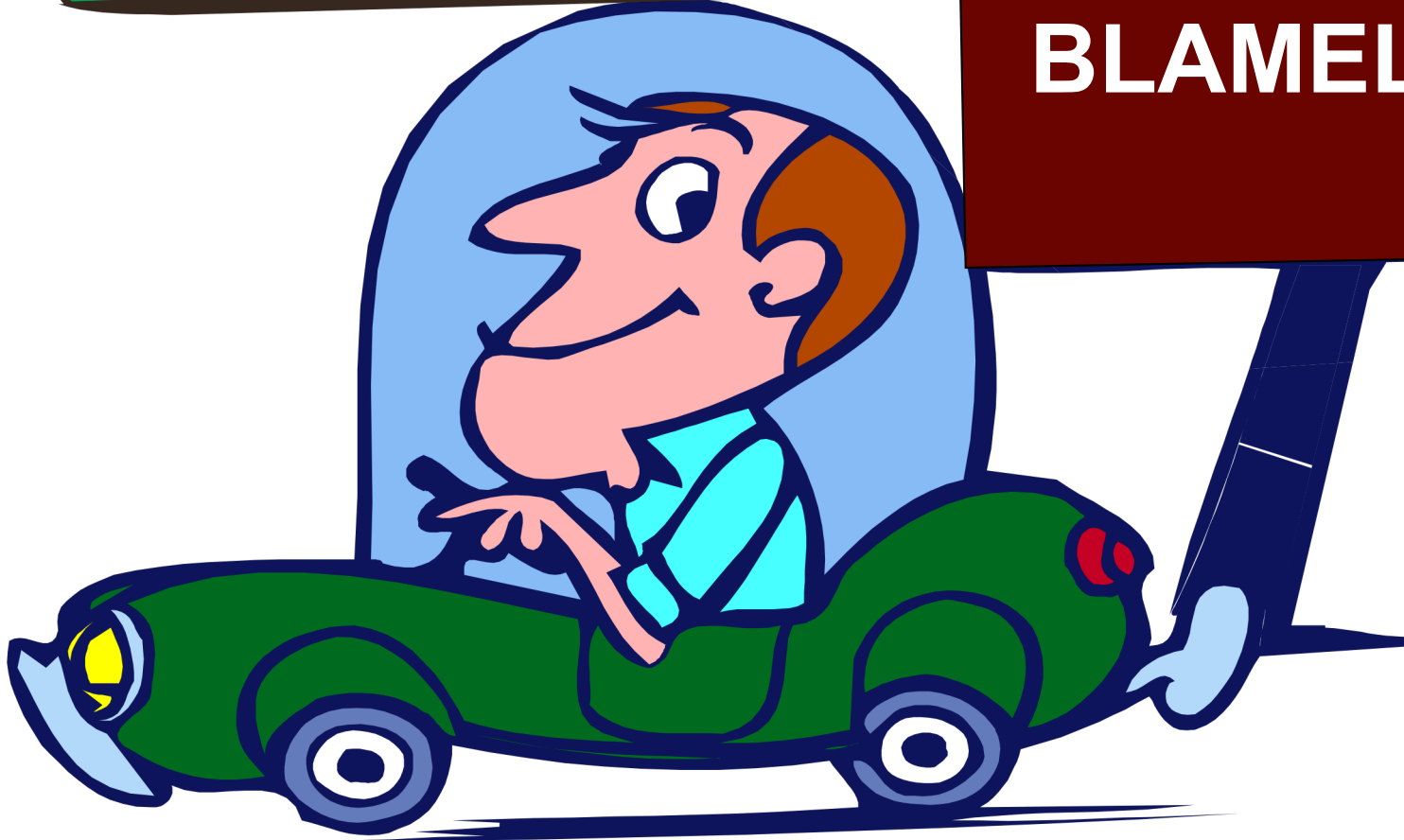
# TESTED (AS BLAMELESS)

