

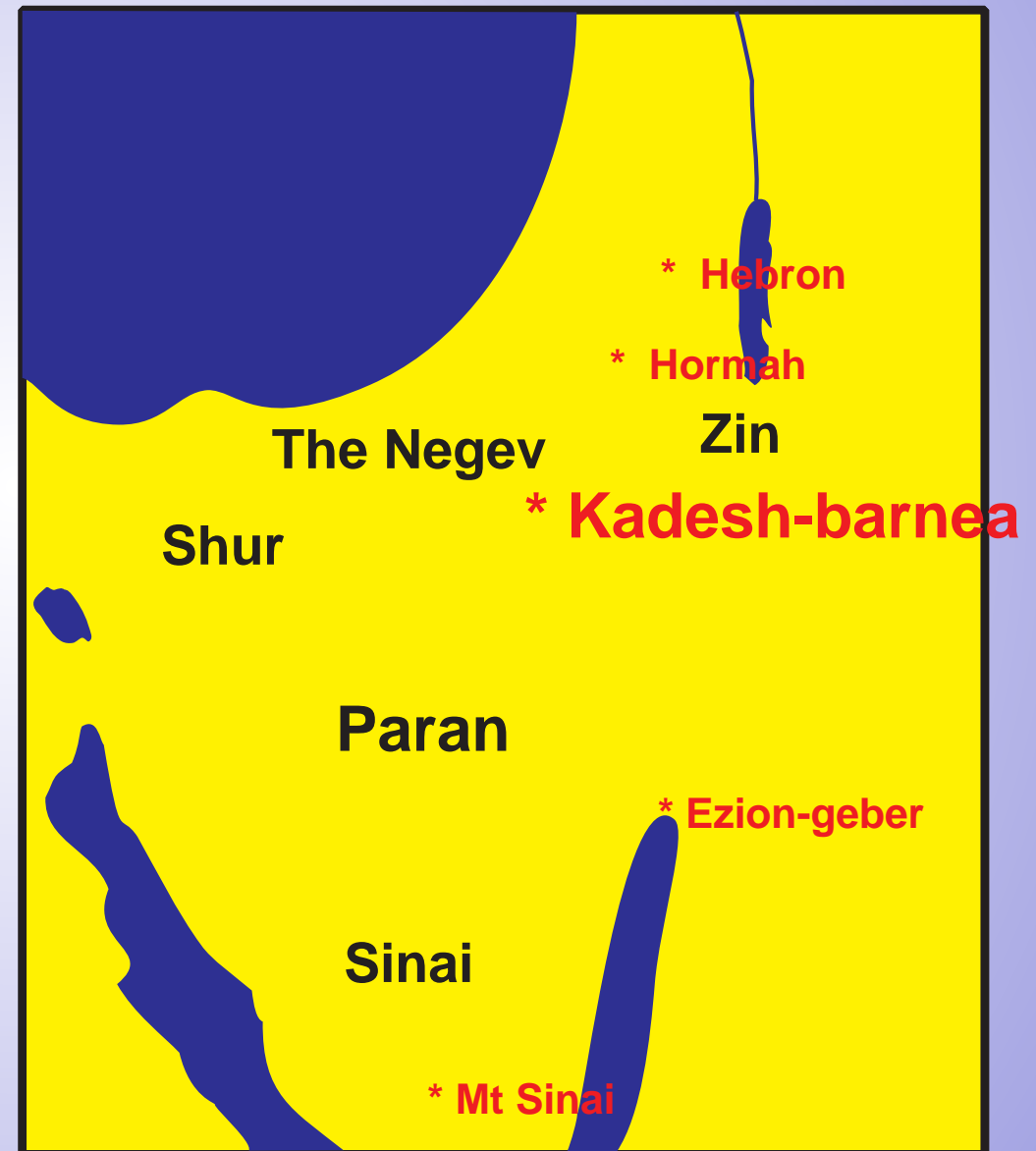
# 10. The True Priest (Nu. 17,18)

## In the wilderness: Numbers

1

The word of the LORD came to me: “What do you see, Jeremiah?” “I see the branch of an almond tree,” I replied. The LORD said to me, “You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled.”

