

Title: **GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS**

Text: Exodus 28:1-43

Subject: *The Tabernacle Priesthood*

Date: Tuesday Evening — April 7, 2008

Tape : Exodus #95

Readings: *Exodus 28, Leviticus 8 and Hebrews 7*
Joe Blakely and Rex Bartley

Introduction:

My subject tonight is **GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS**. The Lord Jesus Christ is our one and only, sin-atoning High Priest, our only Advocate and Heavenly Intercessor before God. We call no man a priest, but the God-man our Savior. We pray to none, worship none, and revere none but that man who is God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, every saved sinner is, in and with Christ, a priest. God's elect are called by God the Holy Spirit "*an holy nation*" and "*a royal priesthood*" (1 Peter 2). Priests are the members of the priestly family, those who live upon the sacrifice of God, ever doing business in the holy place, serving God in the sanctuary.

In Exodus 28, Aaron represents Christ, our great, sin-atoning High Priest; and Aaron's sons represent believing sinners, you and me, whom Christ has made priests unto God forever.

The Lord Jesus is called both the Apostle and the High Priest of our profession in Hebrews 3:1. An apostle is one who comes out from God with a message to men. A priest is one who goes in to God on behalf of men. The Lord Jesus Christ is both our Apostle from God and our High Priest before God. He came from God, and He went back to God. The great work of the priest was to minister unto the Lord (28:3). — "*I delight to do Thy will, O my God,*" is the language of our Great High Priest; and that is our souls' great delight, if we are among those walking in the white robes of God's holy priesthood (Revelation 1:6).

Before I try to talk to you about **GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS**, I want us to read the 28th chapter of Exodus. I would really like for us to read this chapter and Leviticus 8 and Hebrews 7; but that is not practical. So, I trust you will read those two chapters together with our text soon, while this message is still fresh on your mind.

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

(Exodus 28:1-5) “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, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. (2) And thou shalt **make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty**. (3) 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**. (4) And these *are* the garments which they shall make; a **breastplate**, and an **ephod**, and a **robe**, and a **broidered 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**. (5) And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.”

(28:6-12) “And they shall make **the ephod of gold**, *of* blue, and *of* purple, *of* scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work. (7) It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and *so* it shall be joined together. (8) 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. (9) And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: (10) Six of their names on one stone, and *the other* six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. (11) With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the engravings 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. (12) 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.”

(28:13-14) “And thou shalt make ouches *of* gold; (14) And two chains *of* pure gold at the ends; *of* wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.”

(28:15-21) “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 *of* scarlet, and *of* fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. (16) Foursquare it shall be *being* doubled; a span

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

shall be the length thereof, and a span *shall be* the breadth thereof. (17) 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. (18) And the second row *shall be* an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. (19) And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. (20) And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their enclosings. (21) And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.”

(28:22-25) “And thou shalt make upon the breastplate **chains at the ends of wreathen work of pure gold.** (23) And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. (24) And thou shalt put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breastplate. (25) And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen *chains* thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put *them* on the shoulder pieces of the ephod before it.”

(28:26-29) “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. (27) And two *other* rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt 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. (28) And they shall **bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto 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. (29) 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.**”

(28:30-32) “And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the **Urim and the Thummim**; and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and **Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.** (31) And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. (32) And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the

GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS

midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent.”

(28:33-35) “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: (34) **A golden bell and a pomegranate**, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. (35) 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**.”

(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**. (37) 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. (38) 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.”

(28:39) “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.”

(28:40-43) “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. (41) 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. (42) And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: (43) 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.”

GOD'S PRIEST

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

Aaron, God’s priest was typical of Christ our great High Priest. The priest, as you might imagine, had to be ceremonially perfect. No man that had a blemish of any kind could come near to offer the offering of the Lord (Leviticus 21:23). And our High Priest, the Lord Jesus, was “*holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*” (Hebrews 7. 26). Man could find no fault in him, and God was infinitely pleased with him. But there is much more to the type before us than ceremonial perfection. Everything we are told about Aaron in Exodus 28 and Leviticus 8 is a typical of Christ.

The first thing mentioned in this chapter is **God’s calling and appointment of Aaron** to be Israel’s high priest. — “*No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*” (Hebrews 5:4). — “*Every high priest is ordained*” (Hebrews 8:3). Even so, the Lord Jesus Christ our High Priest was the chosen and appointed of God. He is the only divinely ordained High Priest, the only “*mediator between God and man*” (1 Timothy 2.5).

Not only was Aaron called, in Leviticus 8:6 we are told that **he and his sons were washed with water**. They must be clean who bear the vessels of the Lord. Aaron is a brilliant type of Christ; but our Lord Jesus needed no such washing. Obviously, this was done to show us that though we are one with our Savior, God’s elect must be washed with the washing of regeneration by the Word as well as redeemed with the blood of atonement.