- ONE AGAINST WHOM THERE IS NO LEGITIMATE CHARGE OF WRONG DOING IN SPEECH AND ACTONS.
- ABOVE REPROACH
- GOOD REPUTATION

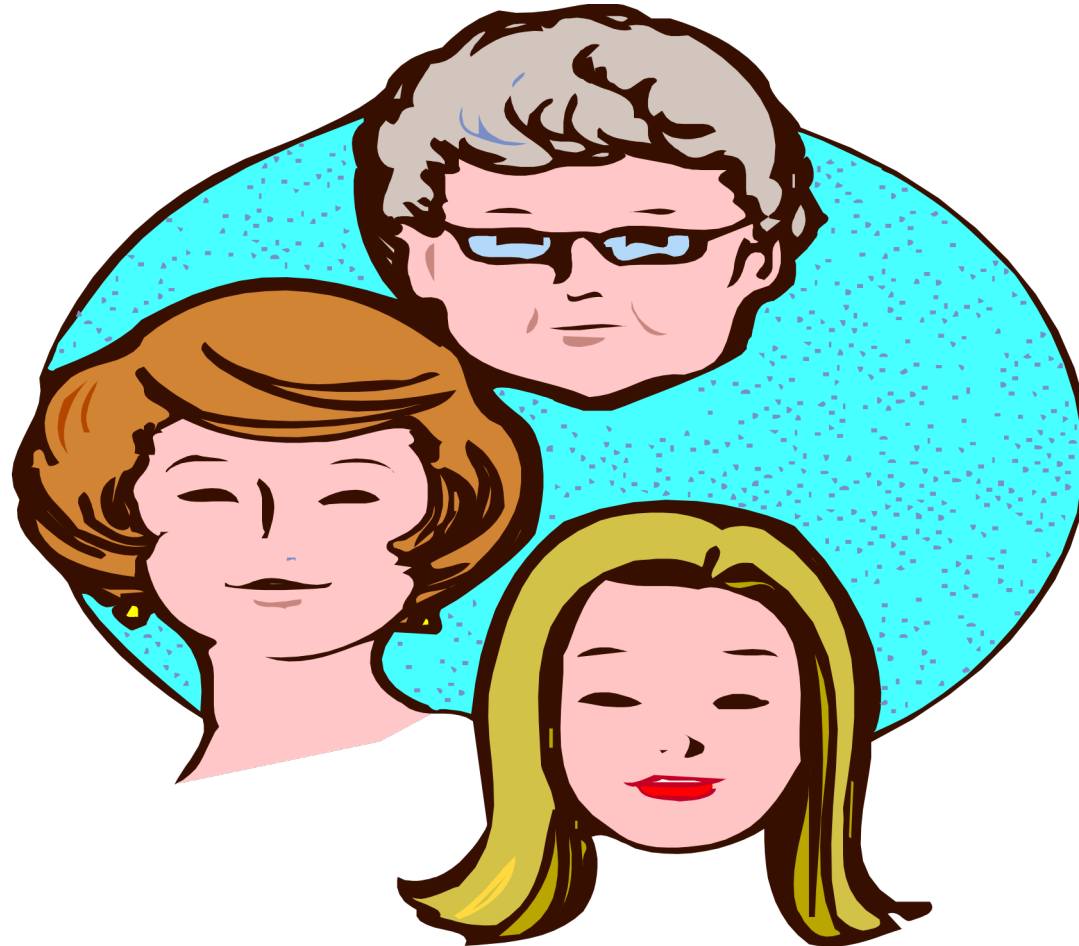




**BLAMELESS**



# WHAT ABOUT DEACON WIVES?



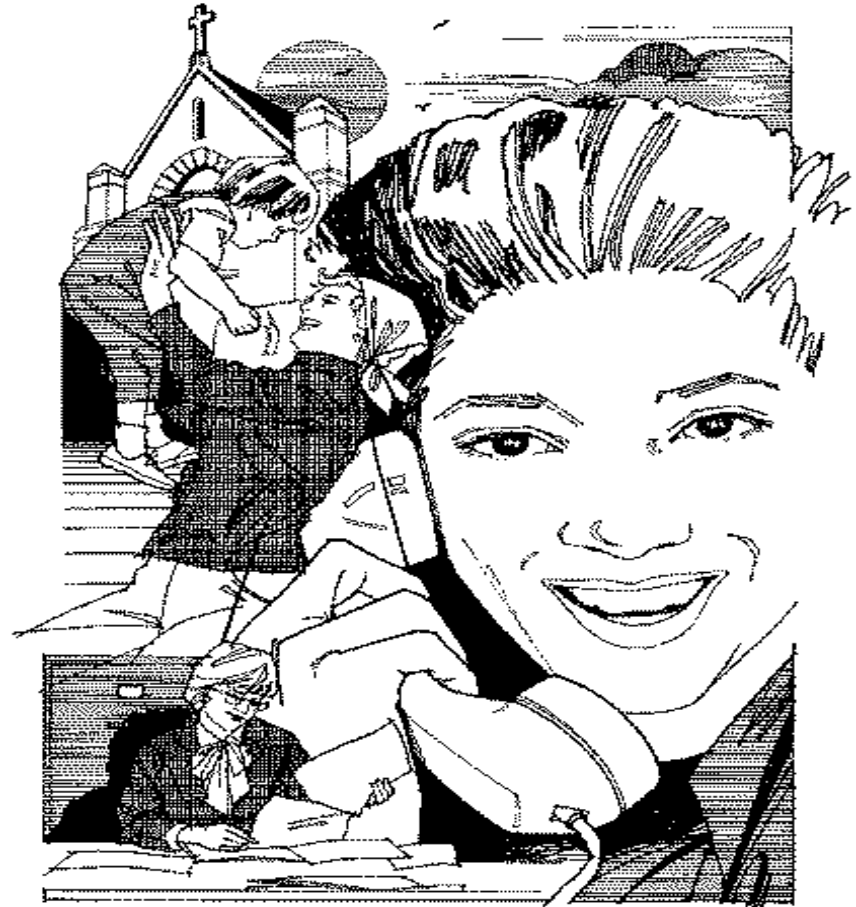
