

EXODUS 28:31-43 (CLOTHED IN MAJESTY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS)

On Tuesday morning, while at my morning job and thinking about completing this sermon, I was pondering how people get duped into things concerning bad doctrine. The Hebrew Roots movement rejects Christ's grace and reinserts the requirements of the law.

It basically says, "What Jesus did on that cross wasn't enough." In turn, each follower of this heresy is in the process of working their way to heaven... an infinite climb which will be cut short at their death. Instead of heaven, they will find another sad end.

If those same folks would simply read the word, take it at face value, and understand it in context, they would come to the letter of Galatians, put away their heretical works, and trust in the grace of Christ's finished work – boasting in His cross alone. There would be peace in their lives, harmony between God and them, and they would be able to bridge that infinite gap via His shed blood.

Mostly though, I was thinking about the cult of Mary. People pray to her, they worship her, they trust in her to be their mediator to God. What is so curious to me is that after about 5 years of sermons in Genesis and Exodus, we have had literally thousands and thousands of pictures of Christ.

We have had pictures of the dispensations of time through which Christ works. We have had pictures of God's people in collective snapshots, such as in the rapture, or in Israel, or in the church - all of which center on Christ.

In fact, in all of these 208 Genesis and Exodus sermons, plus the 13 Ruth sermons, and in the other various sermons we've done, there has not been one.single.picture.of.Mary... not one! Even if we were to force her into a picture

or two as the RCC has done, it would still be far less than pictures of the apostles or the redeemed collectively, which are only the *result* of Christ's work.

Comparing zero to about 17 jillion pictures of Christ, it should be obvious to even the dullest of sorts that God really wants us to focus on Jesus. It is all, and I mean all, about Him. Don't get led astray into strange doctrines, and don't take your eyes off of Jesus. Today's text verse is about the priests and saints of the Lord, but they are only priests and saints *because* of the Lord...

Text Verse: Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness,
And let Your saints shout for joy. Psalm 132:9

The psalmist speaks of the priests being clothed with righteousness. This is pictured in today's verses and it continued on all during the time of the law. But there is more. Because of the work of Christ, we too are counted as a kingdom of priests, and we too are clothed with righteousness. It is a truth which is to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The High Priestly Robe (verses 31-35)

³¹ **“You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue.**

Some of Aaron's garments have already been detailed, including the ephod and the breastplate. Now a robe is detailed which will be worn under those implements but over the fine woven tunic. It is known as a *meil*. It was first mentioned in verse 28:4 in the list of what was to be made. Now its details are given.

This *meil* is a type of tunic which would reach from neck all the way down to somewhere around the knees; some believe even as far as to the feet. It was a completely seamless garment as is inferred by Exodus 39:22 -

"He made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue."

The term "woven work" implies a seamless garment. However, Flavius Josephus explicitly documents this fact in his commentary on the priestly garments. He says that "the coat did not consist of two parts, nor was it sewed upon the shoulder, nor on the side, but was one long piece of woven work."

It would have a hole for the head to go through and it had no sleeves. Therefore, the top portion of it would be mostly covered by the ephod and the breastplate. However, the lower part was fully visible. The plain blue would be a beautiful contrast to the variegated ephod and the gleaming breastplate.

This blue, as we have seen in other details of the tabernacle and priestly garments, signifies the law, especially in adherence to it. The word translated as "all," as in "all of blue" is the adjective *kalil*. This is a new word in Scripture which comes from the verb *kalal*, which means to complete or make perfect. Thus it means that this robe is to be entirely made of only this color.

³² There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it;

At the top and the middle, logically where the neck is, there was to be an opening for Aaron's head to go through. Rather than a slit, it was to be round like a modern t-shirt. The word for "opening" is *peh*, meaning "mouth."

32 (con't) it shall have a woven binding all around its opening,

saphah yihyeh lephiv saviv maaseh oreg - "lips it shall have at the mouth around, work of woven." The word translated as "binding" is *saphah*, meaning "lips." Just as the robe was to have a mouth, so it would have lips around the mouth. The same word is translated as "speech" elsewhere because the lips are the place where speech issues forth from. The Hebrew is far more descriptive than how the English reads.