(NIV Jer 1:11–12)

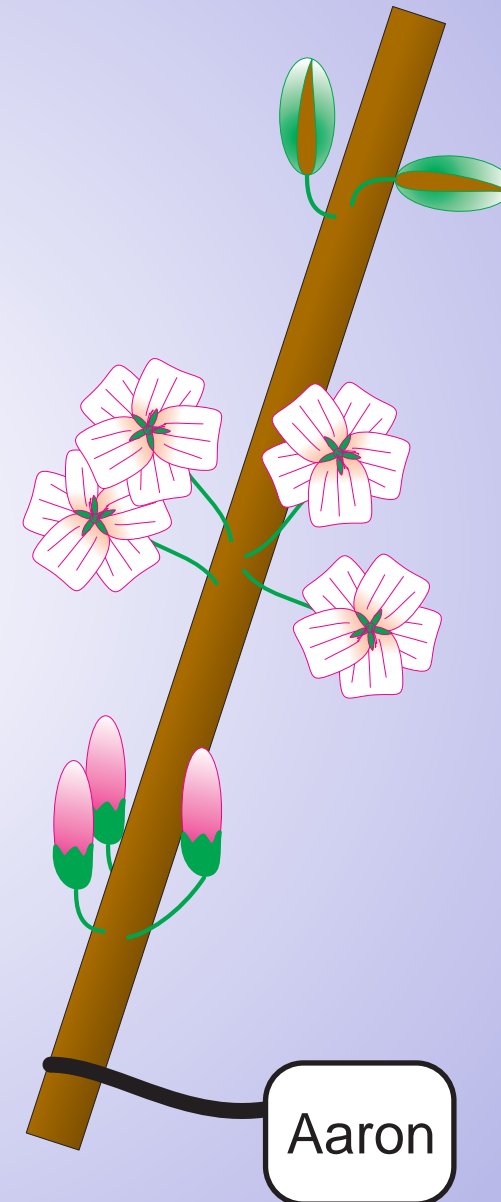


## The staff of office

The next day Moses entered the Tent of the Testimony and saw that Aaron's staff, which represented the house of Levi, had not only sprouted but had budded, blossomed and produced almonds.

(NIV Num 17:8)

The purpose of the passage  
Numbers 17:1-5  
Numbers 18:8



## The staff of office

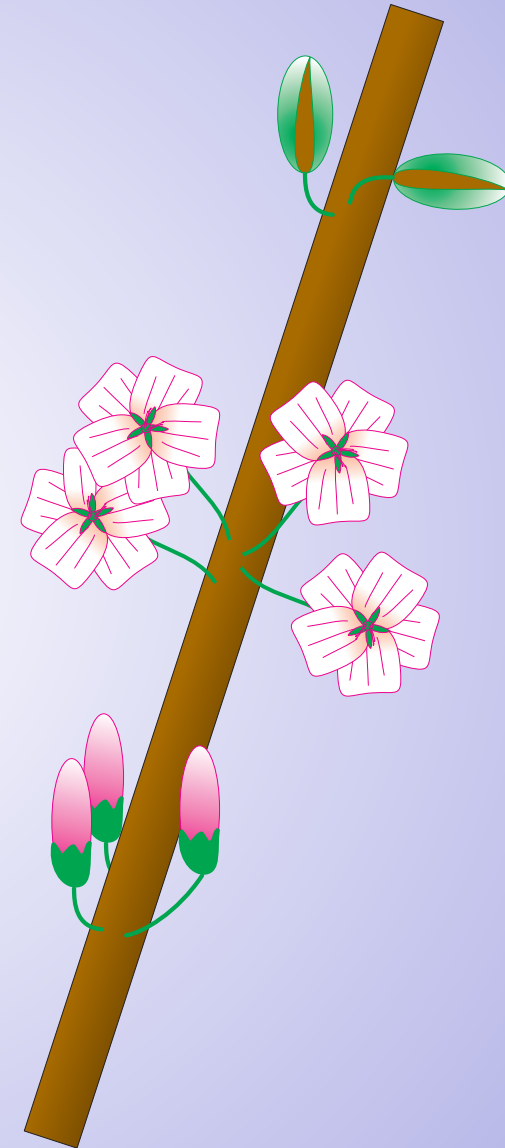
Religious economics  
*the staffs and the offerings*

Matters of life and death  
*the bud and the sacrifice*

Holy to the LORD  
*the blossom and the firstborn*

Watchfulness  
*the almond and the guard*

The new covenant?