# A DEACON WIFE MUST BE...

- **WORTHY OF RESPECT**
- **NOT MALCIOUS TALKERS**
- **TEMPERATE**
- **TRUSTWORTHY**
  
- *These four traits parallel those of deacons in v. 8*



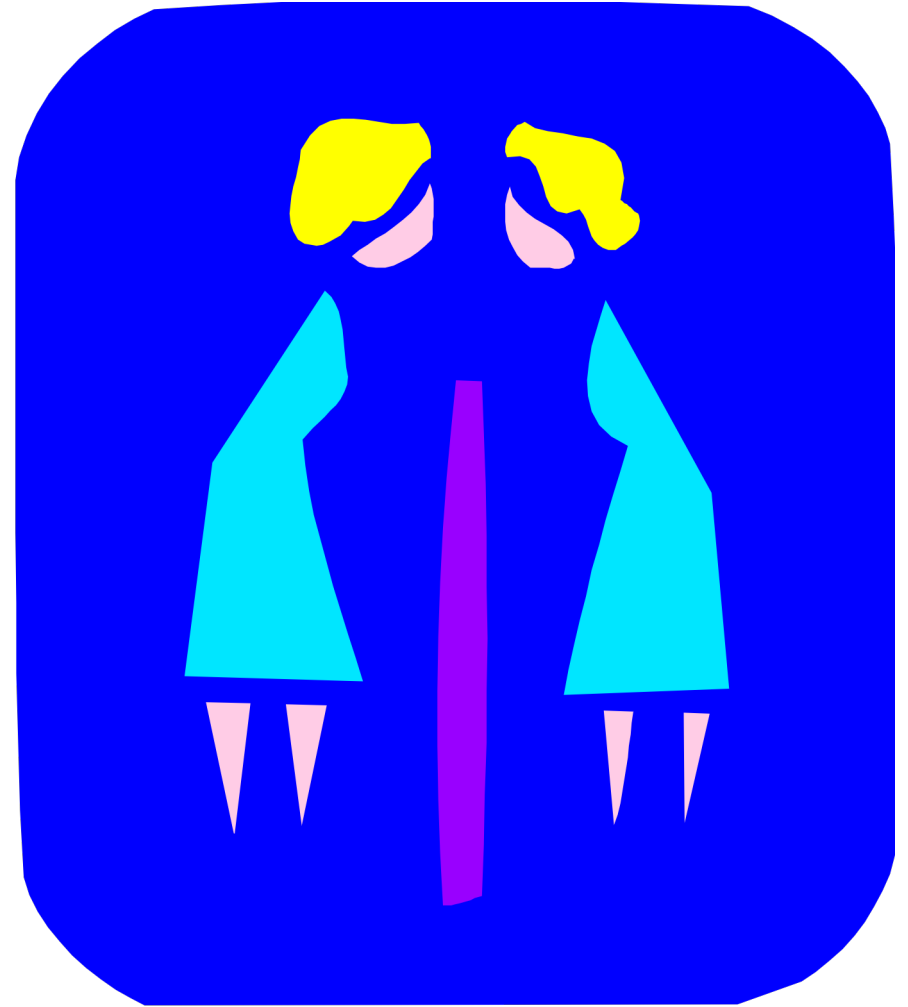
# ... TO BE REVERENT IN THE WAY THEY LIVE