The word for "woven" is *arag*. It is a verb used for the first of thirteen times which means "weaving." It is what a spider would do when forming a web, or what a weaver would do on a loom. The reason for this woven work is next explained...

32 (con't) like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear.

The word for "coat of mail," *takharah*, is very rare. It is used just twice, and both times it is speaking of this garment. It comes from the verb *kharah*, which means "to burn with anger." Thus, it probably is facetiously used just as a coat of mail would be used in fighting.

The idea here is that this opening would be sewn onto the woven garment to give it additional strength to keep it from tearing. In other words, it is exactly what we have on our t-shirts today. If that lip wasn't sewn all around the mouth of the shirt, the fabric would simply, and quickly tear as we pulled our head through.

33 And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem,

The hem is introduced here. It is the word *shul* which comes from an unused root meaning "to hang down." Thus it indicates the bottom edge. To fully grasp the meaning, it is translated as "train" in Isaiah 6:1 -

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the **train** of His *robe* filled the temple." Isaiah 6:1

Onto this hem, pomegranates were to be attached which were to be sewn out of blue, purple, and scarlet. The pomegranate is also a new word in the Bible, *rimmon*. It will be seen 32 times and it is an enigmatic symbol. The word *rimmon* is associated with the word *rum*, or "to be high, or exalted."

It also carries the connotation of mental maturity and calling to remembrance. The modern Jewish notion of the pomegranate representing the law because it has 613 seeds, just as the law has 613 commandments, is a bit far-fetched. This is especially so because a pomegranate doesn't have 613 seeds. The number varies with each fruit.

However, in that they are attached to the blue garment of the high priest, it does point to the notion of calling the law to remembrance. As far as the colors which these pomegranates were to be sewn, their meanings remain constant.

The blue represents the law; royalty is seen in the purple - which is a combination of blue and red; and war, blood, and judgment is signified by the red. The pomegranates were to completely circle the hem of the garment.

³³ (con't) **and bells of gold between them all around:**

Paamon or "bells" are now brought into the Bible. This particular word for "bell" is to be used only in connection with this high priestly garment. The word comes from *pa'am*, which means "times" or "occurrences." In the ringing of a bell there is an occurrence which can be counted.

One would think that because they are on his garment that they would be described with the adjective *tahor*, or pure. However, that is lacking. But don't despair! They are, in fact, made with *zahav tahor*, or "gold pure." This is later seen in Exodus 39:25 -

"And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the hem of the robe all around between the pomegranates:"

³⁴ **a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around.**

Jewish scholars of the past have claimed a certain number of pomegranates and bells were hung from the hem. However, the Bible is silent on this, and therefore there is no symbolism in that regard. Rather, what is clear is that they were to alternate between a golden bell and a pomegranate all the way around the hem.

³⁵ **And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers,**

Verse 35 is a puzzling verse to many, but by looking at it one clause at a time, it clears up. The robe with the bells is to be worn whenever he ministers. The word

for "minister" is *sharat*. It comes from a primitive root word and means, "to attend as a menial or worshipper." In essence, it means to "wait on."

35 (con't) and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the LORD and when he comes out,

The sounding forth of the bells was to be heard anytime that Aaron was to enter the Holy Place before, or in the face of, the Lord - as the word means. As he entered and as he exited, his movements would be heard. The word translated here as "sound" is *qol*. It means "voice." A voice is something that calls out in an understandable way.

Thus, the *voice* of the bells was calling out as a reminder. But it is not a reminder for the Lord. He is fully aware of all things. He needed no reminders. Therefore, the voice of the bells was to be a reminder to Aaron of his responsibilities within the Holy Place.

35 (con't) that he may not die.

v'lo yamut - "...and no he die." The penalty for not treating the duties of the office with proper respect was death. The bells upon his garments were a reminder that he was to never treat his duties as an unholy thing.

