

What was the significance of the anointed priest?

Question: "What was the significance of the anointed priest?"

Answer: [Exodus 29](#) describes the commands for consecrating the first anointed priests of Israel. Verse 7 says, "Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his head." The pouring of oil on the priest's head was full of significance.

[Anointing](#) shows that the priest was set apart for holy service to God. The consecration of Aaron and his sons actually took place later, in [Leviticus 8](#): "Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and everything in it, and so consecrated them. He sprinkled some of the oil on the altar seven times, anointing the altar and all its utensils and the basin with its stand, to consecrate them. He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to consecrate him" (verses 10-12).

The purpose of the anointing—consecration—is mentioned three times in this passage. To consecrate is to set apart or to make holy. After their anointing, the priests were considered holy unto God; they were sanctified, rather than common.

Following this anointing, offerings were made and instructions were given before Aaron and his sons began their work as priests in the [tabernacle](#). The Lord would later dramatically confirm the anointing of Aaron at the time of his first offering. [Leviticus 9:22-24](#) says, "Then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them. And having sacrificed the sin offering, the burnt offering and the fellowship offering, he stepped down. Moses and Aaron then went into the tent of meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people; and the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. Fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell facedown."

God had set Aaron and his sons apart, anointing them for service. He then confirmed that setting apart through supernatural events: God Himself set fire to the offering, and His glory appeared before the people. The response was one of joy, reverence, and worship.

Anointing is used elsewhere in the Bible to set people apart for service. Samuel anointed Saul and later David as kings of Israel. In [Mark 14:8](#), Jesus defended a

woman who had poured oil on Him, saying, “She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial” (NKJV). The very meaning of the word *Christ* is “Anointed One.” Jesus was “set apart” as God’s Servant (see [Isaiah 42:1](#)).

In the New Testament, anointing a person is also associated with prayers for healing. [James 5:14-15](#) teaches, “Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.”

In summary, an anointed priest was one set apart for service to God. The anointing was part of a public ceremony designed to impress upon everyone the fact that God had chosen this person for a special task. The idea of anointing to set someone apart was also associated with kings and in reference to Jesus. In the church, anointing is associated with prayers of healing for the sick. Anointing connotes the ideas of holiness and cleansing, key concepts for Jewish priests and important traits for believers in Christ today.

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