- **REVERENT -  
CONDUCT IN  
EVERY AREA OF  
LIFE THAT IS  
FITTING FOR A  
PERSON WHO  
PROFESSES TO  
WORSHIP GOD**



# ... NOT TO BE SLANDERERS

- **SLANDER - FALSELY ACCUSE, BACKBITING**
- **MALICIOUS GOSSIP - SPREADING STORIES ABOUT OTHERS WHETHER TRUE OR FALSE**



# ... NOT TO BE ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE

- **CONTROLLED BY, INTOXICATED, A SLAVE TO**
- **WOMEN LIVING IN A PAGAN CULTURE WHERE DRUNKENNESS WAS COMMON**



# ... TO TEACH WHAT IS GOOD

- **A TEACHER OF WHAT IS GOOD**
- **GOOD - BEAUTIFUL, ATTRACTIVE**
- **ETHICALY GOOD, IN THE SENSE OF WHAT IS RIGHT, FAIR.**

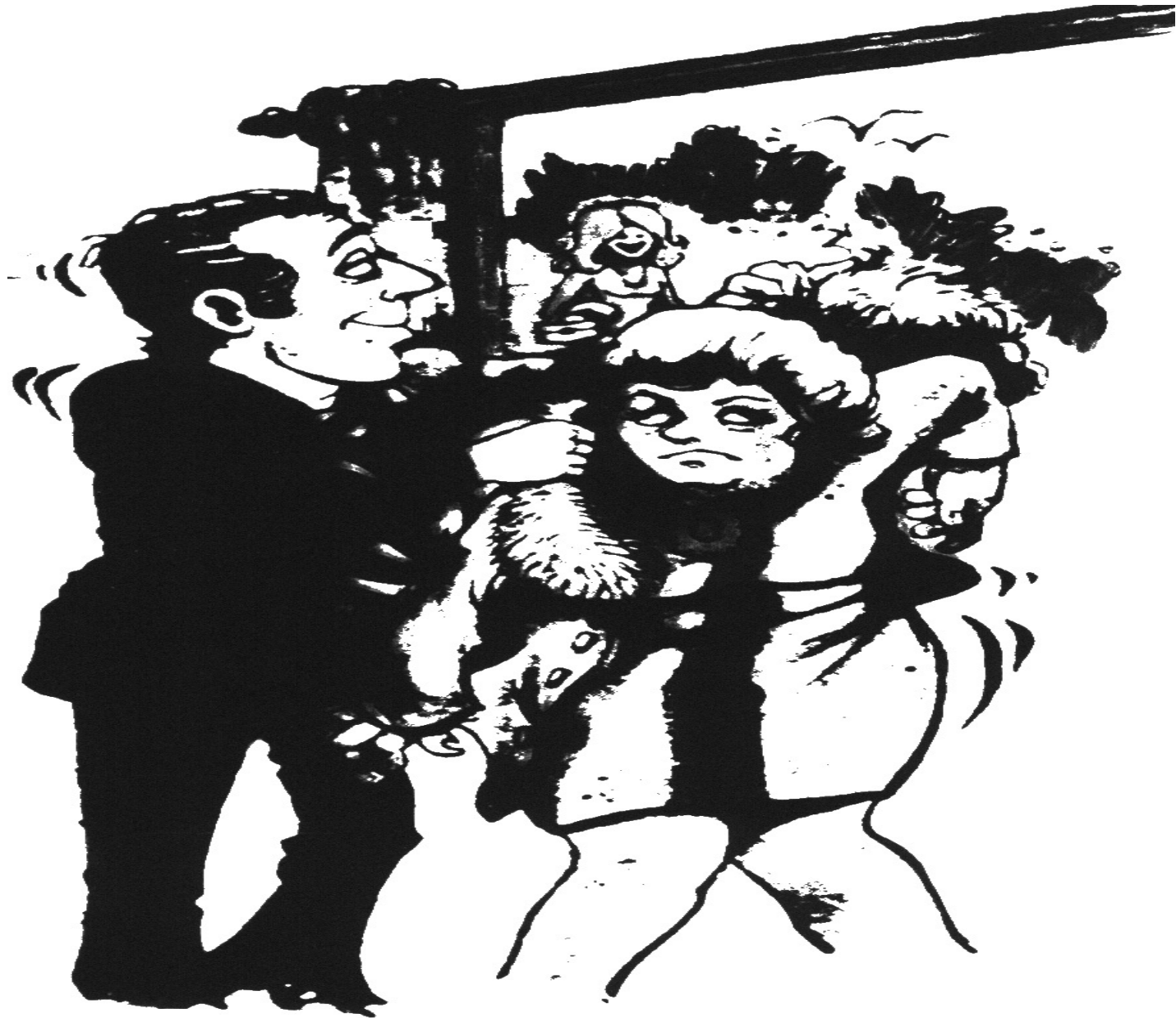


# HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE

- **LIT. “ONE WOMAN KIND OF MAN”**
- **CULTURE:**
  - **SEXUAL IMPURITY**
  - **DIVORCE**
- **BELIEVERS WERE “CALLED OUT OF”**
- **CONTEXT: MORAL CHARACTER**