Almost all scholars tie this sounding of the bells to the people outside the Holy Place, informing them that the priest was inside attending to his duties and that they were to pray and worship while he was in there. To support this, Luke 1:9, 10 is cited -

"So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn

incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense."

This is incorrect. These garments describe those worn by the high priest, not the priest selected to offer incense before the Lord. Further, whether the people outside prayed or not had no bearing on whether the high priest lived or died.

Rather, he was the servant attending the Lord. The Lord is holy. Should a servant show disrespect to his king, he would be killed. How much more then should the high priest treat the Lord with absolute holiness! The bells were to call this to memory with each step that he took.

The pomegranates were there as a testimony that he was to be mentally mature in the presence of the Lord. To fail in this regard would result in death. This lesson was learned by his two eldest sons when they failed in this regard -

"Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. ² So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. ³ And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying:

'By those who come near Me
I must be regarded as holy;
And before all the people
I must be glorified.'"

So Aaron held his peace." Leviticus 10:1-3

This verse concerning the bells is one of several such times this precept was stated to Moses.

*A pomegranate and a bell, a pomegranate and a bell
A delightful fruit to think about and a wondrous tinkling too
In wearing these on your garments, all will go well
So you shall call to mind the things which you are to do*

*Attend to your duties, but keep the Lord on your mind
Each step that you take, call Him to remembrance
Trust in Him alone, leaving all else behind
And in this manner, have your duties in attendance*

*Walk in holiness all of your days
For your tasks are the most important ever known
And in your victory a new path you shall blaze
And to those who follow you, that precious path will be shown*

II. Holiness to the Lord (verses 36-39)

³⁶ “You shall also make a plate of pure gold

The next item to be made is a plate of pure gold. The plate is a new word, *tsiyts*. It indicates a burnished plate, but it also means a flower which is bright-colored, and even a wing which gleams in the air. Thus, this was probably a plate resembling a flower.

The Greek translation of the OT calls it a *petalon*, the plural of leaf. Later, it will be called the holy crown. Therefore, it was probably somewhat like a crown of leaves or flowers.

The gold for this plate is given the adjective *tahor*, or pure. The gold was to be completely undefiled in any way. It is a reflection of the divinity of Christ. The idea is that this plate would be highly visible and reflect any light which touched it.

³⁶ (con't) **and engrave on it, *like* the engraving of a signet:**

Like the memorial stones and the stones of the breastplate, this plate was to be engraved as a signet. The words were to be clear and visible. As this was on his head, it would be the point most seen by anyone observing him. Even more than the memorial stones, or the stones of the breastplate, this would be the main focus of the high priestly attire.

However, like a canvass which is only a vessel for a painting, the gold was merely a vessel for conveying something else. In the case of this plate, it would be just two words. And the words to be engraved consisted of just eight letters...

³⁶ (con't) **HOLINESS TO THE LORD.**

qodesh Yehovah - "Holiness to Yehovah." The number eight in the Bible is the superabundant number and the number of new beginnings. There was a rift between God and man and now that rift is beginning to be healed by the work of the high priest. He would be the mediator between God and man. The Lord is holy and the high priest was to be HOLY TO THE LORD. There was to be a dignity in the office which would allow him to minister on behalf of the people redeemed by God.

³⁷ **And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban;**

The plate was to be attached to the turban by a blue cord. Consider the symbolism of the metal and the color of the cord. One speaks of divinity and royalty, the other speaks of the law.

37 (con't) it shall be on the front of the turban.

The plate was to be right at the front of the turban, right at the forehead of Aaron. This is seen explicitly in the next verse...

38 So it shall be on Aaron's forehead,

After 2500 years of human existence, the *metsakh*, or forehead, is introduced into the Bible here, and for a very good reason. The word comes from an unused root meaning "to be clear," and hence, "conspicuous." Therefore, the forehead is considered the prominent place of the man in the Bible.

