

March 18, 2018 - Ex. 27:20 – 28:43 - High Priest's Garments
Torah Reading: Exodus 27:20 – 28:43 - High Priest's Garments
Psalm 62
Haftarah: Malachi 3:4-24
Hosea 14:7 – Joel 1:5 + 2:14
Jeremiah 11:16-20 + 12:1-3 + 15:15-16

Maintaining the Lampstand

Exodus 27:20-21 - "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."

The High Priest's Garments

The High Priest's garments are described here along with other Tabernacle related material because the garments are ceremonial ritual objects, part of the Tabernacle service in the Holy Place, which he is to enter twice daily.

Exodus 28:2 - "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty."

"holy" - because worn exclusively for service to God.

"Glory and beauty" - referring to the garments of righteousness that adorn Christ in his high priestly function, and with which he has adorned believers as a nation of priests. The glory of divine majesty and the beauty of holiness.

- **Psalm 96:9** - "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth."

- **Isaiah 61:10 NIV** - "I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

- **Psalm 132:9** - "Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness, And let Your godly ones sing for joy."

- **Revelation 19:8** - "It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

- **Isaiah 59:17** - "He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation

on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle."

- **Isaiah 11:5** - "Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist."

Exodus 28:4 - "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."

Exodus 28:5 - "And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work."

The Ephod, the girdle and the breastplate were all to include gold, blue, scarlet, white linen and purple. These are the colors of the Tabernacle tent and veils, with the addition of gold.

These Tabernacle colors possibly relate to the five virtues recorded in **Hosea 2:19–20** - "in righteous, in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies, . . . in faithfulness."

THE EPHOD - Exodus 28:5-7

- THE GIRDLE, BELT or SASH - Exodus 28:8

- TWO ONYX STONES - Exodus 28:9-12

THE BREASTPLATE - Exodus 28:13-30

THE ROBE - Exodus 28:31-34

THE GOLD PLATE - Exodus 28:36-38

THE COAT (or TUNIC) - Exodus 28:39

THE MITRE or TURBAN - Exodus 28:37, 39

THE LINEN PANTS - Exodus 28:42-43

Putting them all on:

Pants

Practically, the High Priest would first put on the pants, made of pure white linen, reaching from the waist to the knees. The pants are not mentioned in the list of garments called "honor and glory" because their purpose is for "common decency" and "that they bear not iniquity, and die."

Tunic

Next he would put on the tunic. Made of pure white linen in a box-stitch (similar to the setting of a ring). It extended from the neck to the toes and wrists, modestly covering the entire body.

Robe

Then he would put on the robe or cloak. Worn over the tunic, the robe was a four cornered garment made entirely of wool dyed blue. The robe went over the head with a hole in the middle, stitched with a double stitch so it wouldn't tear.

- Bells and Pomegranates

On its hem hung golden bells, alternating with red, blue, and purple ornaments in the shape of pomegranates (possibly the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). When the High Priest walked in the Holy Place, God could hear the bells ringing, "that he die not." The pomegranates possibly would remind all of the sin that required the sacrifice. The pomegranate also contains 613 seeds, the number of the commandments.

However, Pomegranates are mentioned in a positive light in **Song of Solomon 7:12** and **8:2** - "the pleasant fruits in which the beloved delights" - and as fruits of the Promised Land in **Number 13:25**. Solomon decorated the Temple with pomegranate shapes. So perhaps they can represent the triumph and transformation over that first sin, resulting in the fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22**). As in **Habakkuk 3:19** - "...he will make me to walk upon mine high places" i.e. where I used to practice idolatry.

Ephod

Over this, the High Priest would don the Ephod, an apron-like garment worn over the blue robe, it was woven from a multi-stranded thread of white linen, and red, blue, and purple wool. In addition, a sheet of gold was beaten very thin, and narrow thread-like strands were cut from it to be added to the other colors.

The Ephod apron covered the bottom part of the body, and the straps went up and over the shoulders. On the two shoulders rested two precious stones, each engraved with the names of 6 tribes. (Although the Torah prohibits wearing wool and linen in the same garment, this is one example of a positive commandment overriding a negative one.)

Thus, the High Priest represents the whole Israelite people.

Belt, Sash or Girdle

The Ephod was secured with a sash. It was very long and made of the above mentioned 4 colors. It was wrapped many times around the body, near the heart.

- **Revelation 1:13** - "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."

Breastplate

Over the Ephod, the High Priest would strap on the breastplate. It was woven from linen and 3 colors of wool, with settings for 12 precious stones arranged in 4 rows of 3 each. The stones were engraved with each of the names of the Twelve Tribes, and also had the Patriarchs' names and the words "tribes of the Lord" - in order to contain all the letters of the Aleph Bet.

The breastplate was connected to the belt of the Ephod apron, and fastened with blue straps and gold chains. The inner fold contained a mysterious object called the Urim and Thummim - "lights and perfections." When the king had a question concerning the nation (such as: "Should we go to war?"), the High Priest would face the Holy of Holies and inquire. The letters of the breastplate would light up in a specific arrangement, and by deciphering the code he received the answer from Heaven.

Urim and Thummim

Rashi - This [refers to the] inscription of the explicit Name, which he [Moshe] would place within the folds of the choshen, through which it would light up its words (מֵאִיר) and perfect (מְתִמֵּם) its words. [I.e., the Urim and Tummim explain their words, and their predictions never fail (on Yoma 73b).]

(See accompanying notes on the Urim and Thumim)

Turban

The mitre or turban was made of white linen, and wrapped around the head many times. The turban of the regular priest came to a point, while the High Priest's turban was flat on top.

Gold Plate

Over the turban, but with enough space for the Tefillin, was a gold plate that rested on the forehead of the High Priest. It was fastened to the turban and tied to the back of the head with blue straps. It was engraved with the words "Holy to God" or "Holiness to the Lord."

No shoes or sandals are mentioned, perhaps because it was holy ground, as at the burning bush (**Exodus 3:1-17**).

On Yom Kippur, before entering the Holy of Holies, the High Priest changed into an all-white linen tunic, turban, belt and pants. The reason he wore no gold was because gold was a reminder of the sin of the Golden Calf, a display of idolatry which is inappropriate to "mention" in the Holy of Holies.

The Talmud relates:

When Alexander the Great came to conquer Jerusalem, the enemies of the Jews slandered them and claimed that the Jews had rebelled. As Alexander approached Jerusalem, the High Priest Shimon HaTzaddik came out to meet him in full regalia of the 8 special garments.

When he saw this impressive sight, Alexander fell on his face and bowed down to the High Priest of Israel.

Upon seeing this, Alexander's generals asked why he bowed before the Jew. Alexander replied, "Every time I go to battle, I see this man in a dream the night before, and he assures me that I will be victorious.

Later, when Alexander wanted to put his statue in the Holy Temple - to solidify Jewish loyalty to him - the High Priest had a better suggestion: Every baby boy born that year will be named "Alexander."

And that is how Alex and Sender became common Jewish names.

--See <http://www.aish.com/tp/b/lp/48941986.html>