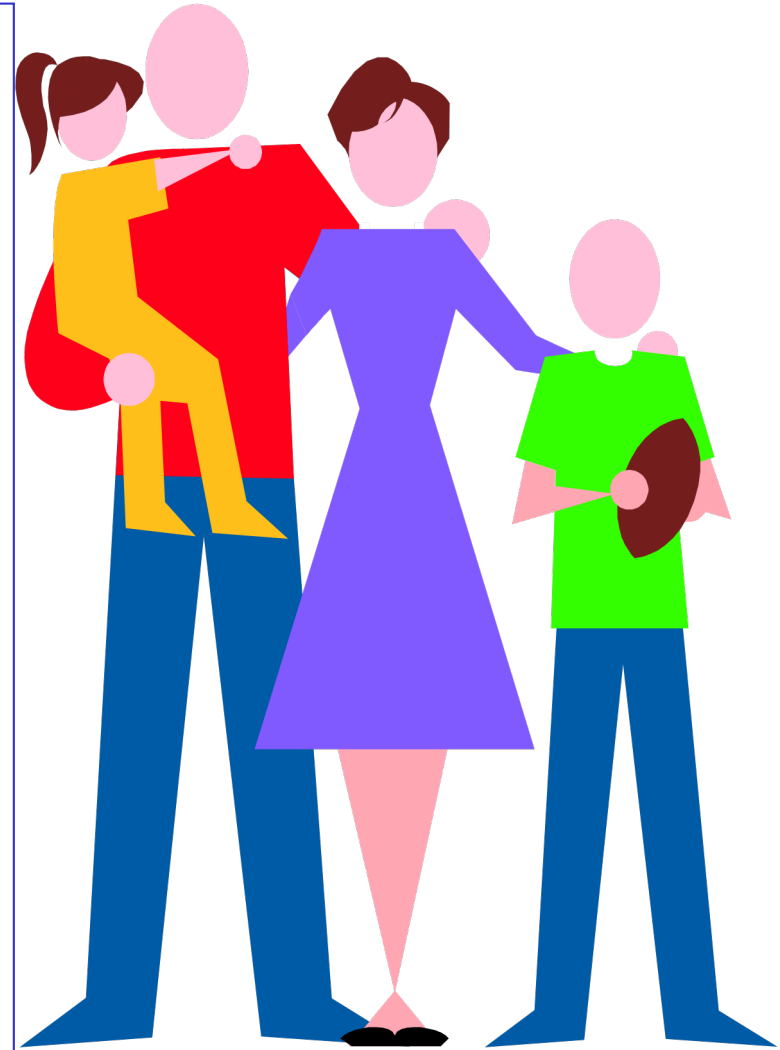


Look at the right woman



# HIS CHILDREN

- **CHILDREN = CHILD IN HIS HOME**
- **BELIEVERS**
- **UNDER HIS CONTROL**
- **1 TIMOTHY 3:12 “He must manage his children and his household well” (cf. elders in v. 4)**