# Religious economics

*the staffs and the offerings*

Abraham

*priest*

*ruler*

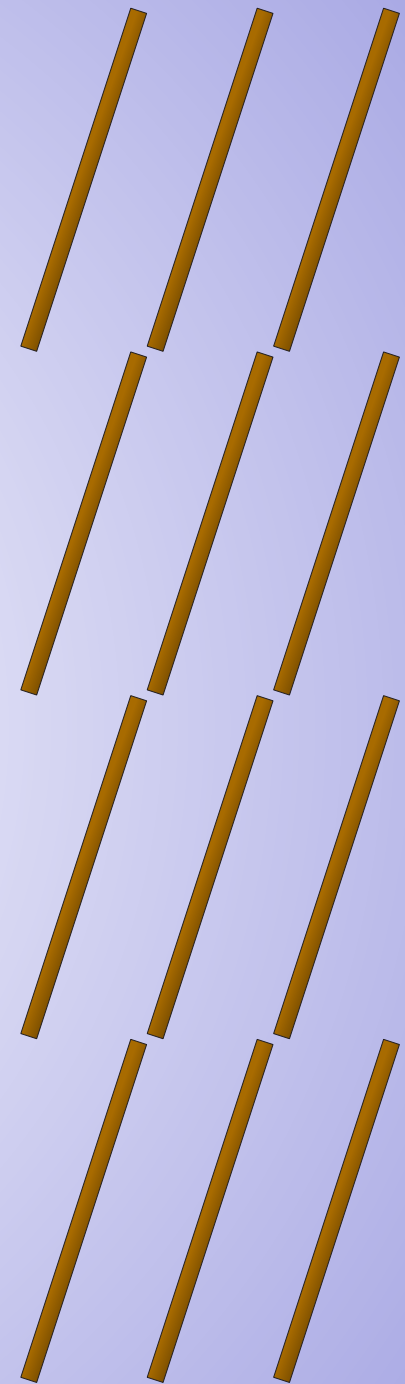
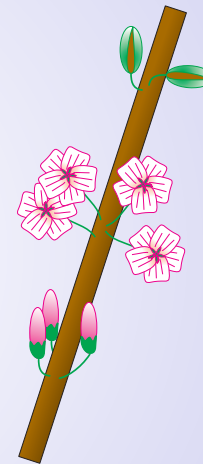
*military commander,*

*prophet*

*farmer...*

Aaron

*priest chosen by God*



## Matters of life and death

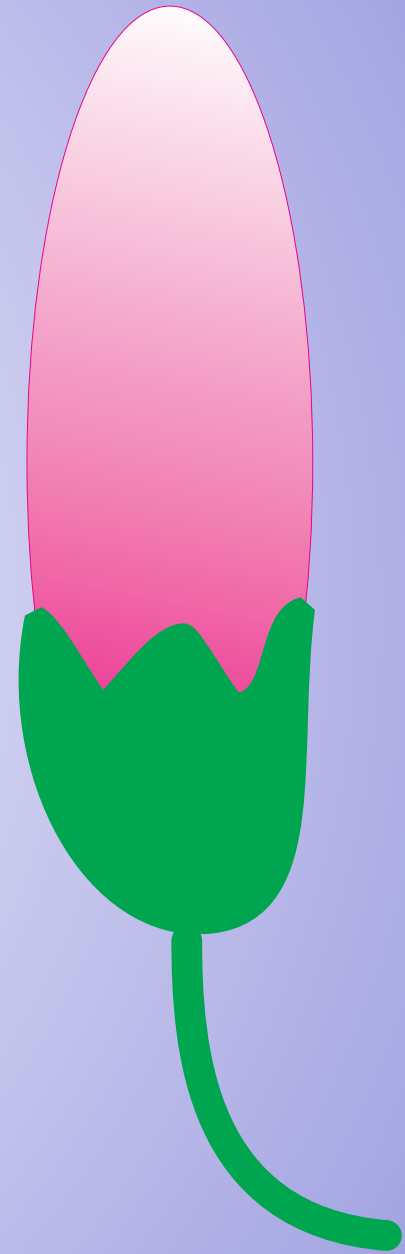
*the bud and the sacrifice*

Life, but not as we know it!