The forehead is the place of conscience and the place of identification. It can therefore be a place of a clear conscience or a seared conscience. When King Uzziah illegally burned incense before the Lord, usurping the duties reserved for the priests, it was his *forehead* which broke out in leprosy.

When the Lord scolded Israel for having no shame, He said they had a harlot's *forehead*. In Ezekiel 9, when the people who mourned over the abominations of the land were sealed for salvation, a mark was placed upon their *foreheads*.

The same is true with the sealed 144,000 of Revelation. It will be upon their *foreheads*. They will be those who realize that Christ is Lord, and their conscience will lead them to being sealed by the Lord. In contrast is the great whore recorded in Revelation 17 -

And on her forehead a name *was* written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.

Revelation 17:5

The conscience of this great whore is completely seared to the holiness of the Lord. The use of the forehead now for the first time in the Bible shows that an awareness of both wrongdoing and what is right is to be maintained by the high priest. One cannot understand holiness without understanding depravity.

Therefore, the high priest is to be aware, at all times, of the holiness of the Lord. He is further to reflect this holiness in all that he does. This is seen in the continuation of the verse...

38 (con't) that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts;

This verse shows the infinite gap which exists between God and man. Aaron, as representative of God, was to bear the iniquity of the holy things of the people which they offered to the Lord. What this means is even that which was offered according to the law, and which was considered "holy," still bore iniquity before the pure holiness of the Lord. This truth is seen in the book of Haggai -

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Now, ask the priests *concerning the law*, saying, ¹² “If one carries holy meat in the fold of his garment, and with the edge he touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any food, will it become holy?””

Then the priests answered and said, “No.”

¹³ And Haggai said, “If *one who is unclean because* of a dead body touches any of these, will it be unclean?”

So the priests answered and said, “It shall be unclean.” Haggai 2:11-13

The fact is that though in the land of the living, all people are spiritually dead before God, having inherited Adam's original sin. Therefore, anything we touch is defiled and impure. The gold plate on Aaron's head was an indication of God's acceptance of his office as high priest to mediate between the people's tainted offerings and His perfect holiness. John Calvin notes -

“It sounds harsh and almost paradoxical to say that holy things themselves are unclean, so as to need pardon; but it is to be held that there is absolutely nothing so pure but that it contracts some stain from us... Nothing is more excellent than the worship of God; and yet the people could offer nothing, even when it was prescribed by law, without the intervention of pardon, which they could obtain only through the priest.” John Calvin (via John Lange)

Aaron, as a picture of the coming Christ, was to bear the iniquity of the people before the Lord. The place of conscience, and the place of sealing and acceptance, meaning the forehead was to be reflective of this truth...

³⁸ (con't) **and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.**

At all times while ministering on behalf of the people, Aaron was to bear the plate and thus bear the iniquity of Israel. In so doing, they and their offerings would be accepted before, or in the face of, the Lord.

³⁹ “You shall skillfully weave the tunic of fine linen *thread*, you shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the sash of woven work.

The items to be made for Aaron's attire close out with these words. The tunic, the turban, and the sash, not mentioned in any form since verse 4, are now instructed to be made. No other details are given here as guidelines for Moses.

The word for "weave" is *shabats*. This is the second and last use of the word in the Bible. It was used in verse 20 concerning the gold settings of the stones of the breastplate. Therefore, as it means "set," it is believed to indicate here a checkered weaving.

Both the tunic and the turban were made in this way, with fine linen. These would then be solid white. The tunic would be under all of the other garments and it would have both sleeves extending to the wrists, and it would reach all the way to the ankles.

The sash is said to be made of "woven work" and is explained in Exodus 39 to be "of fine woven linen with blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, made by a weaver" (verse 39:29). What is unusual about this sash is that it was probably not visible at all as it would be under the other garments. And yet, the instructions are clear, and the weaving of chapter 39 is specific.