Third, **God commanded Moses to clothe his priest**, with such magnificent garments as are described in this chapter for these specific reasons:

1. For his own glory and beauty (vv. 2, 40).
2. To consecrate him as one worthy to minister before the Lord in the holy place (v. 3).
3. That he might bear the names of the children of Israel before the Lord continually (v. 12).
4. That he might, with Light (Urim) and Perfection (Thummim) bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart continually (v. 30).
5. That he might bear the iniquity of the holy things, and yet be accepted and die not (v. 38).

The coat, the robe, and the ephod were put upon him. Our great High Priest was robed in garments of glory and beauty. These holy robes were typical

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

both of his character and of his righteousness, the garments of salvation he puts upon us.

Fourth, the **priest was crowned**. The mitre, or holy crown, was put on his head. The priestly dress was not complete without the crown (Zechariah 3:1-5).

- The priest must be one fit to wear a crown.
- The Mediator between God and man must be one able to wear, and worthy of the glorious crown.
- The crown of holiness is his by right!

Then, fifth, **Aaron was anointed**. — “*Moses poured the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head*” (Leviticus 8:12). The anointing Spirit was poured out upon the head of God’s beloved as He stood by the Jordan. The Spirit, like a dove, crowned him with glory and honor. He is the Lord’s Anointed.

Sixth, **Aaron was sprinkled with the blood, consecrated** to the work and had his hands filled for the Lord (Leviticus 8:24-27). He was claimed by God as his priest, and God filled his hands with the work he must perform.

(Leviticus 8:24-27) “And he brought Aaron’s sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about. (25) And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that *was* upon the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder: (26) And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that *was* before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat, and upon the right shoulder: (27) And he put all upon Aaron’s hands, and upon his sons’ hands, and waved them *for* a wave offering before the LORD.”

The voice from Heaven said, “*This is My beloved Son*” — and the Father claimed the Savior. The Spirit was given unto him without measure — and his hands were filled. His holy hands were indeed filled for God and for man (Matthew 1:21).

Now, watch this. — **Aaron, the priest, fed on the bread of consecration** (Leviticus 8:31; 21:22). The holy bread was his. What none other could

GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS

touch was his by right of his character as priest. The Lord Jesus once said to his disciples, “*I have a meat to eat that ye know not of.*”

(Leviticus 8:31) “And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons, Boil the flesh *at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation*: and there eat it with the bread that *is* in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.”

(Leviticus 21:22) “He shall eat the bread of his God, *both* of the most holy, and of the holy.”

No man that hath a blemish shall come nigh to offer the offering of the Lord (Leviticus 21. 23). Our High Priest was “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” (Hebrews 7. 26). Man could find no fault in Him, and God was infinitely pleased with Him. Aaron is a type of Christ.

GOD'S PRIESTS

As Aaron was typical of Christ, God's Priest, Aaron's sons represented God's priests, those who belong to that “*royal priesthood*” of saved sinners, all who come to God by faith in Christ. May God the Holy Spirit now take the things which are Christ's and show them to us, showing us that they are ours, by virtue of our union with him. Both here (Exodus 28) and in Leviticus 8 I see some obvious matters of tremendous importance and blessedness, though they are commonly missed by those whom I have read in my studies.

First, **the names** of the priest and the priests are constantly set before us in very close association. Twenty-eight times we read these words together — “*Aaron and his sons.*”

- They were chosen together.
- They were called, ordained and accepted together.
- They were clothed with the holy garments together.

Oh, the depths! We were chosen in Christ “*before the foundation of the world.*” Called, clothed, and accepted with him, as one with him from eternity!

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

Aaron’s sons were all priests by birth. So are we. We are priests because we are sons. We the sons of God, blood relatives to the Great High Priest, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh.

Second, Aaron and his sons had the same calling. Their hands were filled with the same work. — *“As the Father hath sent me, so have I sent you”* (John 20. 21). He hath made us priests unto God. Are we abiding in our high and holy calling, or are we doing nothing at it just now?

Third, **Aaron and his sons had the same white linen garments.** Aaron had robes of glory and beauty that belonged to him alone. They were distinctly his as God’s only high priest. Yet, all his sons wore the pure linen garments he wore. — Without question, there are glories that belong to the Lord Jesus Christ as the divine and eternal One we can never possess, but, like him, we are clothed with fine linen, clean and white.

“With His spotless garments on
Holy as the Holy One!”

Fourth, **they had the same anointing.** They were accepted by the same blood and anointed with the same oil. Christ is entered by his own blood, and so are we as His. The same Spirit that come upon him is our anointing, the unction of the Holy One (1 John 2:27). How unerring the type. The oil was first poured upon Aaron’s head before it was given unto his sons. The Spirit was given unto Christ without measure that he might give the Spirit to his redeemed. — *“The promise is unto you, and to your children”* (Acts 2:39; Galatians 3:13-14).

Fifth, **both Aaron and his sons had their hands filled with the same offering.** We have nothing else to offer God on our behalf than that which Christ, our Aaron, offered. We wave before the Lord that which our blessed Lord Jesus waves.