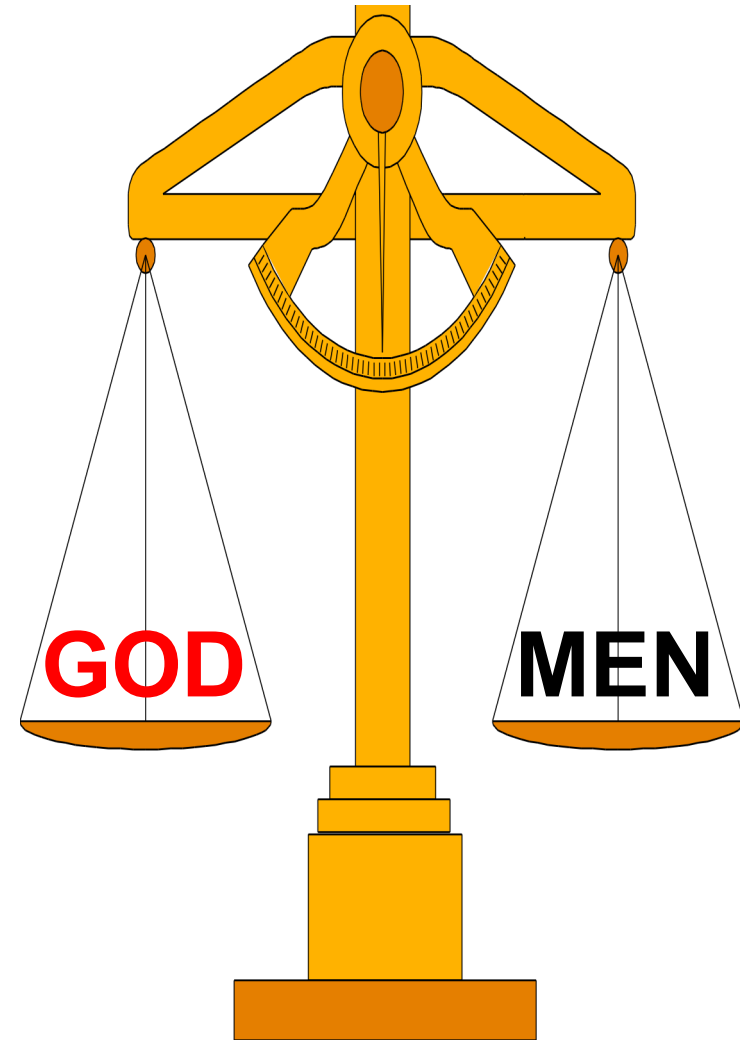


# The Frog in the Pan



# DEACON REWARDS

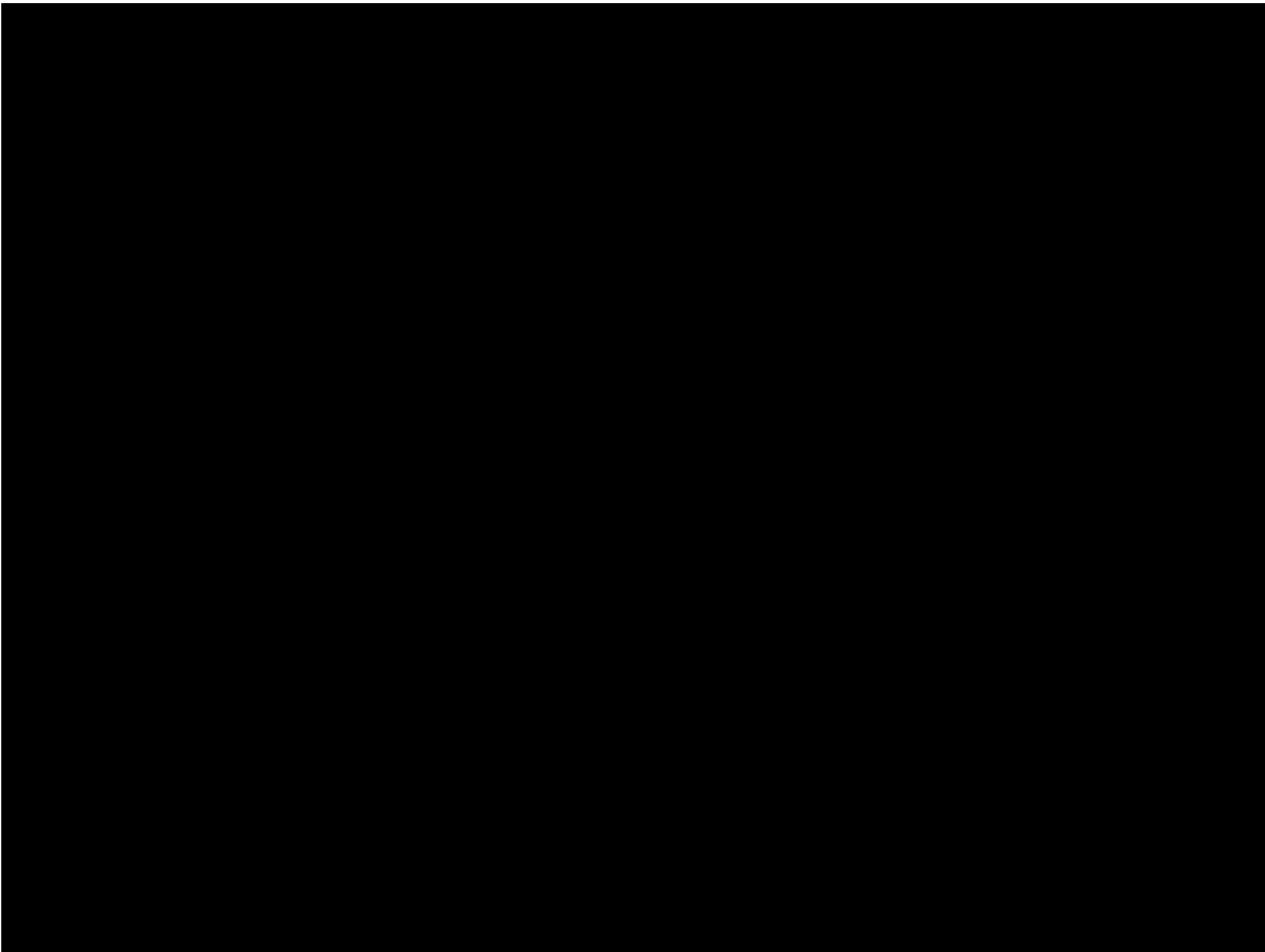
- **“THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED WELL GAIN AN EXCELLENT STANDING AND GREAT ASSURANCE IN THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS” (V. 13)**



# Original Group Presentation Members

**Priests**

**By:** Grace Eu Soo Hwa  
Melvin Koh  
Lim Lay Kwan  
Wong Shin Hoe



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