

The Sanctuary – With Jesus My Priest

ST Series 19

Call to the Priesthood – All my Orders are Christ’s

Aaron’s election by God to minister as a priest, in spite of the disgraceful sin he had just committed in leading Israel in the worship of the golden calf, tells us much about God. His confidence in what Aaron might become, reflects luster upon the character of the One Whom he was to serve.

Our word priest is actually an abbreviation of the Greek root of presbyter, and suggests mature age which produces wisdom through experience. The Hebrew equivalent is *cohen*, describes one who stands up for another and approaches God on his behalf. It also depicts him as a “prince” (Job 12:19) or “ruler” (cf. Acts 23:5) of his family. As a judge of Israel in “matters of controversy within his gates” (Deut. 17:8-12; 21:5).

The details of the Aaronic priesthood, officiating as they did for fifteen centuries in the Tabernacle and Temple, were also typical pictures of the service of Jesus in the heavenly Sanctuary. This ministry was divided among three groups of persons:

- 1) The _____ (1 Chron 27:5; 24:11), also called “the _____” (2 Kings 25:18, margin) and “the governor of the house of God” (1 Chron 9:11; cf. 24:5,6; Acts 23:4,5)
- 2) The “_____ of the second order” (2 Kings 23:40)
- 3) The _____ (1 Chron. 23:3ff; 24:1) who conducted the less sacred tasks connected with the Tabernacle.

God’s Plans for the Priests

God had provided for a priestly ministry long before He called Aaron. After the Fall, He purposed that the father should be the priest in his own family. As the population increased, the first-born assumed this responsibility in the clan.

When Jehovah rescued His people and led them to Horeb, He put into operation his plan for each Israelite to be a member of His “royal priesthood” (Ex.19:5). This is still His purpose for His church today (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6).

[Under the *CALL TO THE PRIESTHOOD* subject, there are several sub-categories which individual study the teacher recommends worth exploring. The following is a partial list of these categories:

[The Model Priesthood of Melchisedek](#)
[The Call of the Levites](#)
[Prerequisites for the Priesthood](#)

[Cities of Refuge and the Priests](#)
[Priestly Compensations & Duties](#)
[Priests as Educators](#)

Priestly Garments – All my Righteousness is Christ's

The common priestly wardrobe was now flung open and garments of “glory and beauty” (Ex. 28:2, 40; cf. Ps. 96:6), made of rich materials according to God's designs, were freely provided to Aaron and his sons. All were “_____” (hint vs.2) made “of fine linen of woven work.” (Ex.39:27)

As we think of these different kinds of robes, we should keep in mind that they represent the “clothing” which Heaven provides for Christian “royal priests.”

“Everything worn by the high priest was to be whole and without blemish. The pattern of the priestly robes was made known to Moses in the mount. Every article the high priest was to wear, and the way the way it should be made, were specified. These garments were consecrated to a most solemn purpose. By them was represented the character of the great Antitype, Jesus Christ. They covered the priest with glory and beauty, and made the dignity of his office to appear. When clothed with them, the priest presented himself as a representative of Israel, showing by his garments the glory that Israel should reveal to the world as the chosen people of God. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in spirit and word, would be acceptable to God. He is holy; and His glory and perfection must be represented in the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit; but no rent must be made in the priestly robes.”

"The high priest who dared to appear in holy office, and engage in the service of the Sanctuary, with a rent robe, was looked upon as having severed himself from God. By rending his garment, he cut himself off from being a representative character. He was no longer accepted by God as the officiating high priest" (YI June 7, 1900; cf. Lev 10:6).

Materials Used

The substances used for these clothes were planned to turn pensive hearts to look at the nature of Mary's Son. They were linen or cotton, gold, silver, precious stones and wool.

Linen – probably Egyptian cotton was garnered from the fields of earth. It was nourished by the dust and dew before man's relentless sickle cut it down, and his unremitting maul thrashed its fibers, and the hot sun bleached them to snowy purity. The spinner tortured them into threads, and the weaver's beam beat upon them, as a woman's hands fashioned the whitest lawn. These "cruel" acts are an allegory of the circumstances which beat upon the earthly life of the Man Christ Jesus and *helped to shape His character*. Throughout His life He learned obedience by the things which He **suffered** (Heb 5:7-9).

Precious Stones – The darkness of unseen mines yielded the gold and precious stones which the craftsmen used. Fire raged and melted the smashed and crushed ore, and hammers banged the metal into form. This fine gold represented "faith and love" which grow in pain. At the same time the lapidary cut and disciplined the multicolored rocks, and ground and polished them by holding them hard against the moving stone and spinning wheel. Only in these ways did they become bright flowers of petrified light. These precious stones portray Christ's "good works" (PK 410).

