

Series: **Exodus: Seeing God in the Journey**
 Title: **Clothed In Christ: The Priestly Garments**
 Text: **Ex. 28-29; Ex. 39; Num 3-4; Lev. 8**

The Priest is called to serve

Ex. 28:1

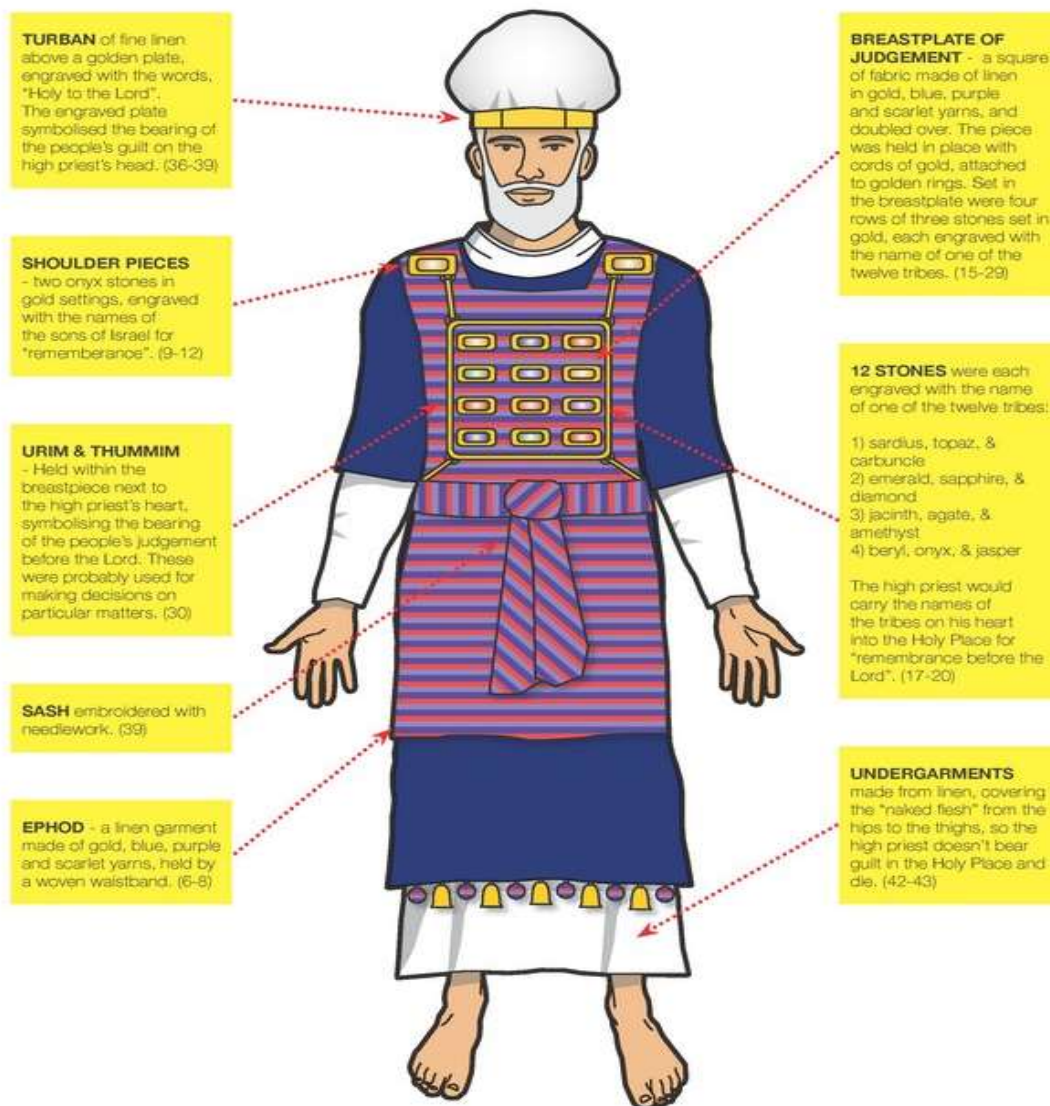
“Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons”

- (Num. 3) Two did wrong - Nadab and Abihu died before the Lord when they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children. (Num. 3)
- 2 served for life - Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in the lifetime of Aaron their father. (Num 3)

The Priest is dressed in holiness

Ex. 28:2-4

² And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. ³ You shall speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him for my priesthood. ⁴ These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priest.



One way the priests were to please the Lord was to obediently dress in His designed garments for them.

Three reasons they couldn't dress however they wanted when ministering in the tabernacle.

- The garments gave the priests "dignity and honor and set them apart." (Ex. 28:2)
- Just as a uniform identifies a soldier or a nurse, they revealed spiritual truths relating to their ministry
- And related to our ministry today
If the priests didn't wear the special garments, they might die (vv. 35, 43)

Barefoot

- In His presence is Holy ground

Exodus 3:5

Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."

Joshua 5:15

And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

- Where Jesus went is Holy ground
- In Christ, where we go is Holy Ground

Under Tunic

- The tunic of fine woven linen which the priest had to wear signifies the covering of Christ as our perfect righteousness in humanity.
- Jesus, in His purity while among humanity and sinlessness as human, is qualified to be our perfect righteousness covering us before God.
- We too have been made clean as His priests

Rev 19:7-8

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

Robe

Exodus 28:34-35

³⁴ a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, around the hem of the robe. ³⁵ And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before the Lord, and when he comes out, so that he does not die.