Holiness to the Lord, pure and undefiled by sin

Performing His duties of mediation for us

Access to the Father has been granted again

Because of the work of our High Priest, Jesus

*Only He can take what is tainted by our sin
And make it acceptable to God for each of us
Yes, God now accepts us once again
Because of the work of our High Priest, Jesus*

*Holiness to the Lord, because of the victory He did win
And now He has also brought that victory to us
Yes, we are granted full rights as sons, thanking God again
Because of the work of our High Priest, Jesus*

III. Consecrating Aarons and His Sons (verses 40-43)

⁴⁰ “For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them.

The tunics and the sashes for the sons of Aaron were to be white. There is nothing else noticeable about them. The instructions are simple and without any particular detail. The verb for making the tunics in this verse is *asah* instead of *shabats* of the previous verse. Therefore, these were probably not patterned. The garments of the sons were simple, unadorned except in pristine white, and yet they were distinct from all other people around them.

^{40 (con't)} And you shall make hats for them,

The word for "hat" is *migbaoth*. This is the first of just four times it will be used and only in reference to these caps for the sons of Aaron. It is from the same root as *gibah* or "hills" and *gabia* or "cups." Hence, they are caps which fit the head.

40 (con't) for glory and beauty.

The same term as was used to describe Aaron's garments is again used here - for glory and for beauty. It may seem remarkable that plain white garments would be so described, but white symbolizes righteousness. At times in the Bible, Christ's garments, or those of angels, are represented as being white. The glory and the beauty then is reflective of that which is of God - His righteousness.

41 So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him.

It is Moses who is instructed to not only have the garments made, but also to be the one to present and invest Aaron and his sons with them. It is really an amazing thing to consider. The prophet of God, the one who speaks His word, is the one to bring about the *initiation*.of.the.priesthood.

Thus it logically follows that the priesthood is subordinated to the office of prophet. The pattern follows through with Christ who was from the beginning the Word of God, but who *became* God's High Priest according to the word of God as is indicated in Hebrews 5:5.

41 (con't) You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests.

The word for "anoint," *mashakh*, has only been used once so far in the Bible. It referred to Jacob's action of "anointing" the stone which he had set up as a pillar after sleeping on it the night before. Now it will become a common word in the history of the law. It is the same word used for anointing prophets, priests, and kings. It is the basis of the word *mashiakh*, or "messiah."

The words for "consecrate them" are literally "fill their hand." Moses would fill their hand with a part of a sacrifice and then present them to the Lord, thus consecrating them. And the word for "sanctify" means "to make them holy." In their ordination, they would be set apart as priests; acceptable ministers to the Lord.

⁴² And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs.

The *miknas*, or undergarments are introduced here and will only be noted five times, always in regards to the priests. The final time will be in the book of Ezekiel. It comes from a word which gives the sense of "hiding." They are specifically noted as for the covering of their *besah ervah*, or "flesh of nakedness."

The linen they are made of is a new word too, *bad*. It is probably from the word *badad*, or "shoots." Thus one gets the idea of divided fibers that are woven together. The nakedness of the priests was to be covered in order to reflect purity and holiness instead of indecency. These would reach from the waist to a little above the knees.

⁴³ They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy *place*, that they do not incur iniquity and die.

One must ask why this covering is required. Nakedness was created by God and there was no hint of indecency in the Garden of Eden. However, after the fall, the man and his wife realized they were naked. Thus the nakedness of man is connected to the knowledge of sin.

Further, sin is an inherited disease. It is one which affects all people and which is transferred by the father through a union with a woman. Thus, the life of humans is one fraught from the beginning with sin, as well as both moral and physical decay. Thus, covering their bodies was symbolic of being covered in righteousness and life.

Should they expose their private parts before the Lord, it would be an affront because they had exposed the *source* of the transfer of that first sin committed so long before by their first father and which continued to be transmitted through them.

It is important to note that both the KJV and the NKJV receive demerits in their translation of this verse. It is not the "tabernacle of meeting" but the "tent of meeting." The word is *ohel* and it means "tent." This is why it first says, "the tent of meeting" and then "near the altar." Although not yet described, this is speaking of the altar of incense which will stand in the Holy Place.

43 (fin) *It shall be a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.

