

The Garments Of The High Priest

1. The High Priest was the main, or Chief Priest, who was in charge of all the other priests. He was the one who had to go one time per year, into what was known as the Holy of Holies; to offer a sacrifice unto God, for the sins of the people. This took place on what was known as the Day of Atonement. The Holy of Holies was where God abode, and there were certain restrictions, concerning the High Priest, and his admittance into the Holy of Holies. These restrictions were of vital importance, and had to be followed to the letter.

2. We will discuss the matter, which concerns the garments of the High Priest. The garments of the High Priest, were made for glory, as well as for beauty. We read in Exodus 28:1-2: “And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Elezar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.” Aaron and his sons were the first to hold the office of the High Priest.

3. In Ex. 28:3 we read: “And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.”

A. Wise hearted-Hebrew-chakam (khaw-kawm: intelligent, skillful, artful, or capable of becoming such.

B. Spirit of wisdom. Hebrew-chokmah (khok-maw): having the same meaning as above; intelligent, and having a spirit which allows oneself to become wise in every way.

C. To consecrate him. Hebrew-qadash (kaw-dash): to be pronounced clean (spiritually and morally); to become hallowed or holy.

D. That he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.

a. Minister-Hebrew-sharath (shaw-rath): to attend, or to contribute to; to serve, or to wait on.

b. The priest’s office. This is referring to the Holy of Holies, or the holiest section of the temple; behind the curtain.

4. Verses 4-5 of Exodus chapter 28 tells us of the different pieces, which make up the High Priest’s garments; as well as the different materials which were used in the construction of them. We read in these two verses: “And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple,

and scarlet, and fine linen.”

5. We read in Ex. 28:6-14, of the making of the ephod: “And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engraving of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial;. And thou shalt make ouches of gold; And two chains of pure gold at the ends; of wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.” Exodus 39:2-7 also tells us: “And he made the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work. They made shoulderpieces for it, to couple it together: by the two edges was it coupled together. And the curious girdle of his ephod, that was upon it, was of the same, according to the work thereof; of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; as the Lord commanded Moses. And they wrought onyx stones enclosed in ouches of gold, graven, as signets are graven, with the names of the children of Israel. And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, that they should be stones for a memorial to the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses.” The ephod was a long vest, which was worn by the High Priest when he presided at the altar. It took much fine-technical work, in the making of the ephod. The ephod was worn over the robe of the priest; and it was made of fine linen, and other threads of pure gold, blue, purple, and scarlet in color. The ephod consisted of two pieces joined at the shoulders, and bound together at the bottom by a woven band of the same material as the ephod; as a belt. The ephod looked like an apron. Upon the shoulders of the ephod, in settings of gold, were two onyx stones; upon which the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved.

6. The breastplate will be studied next. We read in Ex. 28:15-30: “And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of

the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. Foursquare it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engraving of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the ends of wreathen work of pure gold. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. And thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate.

And the other two ends of the two wreathen chains thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulderpieces of the ephod before it. And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate in the border thereof, which is in the side of the ephod inward. And two other rings of gold thou shalt make, and shall put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart thereof, over against the other coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually."

A. The breastplate was also made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet linen material.

B. *Foursquare* it shall be, being doubled. It was a perfect square piece of the outer garment to be worn over the ephod.

C. A *span* shall be the length and the width thereof. Hebrew-zereth (zeh-reth): the spread of the fingers.

D. The breastplate contained upon it, four rows of stones; three stones

each. In the first row, was a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle. In the second row, was a emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. In the third row was a ligure, an agate, and a amethyst. And in the fourth row was a beryl, an anyx, and a jasper. These twelve stones were in settings of gold. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, were engraved in the twelve stones; one tribe name in each stone. Pure gold chains were hooked at the corners of the breastplate, which were hooked by two gold rings, to the ends of the ephod on the shoulders. There were also two gold rings which held the bottom of the breastplate to the front of the ephod. These two gold rings were covered with blue lace, and were set just above the girdle, or the belt of the ephod; to hold the breastplate tight to the ephod.

E. The *urim*. Hebrew-uwriym (oo-reem): referring to a lighted or brilliant piece of stone; signifying the brilliantcy of the figures of the High Priest's breastplate. The urim was placed in a small pocket of the breastplate, which was just over the High Priest's heart.

F. The *thummim*. Hebrew-thummiym (toom-meem): referring to a piece of stone which signified perfection; a stone which also signified the complete truth; the thummim was also held in the small pocket of the breastplate; both these small stones signified that God could communicate his will unto the High Priest.