From bud to fruit in one night

Death makes the sacrifice holy, and hence a  
source of life  
(Numbers 18:9)

Jesus said “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.  
(NIV Jn 15:5–6)



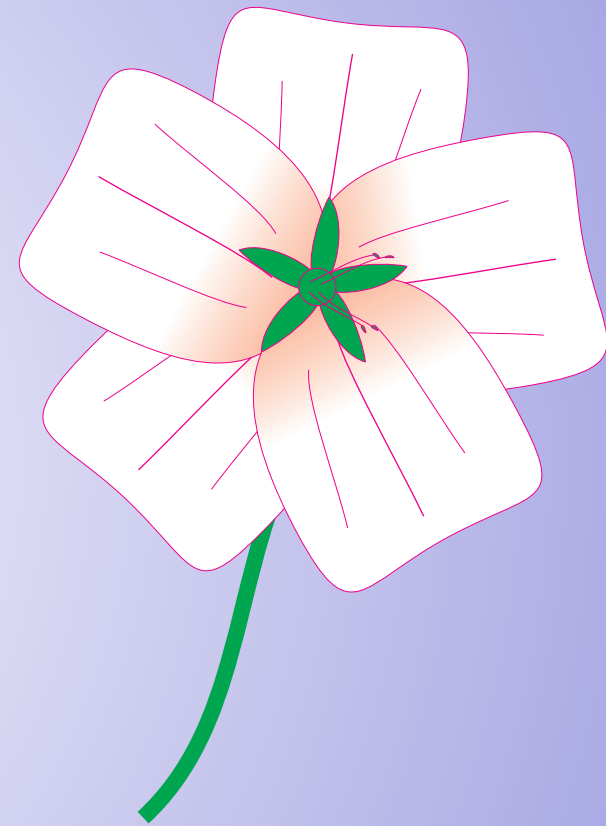
## Holy to the LORD

*the blossom and the firstborn*

The decoration on the tabernacle lampstands is almond blossom. It probably signifies the presence, purity and holiness of God. (Exodus 25:33,34)

Aaron tends the lamps, which shine on the shewbread of the tribes  
(Numbers 8)

The firstborn are holy to the LORD,  
redeemed with money paid to the priests, a  
covenant sign (Nu. 18:16,19)



## Watchfulness

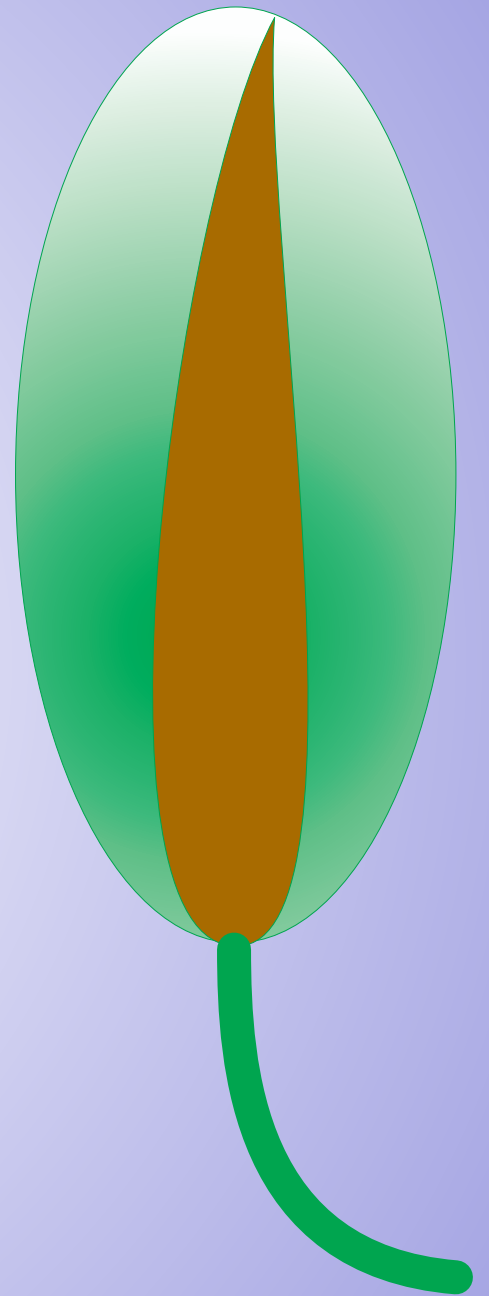
*the almond and the guard*

almond = shaqed

watching = shaqad (Jeremiah 1:11,12)

Aaron is to watch over the holy things (18:3) to keep the people from wrath (18:5). If he fails, he suffers guilt himself (18:3).

Ezekiel 33:6 - the watchman must sound the warning trumpet, or he is responsible for the death of the citizens.