Wool – The **selfless lamb** provided the wool, and the rainbow dyes, extracted from slaughtered animals, added color to the distaff and the loom. And from these substances of the earth two kinds of material were woven. From these **the Master** designed garments for the priests and the high priest, and then **the Spirit** inspired artisans to tailor them to suggest meaning to the musing heart. The garments were “whole (that is, woven in one piece) and without blemish;” (DA 709) no garment worn was to have a rent or be unclean. Only thus could it represent the **pure unblemished character** of the **heavenly Priest, Jesus Christ** their great Antitype.

Four Garments comprised that of Aaron and his sons. They were designed to cover the nakedness of Aaron and his sons. All were tailor-made for them without any cost.

1. The under garment, or “ _____ , ” extended “from the loins even unto the thighs.” (Ex.28:42)
2. The outer garments comprised: _____ , _____ , and _____ . (Ex.28:40)

Description and Function of Garments

The **Linen breeches** or shorts, confined about the waist with a cord, and extended to the knees. The following texts give support for this: (Ex.28:42,43; 39:28; Lev 6:10; Ezek. 44:18), clothed their “loins” and reached “even to the thighs.” This biblical term “loins” symbolically describes man’s “creative” functions, on the analogy of his secret powers of “procreation” (cf. Acts 2:30; 1 Peter 1:13; Eph. 6:14; cf. Heb. 7:5,9,10; Ezek. 1:26,27). These were to be kept enveloped by _____ , symbolized here by the white linen shorts.

Application: The angel Gabriel explained the significance of the “**fine linen clean and white**” to the Revelator: it pictured “the **righteousness of Christ**” (Rev 19:8), **His matchless character**. The “shame of the nakedness” of **man’s sinful nature** was **to be transformed** by the power of **enabling grace**. His resulting character was represented by this garment of **snowy purity** which Jesus casts about his roving thoughts and errant plans (Cf. COL 3:11; Ezek. 16:10,14; 1 Cor 10:5)

The **Coat** –the enveloping white linen “tunic with long skirts and sleeves” was his principal garment. “Woven in one piece” (PP 350), it was placed over the priest’s shoulders, and probably extended down to his feet (Ex.39:27). The Septuagint suggests that it had tassels, and Josephus (*Antiquities* III:7:2) indicates that it was close fitting. Robes of this kind were evidently worn by men (Gen 37:2) as well as women (2 Sam. 13:18). This white linen coat corresponded to the plain simple coat of Jesus, which was “without seam, woven from the top throughout,” (John 19:23,27). This was the seamless coat for which, fulfilling prophecy, Ps.22:18, the heathen soldiers cast lots.

Application: “Thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen,” the Lord decreed (Ex.28:4,39). Art and skill made this snowy robe a thing of quiet loveliness. This snowy cloak symbolized the perfect _____ of Christ which He credits to **the believer** at the moment of **justification**. The **sinless Jesus** thus displays His desire to share the qualities of His impeccable life with His **royal priestly representatives**, and these may be ours as His gift.

The **Girdle** – the white robe, or coat was “confined about the waist by a white linen girdle embroidered in blue, purple, and red” (PP 350; Ex. 28:39: 39:29). These colors call attention to: the three _____, and remind the student of other qualities of Christ’s human nature (Heb 10:20). The sash thus speaks of the righteousness, compassion and understanding of the Son of Man which disciplined His conduct as a “girdle.” Jospheus remembered that this belt was four fingers wide and went around the body twice. It was tied in front, and the ends hung down to the feet. When the priest was officiating at the altar he flung the ends over his left shoulder to give him freedom of movement (*Antiquities* 1:3:8).

Of Christ it is said, “Righteousness shall be the _____ of His loins, and faithfulness the _____ of His reins.” Isaiah 11:5

Application: thus the girdle was used to bind up the coat for greater freedom in service. The girdle was uniformly the emblem of readiness for work. Jesus says, “Let your loins be **girded** about, and your **lights burning**,” (Luke 12:35) that is be always prepared for any service that God requires of you, and be diligent about it.

Finally, a white cap or “**bonnet**,” which resembled the calyx of a blossom (*migba’ah*), was worn by the ordinary priest (found in Ex. 28:40; 29:9; 39:28; Lev 8:13, RSV “caps”). Did this shape and color suggest the bloom of spring and the development of a living character on the part of the wearer, — the exact opposite of a fading flower (1 Peter 1:24; James 1:10; Isa 40:6-8)? The mind must be encased in righteousness.

In summary, these four garments formed the basic livery of all the priests, and their snowy color portrayed how their characters should appear as representatives of Christ (cf. Rev.19:8). They are described as white and shining because they reflected this purity of disposition (cf.Rev.15:6). They taught that His righteousness must form the foundation of the entire ministry of the priests, and that their Saviour’s life must cover their nakedness and infuse their thinking.

Extra credit: Turn to Rev.1:13; 15:6; 19:7,8 notice the sanctuary term: “golden girdle” in these verses. What is it telling you? _____

_____.