Anytime, from the life of Aaron, and through all of his descendants during the time while the law remained in effect, they were to be obedient to this precept. They were to wear these undergarments at all times when ministering to the Lord in their prescribed manner.

IV. Pictures of Christ and His Work

With the verses completed for the passage and the chapter, let's take a few minutes and look at how they point to Christ and His work. First, the robe which is to be worn by Aaron is all of blue. As blue signifies the law, it is intended to show us, like the picture seen in the Ark, that Christ Jesus is the embodiment of the law.

As I noted, the word for "all," as in "all of blue" is the word *kalil*. This comes from *kalal*, meaning to complete or make perfect. It is Christ who perfectly fulfilled the law, completing it on our behalf. He is literally "robed" in the completion of the law. Also, the robe was seamless, and points to John's words about Jesus on the cross -

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece." John 19:23

Shortly after this occurred, John records Jesus' dying words, "It is finished." The high priest of Israel's robe was merely a picture of Christ embodying the law, fulfilling it, and finishing it for us. However, before He died, something else was recorded about Christ's tunic. Despite dividing His other garments, the value of His tunic led them to say -

"Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," John 19:24

In Matthew 26:65, the high priest of Israel tore his clothes during Jesus' trial. This was in direct violation of the Law of Moses. In Leviticus 21 it says -

"*He who is* the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes;" Leviticus 21:10

What we see in this was an ending of the old order of things. The Law of Moses was ended in Christ's work and the New Covenant was established in His blood. The note of keeping the high priest's robe from tearing was given as an anticipatory picture of the true High Priest's garment not being torn.

But, the recording of the high priest tearing his garment signifies the ending of that priesthood. That Christ's garment wasn't torn, and yet His body was, signifies the introduction of the New. Next, the word to describe the hem around the neck was that very rare word *takharah* which comes from a root "to burn with anger."

In this, the symbolism seems obvious; the anger of the Lord at the sin of man is what was on display there at the cross. The penalty for that sin was the tearing of Christ's body, the true robe of humanity.

The pomegranates or, *rimmon*, as I said are associated with the word *rum*, or "to be high, or exalted." They also carry the connotation of mental maturity, and calling to remembrance. The wearing of the pomegranates then only looked forward to the maturity of the New Covenant established through Christ's work. This is seen in the use of the same word, *rum*, in Isaiah 52 -

"Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently;
He shall be **exalted** (*rum*) and extolled and be very high.
¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you,
So His visage was marred more than any man,
And His form more than the sons of men;
¹⁵ So shall He sprinkle many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;
For what had not been told them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall consider." Isaiah 52:13-15

Christ was exalted through His death in fulfillment of the law. In Christ we too now have that maturity. Paul explains it in the book of Galatians where he calls the law a tutor to lead us to Christ -

"But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor." Galatians 3:23-25

The colors of the pomegranates - blue, purple, and red, all point to the completed work of Christ, just as each time these colors have been mentioned. He kept the law, He was exalted to His rightful kingly status, and His blood is the judgment *on* our sin or *against* the sin of unbelievers.

The *paamon*, or bells, are specifically given to represent calling to remembrance the fulfillment of the law by Christ. The word comes from *pa'am*, or occurrences. Each precept of the law was specifically and perfectly fulfilled by Christ. Each tinkle of the bell is to call that to remembrance.

That they were of gold indicates His deity which reminded His humanity of each task He was to fulfill for His redeemed. That both the pomegranates and the bells are attached specifically to the blue robe of the High Priest signifies calling to remembrance His work in completion of the law and acknowledging His exalted status because of it.

That they encircled the entire hem shows the unbroken nature of His work in its fulfillment. Every word and every detail fills us with pictures of the work of Christ on our behalf.

The specific note about Aaron wearing this robe at all times when he went in and out before the Lord, and that the sound was to be heard lest he die, continues the picture of the constant reminder by God to Christ of His need to not die *because* of the law, but *in fulfillment of* the law. If He failed in any precept, He would die before the Lord. Thanks be to God, He prevailed.

