

Out of Bondage onto Promise

Exodus 28:1-43

- After describing the “**Tabernacle**”, the place Israel was to bring their sacrifices and offerings to, Moses is now going to receive instructions concerning the “**Priesthood**”, those who were responsible for handling those sacrifices and offerings. Remember in **Ex 19:6** > God said it was His desire for Israel be “**a Kingdom of Priests**” in the world, revealing His glory and sharing His blessings with the unbelieving nations around them. But in order to magnify “**a Holy God**” Israel had to be “**a holy people**” and that’s where the Aaronic Priesthood came into play.
- It was the task of the **Priests** (Aaron’s family line) and the **Levites** (the families of Kohath, Gershon, and Merari,) the sons of Levi, to serve in the Tabernacle and represent the people before God, they also were to bring God to the people by teaching them the Law and helping them to obey it, and this is where God spoke to Moses and told him how they were to do it.

V1-43

- **V1-4** Moses is told to set Aaron and his sons aside so that they could be used by God as one of His ministers, notice before they could serve the people they first needed “**to minister to God**”. It was Spurgeon who said “**before he sees the face of man, let him first see God**” this was the purpose of his devotional life, to see God well before he tried to minister to man.
- So it is for you and I that if were to protect ourselves from serving in the flesh we need to make sure were meeting regularly with the Lord, so that none of what were doing for Him is being done in our own strength but in the Power of the Lord. To stop the Priesthood from being a place of ambition and self-glory, it could be entered in only by God’s calling and invitation. That was done by birthright, one had to be born into a priestly family, that’s how you knew you were called, it took all the guess work out of it, so it couldn’t be earned or taken, only given by God.
- We also see what was to made and who was to make it, we see a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a tunic, a turban, and a sash. The people who made it were only those who were skilled in their craft, whom the Lord would fill with the spirit of wisdom. So it wasn’t enough to be good at what you did, you also had to have been touched by God’s Spirit to know what He wanted you to do.
- There are plenty of people who know how to do things, but so precious few that are touched by God’s Spirit in knowing when to do them, and how it can be used to glorify God. Much of what we see in ministry glorifies man but causes God to be put in the shadows as man receives the glory, when it’s done by people called by God and touched with His Spirit, all you see is the Lord.
- Three times in these four verses we see the phrase “**that he may minister to Me**” this shows how important it is that our first ministry be to God Himself. I cannot stress this enough if anything that were doing inside the church or outside of the church but calling it for God’s glory, sooner or later that will be put to the test. Because eventually someone is going to offend you something terrible, something is going to happen that rubs you the wrong way, and if you are not doing whatever you say is for the Lord the first thing you’ll do is threaten to drop it.

- Before I do anything for people I first must be doing it for the Lord therefore whether man appreciates it or not I know that my heart is in the right place as it wasn't for them anyway it was for God they just benefitted from it. **V5-14** we see the garments of the High Priest, all the Priests used the same color scheme and materials of the Tabernacle, but only the High Priest wore both the Ephod-Breastplate. Gold, Blue, Purple, and scarlet, all pointed forward to the gospel > **Blue**- Deity the Book of John, **Purple**- royalty, the Book of Mathew, **Scarlet**- sacrifice, Jesus the suffering servant, the Book of Mark, **White**- speaks of Righteousness, the Book of Luke.
- The Ephod was an apron like garment made of these four colors, and it was made like this in fine linen for the look of cleanliness and coolness, not social but the weather. It had two straps with polished onyx gemstones on each strap with the inscription of six of the tribes of Israel on each stone, so the High Priest would bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders when he approached God, for that is who he was representing when he came into His presence.
- **V15-30** the breastplate contained **12** beautiful stones arranged in **4** rows of **3's** set in Gold, each would bear the name of **1** of the **12** tribes of Israel. The Ephod and the breastplate were to be woven together, now inside the breastplate would be "**the Urim and Thummim**" Urim means light, and Thummim means perfection, and each stone indicated a yes or no from God. Some suggest that when Israel approached God with a question and the High Priests sought the Lord that these stones would either flash brightly for yes or dimly for no, and that was their answer.
- **V31-35** the robe was the basic covering for the Priest and it was made of blue, on the hem was bells of gold, and pomegranates of blue and purple, this was done so that the people could hear the Priest ministering before God, for if he were to die the bells would stop tinkering and they would pull him out, this is why they tied a rope around him before he went in to see God.
- **V36-38** on his head was a turban made of linen but more important than the turban was the gold plate with the inscription "**Holiness to the Lord**". In this we see that even the gifts of sacrifices and offerings Aaron and the Priests brought before the Lord wasn't enough as it was still touched with the iniquity of the people. But because Aaron had God's name on him, and brought them in God's appointed way, then and only then was the sacrifice acceptable.
- **V39-43** for the regular Priests they also had special made garments but it was all made of fine linen, this distinguished them from the High Priest, for their clothes represented them having a lower position than that of Aaron's. We see three important aspects to the preparation of His servants > Anointing, Consecration, Sanctification.
- In order to Minister to God and for God these three things are essential > **1st Anointing**- it's the calling upon that person's life, **2nd Consecrate**- is the equipping that allows the person to do the work in which they are called, **3rd Sanctification**- it's the separation from defilement for the Power of God to flow in and through them. Finally I want to point back to the Ephod-Breastplate

- Notice one is over the **heart**- Breastplate, the other upon the **shoulder**-Ephod, in order to effectively minister to people I must first have to have a heart for people. If I do have that kind of heart than I must be willing to shoulder some burdens that people will place upon me. Many will say "**you were on my heart**", some will even say "**I prayed for you**", but few will actually be willing "**to become involved with you**", because for that to happen they must be willing to carry some weight.