

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Open up your bible to Exodus 28

We have been looking at the Tabernacle for the last few weeks –

On top of Mt. Sinai, Moses received precise instruction on how to build a sanctuary for God, its vessels and its courtyard –

And as we will see in the next few weeks, God also provided instructions on all the services that were to occur within the Tabernacle.

“Moses, this is how I want my people to worship me!!!”

You see, the Tabernacle is where God was going to dwell among the people.

It would serve as the spiritual heart of Israel.

As they wandered the wilderness for 40 years – as God gave them instruction to move their camp - they would have to move the Tabernacle with them.

And as we have studied the Tabernacle, we see that everything points to Jesus Christ.

You see, God often uses pictures to communicate spiritual truth.

Nowhere is that more true than in the Tabernacle

All of the metals are indicative symbolic of Jesus Christ

Wood – humanity/man

Gold – Deity/God

Silver - Redemption

Bronze - Judgment

So we have God becoming man to judge the sins of the world on Himself to redeem mankind

Someone once wrote, “The Tabernacle is God’s storybook with pictures for babes in Christ”

If you are a new believer and have a hard time trying to understand what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross – look at the Tabernacle.

This morning, we are going to go over the garments that were worn by the priests as they served in the Tabernacle – and most of the focus is going to be on the garment of the High Priest.

And we will see once again, how it all points to Jesus.

Let’s pray...

Show garments -

**[Exo 28:1-43 NKJV] 1 "Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron [and] Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

God chose Aaron and his sons to be priests.

God didn't tell Moses to go down the mountain and ask around if anyone had any ambitions of being a priest – it was a calling from God.

Aaron and his sons did not earn this invitation because they were good or because they were obedient or better than anyone else.

In fact, when Moses does come down the mountain – Aaron is the going to be the one he finds making a golden calf for the people to worship

**And when Moses questions him – he pretty much says, "I threw the gold in the fire and out popped a golden calf"**

The first two sons that are mentioned here – after the Tabernacle is built, the very first sacrifice they are going to offer God, God barbecues them because they failed to adhere to the precise instructions that God had given them.

So God chooses Aaron and his son to serve as priests –

All priests had to be Levites but not all Levites got to be priests –

Church, Jesus Christ is our High Priest and because we are linked to Him by grace, that makes each and every one of us priests.

**[1Pe 2:9 NKJV] 9 But you [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

**[Rev 1:5b-6 NKJV] 5b To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him [be] glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.**

Church as priests, each of us has a role to play in ministry.

And the first thing we need to do is find out what ministry He has called us to –

How do we do that, by serving – not by sitting.

God will steer you in the right path.

It is easier to steer a moving car than it is a parked car -

**2 "And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. 3 "So you shall speak to all [who are] gifted artisans, whom I have **filled with the spirit of wisdom**, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.**

God selected Aaron to be the High Priest – he was the only one who could go into the Most Holy Place once a year –

And God tells Moses to speak to those that He has already anointed and gifted to be able to do the work.

You see, God didn't just give instruction to Moses and told him to figure it out.

God anointed those that were going to make these holy garments for Aaron.

Once again, where He leads, He provides.

The purpose of these holy garments was to “set apart” Aaron as he was ministering to the Lord.

**4 "And these [are] the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.**

Three times in the first four verse, we see that God repeated the instruction – that the work of the priest was to minister to Him.

What does it mean to minister to Him –

Giving thanks, praising, and worshipping are all example of ministering to the Lord.

However, there is another dimension to what it means to minister to Him.

Turn with me to Luke 10

**[Luk 10:38-42 NKJV] 38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." 41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."**

The difference between Martha and Mary is that Martha ministered to the guests in her hours, while Mary ministered to Him.

Yes, we are called to minister to his people.

Indeed, Jesus said, "As much as you do it to the least of these, you do it unto me."

But let us not become so busy or focused on the needs of people around us that we miss the primary calling of ministry is to Him.

Remember the church in Ephesus in Rev 2 – they lost their first love – they got so caught up in ministering to the people and the church programs that they forgot to minister to Him.

5 "They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet [thread], and the fine linen,  
6 "and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, [and] scarlet [thread], and  
fine woven linen, artistically worked. 7 "It shall have two shoulder straps joined  
at its two edges, and [so] it shall be joined together. 8 "And the intricately woven  
band of the ephod, which [is] on it, shall be of the same workmanship, [made of]  
gold, blue, purple, and scarlet [thread], and fine woven linen. 9 "Then you shall  
take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: 10  
"six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of  
their birth. 11 "With the work of an engraver in stone, [like] the engravings of a  
signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel.  
You shall set them in settings of gold. 12 "And you shall put the two stones on  
the shoulders of the ephod [as] memorial stones for the sons of Israel. **So Aaron  
shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial.**

If these colors sound familiar to us – they should.

Because it is the same colors of the inner curtain that covered the tabernacle.

That curtain was supposed to represent heaven –

So when the priest enters the Tabernacle, he fits in with heaven and when he leaves,  
his clothes are a reminder of where he has been.

Now, I had you make a note of the two onyx stones that had the name of the 12 tribes engraved on them.

Six names on one stone and the other six names on the other stones – all engraved in chronological order.

So as Aaron would enter the Tabernacle, he would be carrying the burden of the nation of Israel upon his shoulders – just like Jesus carried our burden (our sins) as He hung on a cross that was meant for you and me.