The engraved plate, as I noted, is later called a crown. It pictures the royal kingship of Christ. Unlike Israel which had offices of king and priest which were not to be intermingled, Christ is the fulfillment of them both. This is explicitly stated by the prophet Zechariah concerning the coming Messiah -

"Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set *it* on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹² Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying:

"Behold, the Man whose name *is* the BRANCH!

From His place He shall branch out,

And He shall build the temple of the LORD;

¹³ Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD.

He shall bear the glory,

And shall sit and rule on His throne;

So He shall be a priest on His throne,

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'" Zechariah 6:11-13

The special word used to describe this plate, *tsiyts*, speaks of Christ's Human and Divine natures. The pure gold represents His pure divinity, but that it is a flower speaks of His humanity. This is seen where the same word speaks of the fading glory of man -

"The voice said, 'Cry out!'

And he said, 'What shall I cry?'

'All flesh *is* grass,

And all its loveliness *is like the flower* of the field.'" Isaiah 40:6

Unlike fallen man though, Christ is the unfading flower who stepped out of heaven to restore us to that same beautiful state.

The engraving of HOLINESS TO THE LORD on this plate signifies the perfection of Christ. It is He who is the true Mediator for God's people. It is He who makes our offerings acceptable to God once again, and it is He who restores us - fully and completely - to our heavenly Father.

That there were two words on the engraving signifies His Divine/ Human nature – *qodesh Yehovah*. The 8 letters signify the new beginnings which are found in Christ Jesus. In fact, the name JESUS in Greek, IESOUS, is numerically equal to 888. Thus He is the ultimate example of the New Beginning for fallen man.

The blue cord which tied the plate to the turban signifies the law as fulfilled which ties the divine Lord to His intercessory role as our high priest. It is He who is the bridge between the infinite Father and finite us.

The specific naming of the placement of the plate on the forehead of the high priest is to show both the place of conscience and of identification. The duality is seen in that He is first conscious *of those* He ministers *for*, meaning us. And He is also conscious of His rightful place before His Father.

Secondly, it reveals His priestly identity presented *before* us and which comes *from* His Father. It is He who bore our iniquities at the cross, and it is He who still makes our sin-filled lives acceptable as HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Only through Him can we be considered acceptable to God. This is actually realized on the very last page of the Bible with these marvelous words –

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads.” Revelation 22:3, 4

The linen tunic and the linen turban reflect Christ's absolute righteousness. It is what crowns Him and it defines His very character. This is why it is on Aaron's head as a turban and is what is closest to his body concerning garments. They picture the pure and unsullied life and authority of Christ.

The unusual word to describe this linen, *shabats*, signifies that it is checkered into His very nature. Unlike any other human, only He possesses this complete righteousness in His nature. It is "set," if you will, into His very being. As it comes out on both his arms and under his robe, it signifies that righteousness is an all-evident trait of His. Thus, it is this characteristic of Him that Pilate proclaimed -

"I have found no fault in this Man." Luke 23:14

The woven sash which was used for the tunic, but hidden under the other garments is reflective of His divine majesty. This is seen in the 93rd Psalm -

"The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty;
The LORD is clothed,
He has girded Himself with strength.
Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved." Psalm 93:1

The chapter closes with a transitional set of verses which lead us into the next chapter and the details for the consecration of Aaron and His sons. Without going into complete detail, the white tunics, sashes, and hats for Aaron's sons merely picture our righteousness, endowed to us because of the work of Christ. It is He who has brought many sons to glory through His work.

The hats, as I noted, are a special word used only for these hats of the priests. The word is *migbaoth* and it is from the same root as *gibah* or "hills," and *gabia* or

"cups." These words are tied directly to the Aramaic word Gabbatha, the place where Christ was judged before Pilate.

The symbolism is beautiful. The priests of the Lord Jesus are granted that status as the helmet of salvation upon their head because of the judgment rendered on Christ at Gabbatha.

