

Week 15: Garments of Praise - Exodus Ch 39

Pre-Work

- To get ready for this week's lesson about the priestly garments and what they signify, please watch the following video about priesthood from the Bible Project:

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/moses-and-aaron/>

- Please read Exodus Chapter 39 in the translation of your choice. What stands out to you in these chapters? What questions arise in your mind when you read them?

Class Notes

- What are humans?
 - Images/Tselem - delegates of Elohim to rule the 'erets Gen 1:26,27
 - Composite creatures of earth (dust and mist) and ruach Gen 2:6-7
 - One that becomes two that become one Gen 2:21-24
 - Priests who “work and keep” the garden of God Gen 2:15, 1 Chr 23:32, Numbers 8:19
 - What is the role of a priest? Among other things, to intercede for others and mediate blessing (Genesis 12:3, Genesis 14:18-19 , Numbers 8:19, Numbers 17-18, Leviticus)
 - How did the priests of the garden of God do?
 - How did Israel as a nation of priests do?
 - Now from the Levites, Aaron and his descendents are called to intercede for others and mediate blessing. How do they do?
 - Does this priesthood point to a future High Priest who fulfills what all the other candidates could not do?

Hebrews 4:14, 5:5, 5:7-10

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let's hold firmly to our confession.

5 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of people in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;...

7 In the days of His humanity, He offered up both prayers and pleas with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His devout behavior. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the source of eternal

salvation for all those who obey Him, 10 being designated by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

- So today, who is the priest? 1 Peter 2:9
- The Priestly garments (Exodus 28 and 39) parallel the materials used to make the tabernacle. Thus the priest becomes the symbolic representative focus of God's presence: an image/tselem.

39 Now from the violet, purple, and scarlet *material* they made finely woven garments for ministering in the Holy Place, as well as the holy garments which were for Aaron, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

² He made the ephod of gold *and* of violet, purple, and scarlet *material*, and fine twisted linen. ³ Then they hammered out gold sheets and cut *them* into threads to be woven in *with* the violet, the purple, and the scarlet *material*, and the fine linen, the work of a skilled embroiderer. ⁴ They made attaching shoulder pieces for the ephod; it was attached at its two *upper* ends. ⁵ And the skillfully woven band of its overlay which was on it was like its workmanship, of the same material: of gold *and* of violet, purple, and scarlet *material*, and fine twisted linen, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- The materials and colors for Aaron's clothes are the same as the colors and materials of the inner curtain
- The Ephod - like an apron, with places on it to hold 12 "memorial stones"

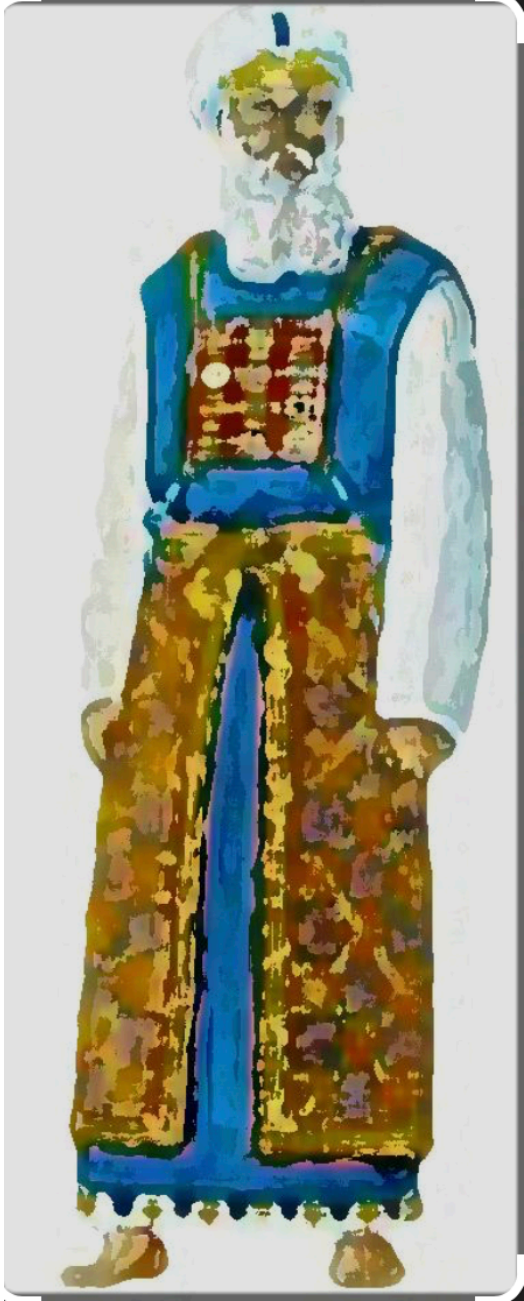
⁶ They also made the onyx stones, set in gold filigree *settings*; they were engraved *like* the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷ And he placed them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod *as* memorial stones for the sons of Israel, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁸ And he made the breastpiece, the work of a skilled embroiderer, like the workmanship of the ephod: of gold *and* of violet, purple, and scarlet *material* and fine twisted linen. ⁹ It was square; they made the breastpiece folded double, a span long and a span wide when folded double. ¹⁰ And they mounted four rows of stones on it. The first row *was* a row of ruby, topaz, and emerald; ¹¹ and the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹² and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ¹³ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They were set in gold filigree *settings* when they were mounted. ¹⁴ The stones corresponded to the names of the sons of Israel; they were twelve, corresponding to their names, *engraved with* the engravings of a signet, each with its name for the twelve tribes.