- Obedience — Perfect Righteousness!
- Satisfaction — Complete Atonement!

Sixth, **both Aaron and his sons ate the same food.** They fed on the same holy bread. The Lord Jesus lived by faith, so must we. His soul rested on and was strengthened by the promises of his Father. This also is our high privilege. Live as he lived. He *“left us an example that we should follow his steps”* (1 Peter 2:21).

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

But I think there is more here. As our Lord’s sacrifice satisfies him as our just God and Savior, so it satisfies our souls!

Seventh, Aaron and his sons were **priests by the same authority**. They had their rightful place in the holy place by the sacrifice they brought, because they were ordained of God to bring the sacrifice.

PRIESTLY GARMENTS

The garments set before us in this chapter, made specifically for God’s priest and his priests reveal much about both our great Savior and the poor souls saved by his accomplishments as our Great High Priest. Let me drop a few hints tonight. The Lord willing, when I get back from England, I will tell you a little more. For now, notice just this...

THE COAT — This was made of “fine white linen,” and worn next to the body. “White linen is the righteousness of the saints” (Revelation 19:8). The white linen was not to cover uncleanness, but to cover nakedness.

THE ROBE — This robe was worn over the white linen coat, and was “*all of blue*.” It was “*curiously wrought*,” and “*without seam*.” As the “*white linen*” speaks of the perfect man, so “*all of blue*” speaks of the Lord from Heaven. “*Curiously wrought*” in His incarnation, and with regard to His eternal existence, “*without seam*.” — This robe of blue was worn by the high priest alone. it represents something belonging to Christ which cannot be put upon His people — DIVINITY — GODHEAD.

Attached to the skirt of this robe were “**GOLDEN BELLS**” and “**POMEGRANATES**.” — The bells speak of a harmonious, joyful sound. — “*Fear not, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born a Saviour which is CHRIST THE LORD*” (Luke 2:11). The bells and pomegranates, with their joyful sound ringing in the court, seem to speak of the joy with which our blessed Savior performed and performs his work as our Great High Priest!

THE EPHOD — This part of the priestly attire was worn above the “robe of blue.” It was made of the same materials as the veil, “*blue, purple, and scarlet*.” We have the same order here as in the curtains. The white coat, represents the character and the righteousness of Christ.

GOD’S PRIEST AND GOD’S PRIESTS

There was also a **GIRDLE** connected with the ephod, made of the same materials. The girdle means service.. Thus we learn that even while the priest was clothed with these “robes for glory and beauty” he was still in the attitude of serving. Our great High Priest, although now robed with glory and beauty, still wears the golden girdle of service (Revelation 1:13).

THE BREASTPLATE — This breastplate was nine inches square, and was formed with “*cunning work of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet*” (Exodus 28:28). It was not to be “*loosed from the ephod*” It is therefore typical of something which belongs to Christ as our Mediator. Twelve stones were sewn in it in four rows, one for each tribe in Israel, bearing their names. Thus the high priest carried the people of God on his bosom, written on his heart. This is a precious thought for every one redeemed by the blood of Christ. ‘They are ever remembered by Him, they are ever before Him. Our place with Him is on His heart, held up before God, and ever accepted in Him. **The priest could not lay off the breastplate without stripping himself of his garment of glory.**

THE URIM AND THUMMIM — These mysterious stones were connected with the breastplate, they mean “Lights and Perfections.” They were used when seeking to know the mind and will of the Lord (Numbers 27:21; 1 Samuel 28:6). We are not told how, but in some way God’s mind was revealed through them. Perhaps they either brightened or grew dim according to God’s “Yes” or “No.” Is not our Lord Jesus the Light and Perfection by which sinners are led and brought into the kingdom of light? Perhaps the Urim and Thummim have reference to the work of God the Holy Spirit, the great gift that has come to his people by our Lord’s entrance into heaven (Hebrews 9:12; Galatians 3:13-14). As the Urim and Thummim, through the high priest, revealed the will of God, the Holy Spirit coming to us through Christ our High Priest leads us into all truth.

THE MITRE — This was the head. piece, or “holy crown,” of the priest. It was made of fine white linen, and had a plate of pure gold in the forefront, with these solemn words clearly engraved upon it, “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD* “ (Exodus 28:36). — While the truth taught here is a deeply humbling one, it is full of comfort. This holy crown was put upon Aaron that he might bear the “*iniquity of the holy things.*” There is in our most holy things much to mar and disfigure them, but our Representative and

GOD'S PRIEST AND GOD'S PRIESTS

High Priest is crowned with holiness, and we are in him, one with him. — Our service to our God is as fully accepted as his!

Now, watch this — It is added that *“It shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord”* (Exodus 28:38). — *“Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”* (Romans 8:34). Who or what can separate us from him who has bound us to his shoulder and his heart with the cords of love and power? I am nothing; he is everything. Of myself I can only say, *“Unclean,”* but he is *“Holiness to the Lord.”* — *“Ye are complete in him,”* perfect, entire, lacking nothing!

Amen.