Even when Jesus provided the parable of the lost sheep – what did the shepherd do when he left the 99 to find the lost sheep? He laid it on his shoulders rejoicing and went home and called his friends, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’

**13 "You shall also make settings of gold, 14 "and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings.**

**15 "You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet [thread], and fine woven linen, you shall make it. 16 "It shall be doubled into a square: a span [shall be] its length, and a span [shall be] its width.**

The breastplate of judgment was supposed to be made so it matched the ephod.

The dimensions were supposed to be a span in length and a span in width – if you are wondering what a span is – it was the distance between your thumb and your pinky (usually about 6”)

**17 "And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: [The first] row [shall be] a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; [this shall be] the first row; 18 "the second row [shall be] a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; 19 "the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; 20 "and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. 21 "And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, [like] the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.**

And here we have how the breast plate and the ephod were connected -

**22 "You shall make chains for the breastplate at the end, like braided cords of pure gold. 23 "And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. 24 "Then you shall put the two braided [chains] of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate; 25 "and the [other] two ends of the two braided [chains] you shall fasten to the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front. 26 "You shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the ephod. 27**

**"And two [other] rings of gold you shall make, and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. 28 "They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, using a blue cord, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod. 29 "So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy [place], as a memorial before the LORD continually.**

With the ephod, we saw that the High Priest would bear the burdens on his shoulder – here with the breastplate of judgment, we see him bear the nation of Israel on his heart.

Church, If we don't have sincere love for others in our hearts, we won't be concerned about their needs, and we will not help them.

Helping people and meeting their spiritual needs is what ministry is all about.

This demands a great deal of patient love on our part and willingness to sacrifice our convenience for the sake of others.

We are a "holy royal priesthood," but we also must constantly be a "loving priesthood."

Jesus sees every single one of us as a precious gem and there is no one on earth He loves more than He loves you and me – that is why He died for us.

Because He holds us next to His heart.

**30 "And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.**

The breast plate contained a pouch and the pouch contained the Urim and the Thummin.

The names Urim and Thummim mean "Light and Perfection."

These were used to help discern God's will.

We really don't know what they consisted of.

Some people think that they might have looked like dice – others believe that it consisted of a black and white stone – so if the priest pulled a white stone, it was a yes and a black stone – it was a no.

We really don't know.

Believers today don't have devices such as the Urim and Thummim for determining what God wants us to do – because we walk by faith and not by sight.

but we do have the Word of God to guide our steps.

God reveals Himself in His word, His character, His desires and His purposes for His people, and the better we know God, the better we can discover His will. God's Word contains precepts for us to obey, warnings for us to heed, promises for us to claim, and principles for us to follow.

If we're sincerely willing to obey, God is willing to direct us.

**31 "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32 "There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear. 33 "And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: 34 "a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around. 35 "And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy [place] before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die.**

This blue robe resembled a poncho –

And on the bottom of the robe it was adorned with bells and ornaments that resembled pomegranates – look at verse 33 closely, it says you shall make pomegranates – not attach pomegranates to the bottom of the robe.

So as the high priest would be ministering to the Lord, he would sound like Santa Claus.

Now, over the years, in more than one occasion – I have heard different people trying to explain the bells by trying to say that they were there in case the High Priest was struck dead by God because He didn't accept the offering.

And so the saying goes that the High Priest would tie a rope around his ankle and if the priests couldn't hear the bells anymore, they would pull the dead corpse away from the Most Holy place.

The problem with this is that it is not biblical – and God was very precise on the instructions regarding the Tabernacle and as we have seen today regarding the garments of the priests – there is no mention of a rope.

It is not even in Jewish tradition.

It is simply something that sounds good.

So what are the bells for???

When you look at the furnishings of the Tabernacle – did anyone ever notice that there is no chair or sofa in the Tabernacle?

The reason is because they were under the law – the law speaks of works – the work of the priest was never finished.

There were always sacrifices that had to be made.

There were wicks to be trimmed and lamps to be filled with oil.

So as long as the priest was moving, and the bells were ringing – it would indicate to the people that God was pleased with the service and everything was ok.

Remember, the people of Israel could not see what was going on in the Tabernacle because only the priests were allowed to go in – but they could hear.

**36 "You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, [like] the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37 "And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. 38 "So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it **shall always be on his forehead**, that they may be accepted before the LORD.**

One cannot come before God without holiness.

**[Heb 12:14 NKJV] 14 Pursue peace with all [people], and **holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:****

Well that does me in –

But if I am in Christ – I can be holy before God.

**[1Th 4:7-8 NLT] 7 God has called us to live holy lives, not impure lives. 8**

**Therefore, anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.**

The Holy Spirit wants to produce “holy-ness” in us. We need to lean on Him and let Him do that.

**39 "You shall skillfully weave the tunic of fine linen [thread], you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work. 40 "For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty. 41 "So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. 42 "And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs. 43 "They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy [place], that they do not incur iniquity and die. [It shall be] a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.**

Here in the last few verse of the chapter we have the garment requirement for the priests –

They were forced to wear underwear – God wanted to make sure that their nakedness would not be exposed as they while ministering –

At the end of chapter 20 – God commands them to build an altar – he tells them to build a ramp to it instead of putting steps up to it.

Why?

Because when going up steps – one lifts up their foot and it could expose their nakedness -

Their robes were special but not much compared to the glory and beauty of the High Priest's garments –

The fine linen speaks of righteousness and salvation. (Psalm 132:9,16)

As priests, we must remember that we are robed in His righteousness – not our own righteousness.

This means that when God looks at us, he doesn't see our wardrobe stained in sin – but through the fine linen of His son.

Amen

Let's pray...