- The precious stones symbolize the families of the chosen ones, so that when Aaron fulfills his duties of intercession and mediation of blessing, all of Israel is symbolically participating with him. The real stones are symbols of living people.

¹⁵ And they made for the breastpiece chains like cords, work of twisted cords of pure gold. ¹⁶ They made two gold filigree *settings* and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. ¹⁷ Then they put the two gold cords in the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. ¹⁸ And they put the *other* two ends of the two cords on the two filigree *settings*, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front of it. ¹⁹ They made two gold rings and placed *them* on the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inner edge which was next to the ephod. ²⁰ Furthermore, they made two gold rings and placed them on the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the front of it, close to the place where it joined, above the woven band of the ephod. ²¹ And they bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet cord, so that it would be on the woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece would not come loose from the ephod, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- Breastpiece was for representing Israel and to hold the Urim and Thummim (Ex 28)
- Urim and Thummim
- What did it look like?



²² Then he made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of violet; ²³ and the opening of the robe was *at the top* in the center, as the opening of a coat of mail, with a binding all around its opening, so that it would not be torn. ²⁴ And they made pomegranates of violet, purple, and scarlet *material and twisted linen* on the hem of the robe. ²⁵ They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates all around on the hem of the robe, ²⁶ alternating a bell and a pomegranate all around on the hem of the robe for the service, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- The rope around the ankle myth

- Bells and pomegranates at the hem 28:35, bells so he will “not die” - likely meaning: the bells were a signal to Yahweh that the High Priest was entering so he wouldn’t be killed for breaking and entering (this is symbolic)
- Pomegranates - The pomegranate seemed to be a common symbol for the garden of God, where humans and Elohim were together in the original priesthood.

²⁷They also made the tunics of finely woven linen for Aaron and his sons,²⁸ and the turban of fine linen, and the decorated caps of fine linen, and the linen undergarments of fine twisted linen,²⁹ and the sash of fine twisted linen, and violet, purple, and scarlet *material*, the work of the weaver, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

“These clothes make him what he is—a representative of every Israelite before Yahweh and a representative of Yahweh before the people. Aaron becomes part of the tabernacle, capable of carrying out effective rituals on Israel’s behalf. He traverses the space between the outer courtyard and the inner sanctuary, mediating between worlds. In fact, his clothes are an “inside-out tabernacle”: his most elaborate garments, woven with purple, blue, red, and gold thread corresponding to the materials of the innermost sanctuary, are his outermost layer. Underneath this, he wears the plain white linen of the outer curtains of the courtyard.” ~Carmen Imes, *Bearing God’s Name: Why Sinai Still Matters*

³⁰They also made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and inscribed it like the engravings of a signet, “Holy to the LORD.” ³¹Then they fastened a violet cord to it, to fasten it on the turban above, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

- “Holy to the Lord” - “set apart for Yahweh” - The head/source of the Israelite faith and calling is sacred space dedicated to Yahweh
- This concludes the section (corresponding to Ch 28) of the priestly garments, once commanded, now fulfilled
- Do you see a repeating phrase?
 - Priests as images of new creation

³²So all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was completed; and the sons of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did. ³³Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; ³⁴and the covering of rams’ skins dyed red, and the covering of fine leather, and the covering curtain; ³⁵the ark of the testimony, its poles, and the atoning cover; ³⁶the table, all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; ³⁷the pure *gold* lampstand, with its arrangement of lamps and all its utensils, and the oil

for the light; ³⁸ and the gold altar, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the curtain for the doorway of the tent; ³⁹ the bronze altar and its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils, the basin and its stand; ⁴⁰ the hangings for the courtyard, its pillars and its bases, and the curtain for the gate of the courtyard, its ropes and its pegs, and all the equipment for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; ⁴¹ the woven garments for ministering in the Holy Place, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to serve as priests. ⁴² So the sons of Israel did all the work according to everything that the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁴³ And Moses examined all the work, and behold, they had done it; just as the LORD had commanded, this they had done. So Moses blessed them.

- This is the ordered space of the new Garden, but the functions within the Garden have yet to be described (that's found in Leviticus)
- Order of completion
 - The Lord Commanded Moses (ch 28, 39:42b)
 - The Israelites did the work (v42a)
 - Moses examined the work (v43a)
 - The proper completion of the work is confirmed (v43b)
 - Moses blesses the Israelites who did the work (v43c)
- Order of the feeding of 5,000 Matthew 14:16-22
 - The Lord Commands the disciples "You give them something to eat" v16
 - The disciples distributed the broken bread v19
 - The disciples examined the miracle (gathered 12 baskets of leftovers) v20
 - The number of fed ones are confirmed (v21)
 - The disciples go into the sea while Jesus dismisses the crowds v22 (The twist!)

Reflections