The statement that the garments of the sons of Aaron were "for glory and for beauty" was the same statement made for the garments of Aaron. In other words, *because* of the work of Christ, His priests now bear the same glory and beauty as He before the Father. Think of it! Imagine what we have been granted!

Yes, we are considered righteous children of God because of Christ, but even more it is we who are considered a kingdom of priests to God because of Him. This is what is pictured in the white garments of the sons of the high priest.

As it was Moses who clothed Aaron and his sons, so it is the Word of God who clothed Christ as a High Priest and who now clothes us through faith in His word. In this, we are anointed - sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). We are consecrated - the offering of our hands is acceptable to the Lord (Hebrews 10:20). And we are sanctified - made holy to serve and minister to God as priests (Revelation 22:3).

Lastly today, in the final two verses are a picture of our acceptable nature before God because of Christ. The linen undergarments are a picture of *our spiritual nakedness* being covered by *Christ's righteousness*. As nakedness was not a consideration in the Garden of Eden, it is not physical nakedness which is being pictured.

Rather, it is the spiritual nakedness of fallen humanity. Though it is difficult for us to consider, the record of the cross is that Christ's garments were taken from Him and parted up, with the exception of the tunic for which lots were cast.

This means that He hung exposed in His flesh to the world. And yet He was considered, just as Adam once was, spiritually covered. His death, shameful by the standards of the world, grants us His same spiritual covering. Through Him, we can never again incur the iniquity of sin and die. We are freed from sin's power because of the work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In all today, we have seen dozens and dozens of pictures of Christ and His work. As I said at the beginning of the sermon, it is up to us where we will fix our eyes and our devotions. If you want to fix them on the law, you will be judged by that law. If you want to fix them on Mary, you will die apart from Christ. Rather, call on Jesus, be reconciled to God, and have peace in yourselves because of the finish work of Another; because of Jesus' work...

Closing Verse: And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads. Revelation 22:4

Next Week: Exodus 29:1-14 *Looking into these verses will be more than fun...* (The Consecration of Aaron and His Sons, Part I) (79th Exodus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Clothed in Majesty and in Righteousness

You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue
Follow all of the directions as I instruct you
There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it
It shall have at its opening all around
Like the opening in a coat of mail
So that it does not tear; we don't want that tearing sound

And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates
Of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem
And bells of gold all around between them
A golden bell and a pomegranate
A golden bell and a pomegranate, so shall it be
Upon the hem of the robe all around
These instructions you shall follow exactly

And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers
And its sound when he goes into the holy place will be heard
Before the Lord and when he comes out
That he may not die; do according to my word
You shall also make a plate
Of pure gold and engrave on it; attend to my word
Like the engraving of a signet

HOLINESS TO THE LORD

And you shall put it on a blue cord, you see

That it may be on the turban

On the front of the turban it shall be

So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, as I tell

That Aaron may bear the iniquity

Of the holy things which the children of Israel

Hallow in all their holy gifts, given to Me

And it shall always be on his forehead, according to my word

That they may be accepted before the Lord

You shall skillfully weave the tunic

Of fine linen thread

You shall make the turban of fine linen

And you shall make the sash of woven work, as I have said

For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics

And you shall make sashes for them, follow in this duty

And you shall make hats for them

For glory and beauty

So you shall put them on Aaron your brother

And on his sons with him, so shall it be

You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them

That they as priests may minister to Me

And you shall make for them
Linen trousers to cover their nakedness
They shall reach from the waist to the thighs
As a part of their regular dress

They shall be on Aaron and on his sons
When they come into the tabernacle of meeting; these instructions apply
Or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place
That they do not incur iniquity and die
It shall be a statute forever to him
And his descendants after him, all of them

Once again, O God we have seen Christ revealed
Each word points to Him and what He has done
In the words which were long ago concealed
New insights keep coming of Your precious Son

Thank You for the wonder of it all
And grant us the wisdom that on name of Jesus we will call

And then through Him we shall glorify you for eternal days
And to You, O God, we shall sing our marvelous words of praise

Hallelujah and Amen...