- Blue robe with tassels at the bottom.
- The high priest was required to have gold bells attached to the hem of his garment, so that "the sound of the bells will be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the Lord and when he comes out, so that he will not die" (Exodus 28:35).

- Were worn for safety. Revealed Service
 - As long as they could hear the sound they knew he was about the service he was called to.
 - You could hear the service taking place – it was not hidden
- Bells – to be heard. That service was being done. Lest he die
- Pomegranates – two views of the pomegranates
 - It represented the return to Eden in that all the capacity of seeds to bring life are presented within. That the priest, prepared, cleansed, and humble returns to the presence of God as it had been in Eden.
 - It represented the duties each has that is to be done unto the Lord
 - Jewish History calls these Mitzvahs – One rabbi stated that there were 613 seeds in each one which represents the laws of the Torah.
 - Some researchers have tried to have a study done of pomegranates from all over the world taken and counted. And the average coming up as 613. – It is likely that the duties and obedience we are to offer the Lord is to be plentiful and complete.
- Jesus fulfilled all the laws and duties.
- We are created unto good works.

Sash

Ex. 39:29

...and the sash of fine twined linen and of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, embroidered with needlework, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

- Bound multiple times around the tunic from hip to chest
 - Binding up any that would cause him to trip – ready for service
 - Armor of God – the Belt of TRUTH
- Jesus is the Truth
- We are to worship in Spirit and in Truth

Ephod – Ex. 28:6-30

Ex. 28:6-7

⁶ And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and of fine twined linen, skillfully worked. ⁷ It shall have two shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together.

- A shoulder covering like a pinafore or short jumper. Sleeveless.
 - 2 ONYX Stones on the shoulder
 - Covered upper front and back, made in two parts and clasped together at the shoulder with an onyx stone on each shoulder.
 - Six names of six tribes on one shoulder, six names of the other tribes on the other shoulder.
- The priest was to carry the burden of God's people on his shoulders
- Jesus took on the sins of the world upon his shoulder
- We are to represent the kingdom of God as Ambassadors everywhere we go

Breastplate

Ex. 28:15

"You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work. In the style of the ephod you shall make it.

- Over the Ephod was a breastplate.
 - A pouch about 22cm square of beautifully woven material. Inlaid with gold were twelve stones with the names of the tribes of Israel on them.
 - *“Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart . . . as a continuing memorial before the Lord”* (Exodus 28:29).
- God wanted Aaron to wear the “breastpiece of decision” to symbolize that the high priest represented the people before God:

Urim and Thummim

Ex. 28:30

And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the Lord.

- Two stones placed in the pouch
 - It was called the “breastpiece of decision” because the Urim and Thummim, which were associated with the breastpiece, were used to determine God’s will in various matters.
- Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev 19)
- We Have His Word and His Spirit to discern his Will

Heb. 1:1-2

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Turban

Ex. 28:36-37

³⁶ “You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, ‘Holy to the Lord.’ ³⁷ And you shall fasten it on the turban by a cord of blue. It shall be on the front of the turban.

- The turban was plain white, with a gold plate placed at the forehead. On the plate were inscribed the words “Holy to the Lord.”
 - This gold plate “will be on Aaron’s forehead continually so that [the children of Israel] will be acceptable to the Lord” (Exodus 28:38).
- This reminder of consecration, placed so conspicuously on the outfit, symbolized the importance of approaching the Lord God in holiness.
- Jesus is the one who is called Holy Holy Holy
 - He is crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords
- We are called to be Holy as He is Holy

Holiness is required to glorify God

God desired for Israel to be “a kingdom of priests” to share His blessings and reveal His glory to the surrounding unbelieving nations. (Ex. 19:6)

- But to glorify the Holy God, Israel would need to be a holy people.

- So God called the Aaronic priesthood (Aaron’s family) and the Levites (Num. 3-4) to serve and represent the people before Him in the tabernacle.
- They were also to represent God to the people by helping them obey the law through their teaching (Lev. 10:8-11; Deut. 33:10; Mal. 2:7).
- God didn’t choose Aaron and the Levites because of any special merit on their part, but rather as an act of sovereign grace.

Israel, however, failed in their role as a kingdom of priests.

- Instead of helping the people worship God, the spiritual leadership slowly decayed to the point of allowing idol worship in God’s temple (Ezek. 8).
- So God disciplined His people by permitting the Babylonians to carry thousands of Jews into exile. The Babylonians not only destroyed Jerusalem, but also the temple. Why? *“But it happened because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests who shed within her the blood of the righteous” (Lam. 4:13).*

Holiness comes through Christ

The priesthood relates to you and me today

God wants His church to minister in this world...

- ...as a “holy priesthood” and a “royal priesthood”
- ...make a noise

1 Peter 2:5

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.

God wants His church to proclaim His praises

- If God’s people are faithful in their priestly ministry, they will “proclaim the praises of Him who called [them] out of darkness into His marvelous light”

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

We are chosen to go and to bear fruit

Like Aaron and his sons, we didn’t choose God. Rather, “[He] chose us” as an act of divine grace.

John 15:16

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

God saves sinners, makes us His children, and then equips us to be His “holy priesthood”.

Our first priority is to please God and serve Him.

If we accomplish this, then He will work in us and through us to achieve His work in this world.

As we study the Old Testament priesthood, we see parallels between the past work of the Jewish priests and the church’s ministry today of “the holy priesthood”.