## The new covenant

*What changes, what remains?*

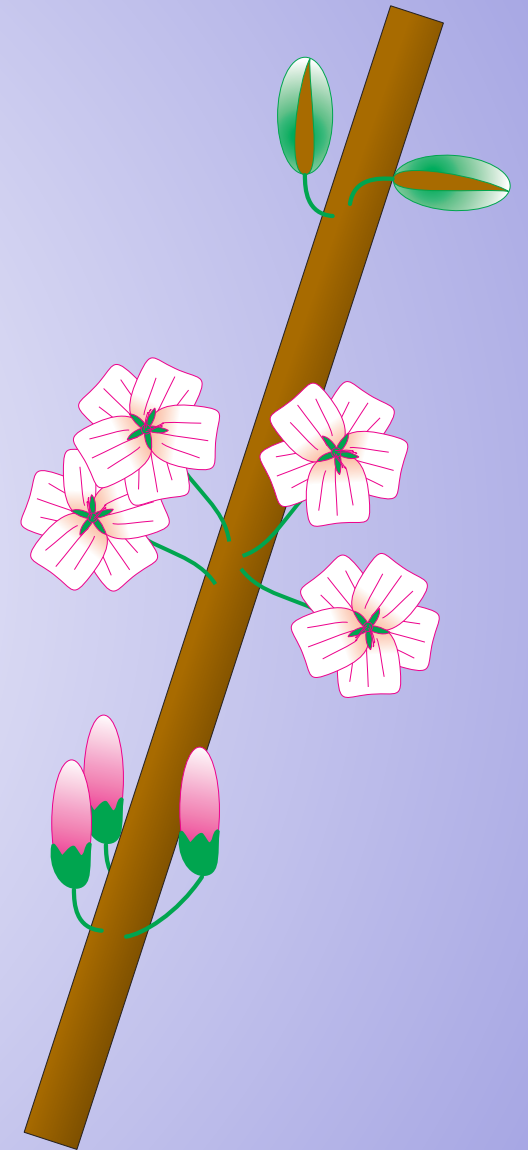
*Every profession is Holy to the LORD.*

*(Zechariah 14:20, Ephesians 6:7,8)*

*Every believer is a priest, with access to the mercy seat, the throne of grace. Our high priest is Jesus, who opens the way, not bars it.*

*(Hebrews 4:15,16)*

*But we still need spiritual professionals, to shepherd the flock!*



## The new covenant

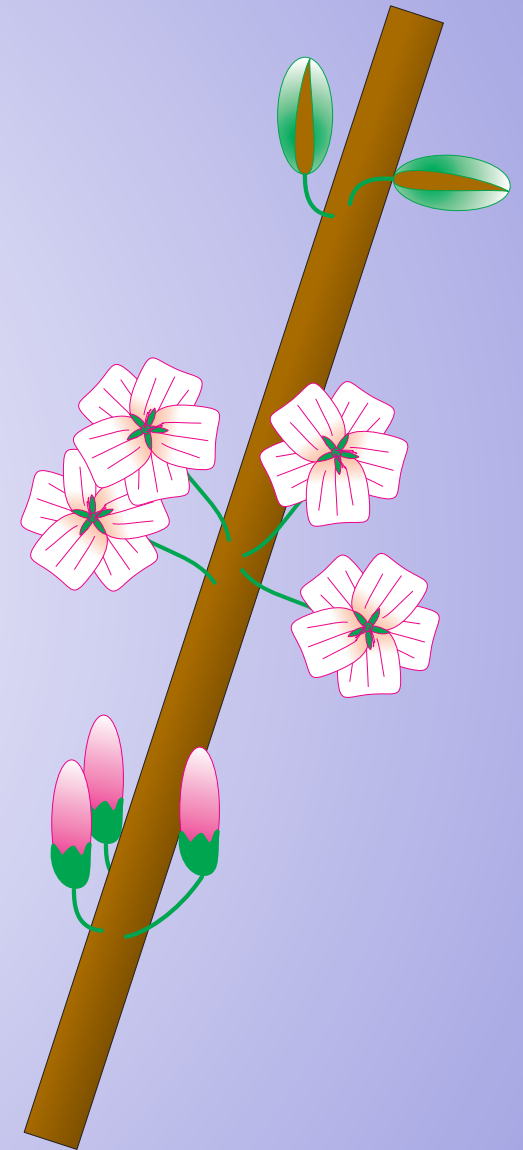
*What changes, what remains?*

We still need spiritual professionals, to shepherd the flock!

Preachers and teachers are worthy of 'double honour' (1 Timothy 5:17)

But you, man of God, ... pursue righteousness... (1 Timothy 6:11,12)

The well qualified craftsman (2 Timothy 2:15)



## The new covenant

*What changes, what remains?*

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (NIV Acts 20:28)

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (NIV Heb 13:17)

And remember quality costs!