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7. We read further, of the robe of the High Priest. Ex. 28: 31-35 tells us: "And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hold of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent. And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not."

A. The robe of the High Priest was to be made of blue cloth.

B. The robe of the High Priest was wore under the ephod, and was only made with the two side holes for the arms to fit through, and the large hole in the top, for the head to fit through. The hold for the head, as well as the holes for the arms, were knitted very well, so as to prevent tearing, when slid in place. They were very well bound with knit string of some kind, all around the holes. The robe reached down to the knees, and was sleeveless.

C. Round about the hem of the bottom of the robe, were hung golden bells, and artificial pomegranates; made of yarn of various colors. The pomegranates added to the beauty of the robe. The bells on the robe, were to let the people know that when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies, to burn incense, that he was alright; and that they may apply themselves to their own study and personal worship. They trusted that the Lord God was hearing their prayers and requests, as the High Priest was burning the incense. It has been heard and said, but not fact at all, to the best of my spiritual knowledge, that when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies, that a rope was tied about his foot; in case he presented some sort of unholiness, as he went before God. This is nothing more than idle talk, as best I can classify it. For in my studies, I have found no Biblical evidence of such talk having any truth to it. Yet it may make us wonder, how any of the High Priest were removed from the Holy of Holies, if any of them should ever fail to live up to God's expectations once entering the Holy place. We are never told, that I am aware of, that any of the High Priests ever failed to come out of the Holy of Holies. How thankful we ought to be, that Jesus Christ is now our High Priest forever.

D. Aaron, the first High Priest, must come into the presence of God, in the appointed garments, lest he die. We must all face and serve the Lord God with fear and trembling; lest we always know that we deserve to die, and are capable of making some fatal mistake. The appearance the artificial pomegranates represents the sweet savour of the gospel.

8. We read in Ex. 28:36-38: "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord."

A. The golden plate with its engraving, HOLINESS TO THE LORD, was to be a reminder to Aaron, that God is holy, and his priests must be holy. Holiness was to be within his house, and his household. The High Priest must be consecrated unto God, and be a part of no sort of spiritual misconduct whatsoever; consecrated unto all the services of God.

B. All that attend and take part in the services of the house of God, must be consecrated in their heart, and have Holiness unto the Lord engraven upon their spiritual forehead. They must never be afraid or ashamed to bear witness of the gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ; who continually goes before the Heavenly Father for us. This holiness must be engraved in our heart so

deeply, that it cannot ever be painted over, or removed in any way. It will bear record for us that we are righteous through Jesus Christ, and are no longer accountable for our sins and shortcomings; for they are now under the blood of Jesus Christ our Savior.

9. We now proceed to Ex. 28:39-43: “And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework. And for Aaron’s sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even to the thighs they shall reach: And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.”

A. The garments of the High Priest were very highly recognized, and were crafted from the finest of materials.

B. The High Priests also wore a *bonnet*. Hebrew-migbash (mig-baw-aw): a cap, or hemispherical bonnet; all for glory and beauty.

C. All of the garments and the bonnets were placed upon Aaron and his sons; and they were anointed, and consecrated and sanctified; that they may be worthy to serve in the office of High Priest before God.

D. They also wore linen *breeches*. Hebrew-miknac (mik-nawce): referring to hiding in dual; and also referring to hiding the private parts of the body. Also from the Hebrew word kamac (kaw-mas); which means to store away, or to cover. This is referring to a simple pair of men’s pants. Their purpose was to make them appear respectful, or clean (spiritual), when entering into the Holy of Holies, and when they came forth into the tabernacle of the congregation.

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Conclusion:

The garments of the High Priest was very sacred. When the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies, or when he entered the tabernacle of the congregation, he must do so in a most respectful manner. For he was a representative of the common people of God. He must be completely clean himself from sin, when he went into the Holy of Holies; for he was to offer the sacrifice for the sins of the whole congregation. He was in a very dangerous position. For if he should make one error, he would be struck dead.

This was the purpose of the bells around the bottom of his garment; so that the people on the outside could hear him as he moved, and know that he was alright. This was not because we serve a cruel God; but because we serve a Holy God. But thanks and glory be given unto Jesus Christ, for He has become our High Priest forevermore, if we will just accept Him as such, by faith. We now every one have the privilege of going into the presence of the Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ his only begotten Son. He has become our High Priest forevermore. We read in Hebrews 13:20-21: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

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