

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes

11-18-20

Exodus 28

The Priestly Garments - Verses 1-5

1"Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests. **2** Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honor. **3** Tell all the skilled workers to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest. **4** These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests. **5** Have them use gold, and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen.

28:1 God was teaching his people how to worship him. To do so, he needed ministers to oversee the operations of the tabernacle and to help the people maintain their relationship with God. These men were called priests and Levites, and they could only be members of the tribe of Levi. Chapters 28 and 29 give some details about priests. Not only was a priest from the tribe of Levi, but he also was a descendant of Aaron, Israel's first high priest. Priests had more responsibilities than Levites. As high priest, Aaron was in charge of all the priests and Levites. The priests performed the daily sacrifices, maintained the tabernacle, and counseled the people on how to follow God. They were the people's representatives before God and thus were required to live worthy of their office. Jesus is now our high priest (Hebrews 8). Daily sacrifices are no longer required because he sacrificed himself on the cross for our sins. Today ministers no longer sacrifice animals. Instead, they lead us in prayer and teach us about both the benefits and the commandments that characterize our new life as Christians.

28:3 The tailors who made Aaron's garments were "given wisdom by God" in order to do their task. All of us have special skills. God wants to fill us with his Spirit so we will use those skills for his glory. Think about your special talents and abilities and the ways you could use them for God's work in the world. As you focus on helping and giving to others, God will show you the best ways to do it and give you wisdom to accomplish the task.

28:4 These were called "holy garments" (verse 4). They were beautiful and expensive to remind the people of the important role the priests had as representatives of God to the people. It also served to remind the priests of their important work and ministry to God. Their clothes were very formal and discouraged them from having a casual attitude towards their work and towards the Lord. At times the ephod itself became a snare to the people who became enthralled with its beauty (in the time of Gideon).

The Ephod - Verses 6-14

⁶ "Make the ephod of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen—the work of skilled hands. ⁷ It is to have two shoulder pieces attached to two of its corners, so it can be fastened. ⁸ Its skillfully woven waistband is to be like it—of one piece with the ephod and made with gold, and with blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and with finely twisted linen. ⁹ "Take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel ¹⁰ in the order of their birth—six names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. ¹¹ Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the way a gem cutter engraves a seal. Then mount the stones in gold filigree settings ¹² and fasten them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the LORD. ¹³ Make gold filigree settings ¹⁴ and two braided chains of pure gold, like a rope, and attach the chains to the settings.

28:6-13 The ephod was a kind of apron elaborately embroidered with two pieces, back and front, joined at the shoulder with a band at the waist. On each shoulder strap was a stone with six of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved on it. The priest symbolically carried the burden of the whole nation on his shoulders as he represented them before God.

The Breastpiece - Verses 15-30

¹⁵ "Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions—the work of skilled hands. Make it like the ephod: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. ¹⁶ It is to be square—a span long and a span wide—and folded double. ¹⁷ Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. The first row shall be carnelian, chrysolite and beryl; ¹⁸ the second row shall be turquoise, lapis lazuli and emerald; ¹⁹ the third row shall be jacinth, agate and amethyst; ²⁰ the fourth row shall be topaz, onyx and jasper. Mount them in gold filigree settings. ²¹ There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes. ²² "For the breastpiece make braided chains of pure gold, like a rope. ²³ Make two gold rings for it and fasten them to two corners of the breastpiece. ²⁴ Fasten the two gold chains to the rings at the corners of the breastpiece, ²⁵ and the other ends of the chains to the two settings, attaching them to the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front. ²⁶ Make two gold rings and attach them to the other two corners of the breastpiece on the inside edge next to the ephod. ²⁷ Make two more gold rings and attach them to the bottom of the shoulder pieces on the front of the ephod, close to the seam just above the waistband of the ephod. ²⁸ The rings of the breastpiece are to be tied to the rings of the ephod with blue cord, connecting it to the waistband, so that the breastpiece will not swing out from the ephod. ²⁹ "Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD. ³⁰ Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD.

28:15-21 Each of the 12 tribes of Israel was to be inscribed on the stones and put on the breastplate over Aaron's heart as well as future high priests. Why? This would remind the high priest that he was a servant of the people. It would remind him to intercede for the people, lead

a good example, and teach the people what was right. It would help the high priest to keep focused on why he was there and what his purpose was.

28:15-30 Unfortunately sometimes priests got a big head because of their high position. They fell in love with their power and abused it (such as Annanias and Caiaphas.) At times the priests abused their position in order to profit personally, like the sons of Eli (you can see God's view of their behavior since God punished them by death). If we are teachers, or leaders or do any kind of ministry always remember why we started off doing this work and our real purpose. Our purpose is to help build the church and to help others, and to strengthen and encourage.

28:30 The Urim and the Thummim were used by the priest to make decisions. These names mean "Curses" and "Perfections" and refer to the nature of God whose will they revealed. They were kept in a pouch and taken out or shaken out to get either a yes or no decision.

28:30 The priest, as representative of the people, carried the Urim and Thummim and as such had the authority and right to use them to inquire of the Lord. Unfortunately, many times in Israel's history they refused to turn to God for help and instead acted from their own wisdom. The result was often disastrous and indicative of their rebellion against the Lord.

Other Priestly Garments - Verses 31-43

³¹ "Make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue cloth, ³² with an opening for the head in its center. There shall be a woven edge like a collar around this opening, so that it will not tear. ³³ Make pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet yarn around the hem of the robe, with gold bells between them. ³⁴ The gold bells and the pomegranates are to alternate around the hem of the robe. ³⁵ Aaron must wear it when he ministers. The sound of the bells will be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the LORD and when he comes out, so that he will not die. ³⁶ "Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO THE LORD. ³⁷ Fasten a blue cord to it to attach it to the turban; it is to be on the front of the turban. ³⁸ It will be on Aaron's forehead, and he will bear the guilt involved in the sacred gifts the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron's forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the LORD. ³⁹ "Weave the tunic of fine linen and make the turban of fine linen. The sash is to be the work of an embroiderer. ⁴⁰ Make tunics, sashes and caps for Aaron's sons to give them dignity and honor. ⁴¹ After you put these clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint and ordain them. Consecrate them so they may serve me as priests. ⁴² "Make linen undergarments as a covering for the body, reaching from the waist to the thigh. ⁴³ Aaron and his sons must wear them whenever they enter the tent of meeting or approach the altar to minister in the Holy Place, so that they will not incur guilt and die. "This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants.

28:40-43 God took the clothes of the priests very seriously. Failure to wear the proper clothing meant death. This would serve as a reminder of the importance of this task as well as set them apart from common citizens. Their job was to be taken seriously and they to wear the best possible clothes, at all times remembering that they were ministering to the Lord.