



*Go for God!*

# **“WHAT IS YOUR MINISTRY?”**

## **Exodus Chapters 28**

> What is your ministry? All Christians have been called to the *priesthood*, *"You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ ... But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"* (1 Peter 2:5-9).

- Open your Bibles to Revelation 1:1-8 (Christians are called to be *“kings and priests.”*)

### **> Chapter 28 – The Priest & His Garments**

#### **(v1) THE PRIESTHOOD (Aaron & his sons)**

(v1) **The Priesthood** was set within the tribe of Levi, from which Aaron was descended. Aaron's sons (Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar) inherited the position of high priest from their father (Numbers 3:2-3).

Aaron was given special robes to wear, signifying his status within the priesthood (Leviticus 8:7-9). At his death the robes were transferred to his oldest living son, Eleazar (Numbers 20:25-28).

The **TABERNACLE**, the main **sanctuary of worship**, was placed under Aaron's supervision (Numbers 4). He received instructions from God on the functions of the priesthood and the tabernacle (Numbers 18). He alone, serving in the capacity of high priest, went into the **Holy of Holies** once a year to represent the people on the **DAY OF ATONEMENT**.

The Lord's words *"to minister unto Me"* are found **five times in these chapters 28 and 29**; also, in 30:30; 40:13,15; Leviticus 7:35. To be sure, the priests ministered to the people, but their first **obligation was to minister to the Lord and please Him.**

- Jesus says to believers in Acts 1:4-8 - *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Jesus said in Matthew 24:14 - *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (JESUS IS COMING SOON!)*

- The Book of Hebrews contrasts the imperfect priesthood of Aaron with the perfect priesthood of Christ (Hebrews 5:2-5; 7:11-12).

**Christ's priesthood is compared to the order of MELCHIZEDEK because it is an eternal office with no beginning and no end. Thus, it replaces the priesthood of Aaron.**

#### **(v2-43) THE HOLY GARMENTS**

(v2-5) Notice that they are to make *holy garments*, these garments *consecrated him*, meaning to set him apart from all others.

- These garments represented identification, revelation, and salvation.

- In serving God and the people, the high priest wore seven pieces of clothing:

1- undergarments (vv. 42-43);

2 - a white inner robe ("coat"; v. 39; 39:27; Leviticus 8:6-7);

3 - a blue robe over that, with bells and pomegranates on the hem (Exodus 28:31-35; 39:22-26);

4 - the ephod, a sleeveless garment of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, held together by a jeweled clasp on each shoulder (28:6-8; 39:1-5; Leviticus 8:7);

5 - a girdle at the waist (Exodus 28:8);

6 - a jeweled breastplate, held in place on the ephod by golden chains attached to the shoulder clasps (vv. 9-30; 39:8-21);

7 - a white linen turban ("miter," 28:39) with a golden plate on it that said, "Holiness to the Lord" (v. 36).

(v6-14) EPHOD OF HIGH PRIEST - A vest worn by the HIGH PRIEST when he presided at the altar (Exodus 28:4-14; 39:2-7).



> Since Christ is our great High Priest (Hebrews 8:1-6), the symbols in the ephod may be applied to Him:

- White linen speaks of His absolute righteousness.

- The high priest's special dress represented his function as mediator between God and man.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 - For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

- Over the trousers, coat, girdle, and cap, worn by all priests, the high priest wore an EPHOD, a two-piece apron reaching to his hips, made of royal colors (blue, purple, and scarlet), and sewed with gold thread.

By two onyx stones bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel fastened to the shoulders of the ephod, he brought the whole nation

before God in all his priestly acts (Exodus 28:5-14).

Typically, scarlet (the color of blood) symbolizes our Lord's atoning work on the cross; purple, His royalty; gold, His divinity.

Blue, the color of the sky, signifies Christ's origin with God the Father in heaven.

(v15-29) The "breastplate of judgment," made of the same material was attached to the front of the ephod (Exodus 28:15-30). On its front were 12 precious stones engraved with the names of the 12 tribes.

In its pocket, directly over his heart, were the URIM AND THUMMIM (Exodus 28:30), the medium through which God could communicate His will. By this the high priest was Israel's advocate before God and God's spokesman to them.

(v30) URIM AND THUMMIM - [YOU rim, THUME em] (lights and truth, or perfections) - gems or stones carried by the high priest and used by him to determine God's will in certain matters. Many scholars believe these gems were cast, much as dice are thrown, to aid the high priest in making important decisions.

Appeals to lots were made under divine authority by the chosen people on the most solemn occasions (Leviticus 16:8; Numbers 26:55; Joshua 7:14-18; 13:6; 18:8; 1 Samuel 14:41-42; Acts 1:26), and it must have been a truth commonly recognized by the people that though *"the lot was cast into the lap, the whole disposing thereof was of the Lord"* (Proverbs 16:33).

The *Urim and Thummim* were either on, by, or in the high priest's breastplate. For this reason, the breastplate is often called the *breastplate of judgment*, or decision.

In the instructions for making the breastplate, the linen was to be doubled to form a square (Exodus 28:16). If the top edge was not stitched together, the breastplate would be an envelope or pouch. Many scholars believe the Urim and Thummim were kept in this pouch and were stones or gems with engraved symbols that signified yes-no or true-false. By these the high priest reached a decision, according to this theory.

> *Today Christians have LIGHT and TRUTH:*

- *JESUS is our LIGHT: John 8:12 - Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

- *The WORD OF GOD is our LIGHT: Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

- *JESUS is our TRUTH: John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

- *The HOLY SPIRIT is our TRUTH: John 16:13-14 - However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.*

- *The WORD OF GOD is our TRUTH: John 17:17-19 - Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

(v31-35) *The Robe of the Ephod* – The sound of the bells on the robe, that the people, who stood without, when they heard the sound of the bells within the tabernacle, might have a sensible proof that the high priest was performing the sacred rite in their behalf, though he was out of their sight.

The *pomegranates symbolized fruitfulness* and *the golden bells gave witness* that the high priest was ministering in the holy place. The bells and pomegranates remind us that our priestly walk must be fruitful and faithful, always giving witness that we're serving the Lord with integrity.

*(v36-43) HOLINESS TO THE LORD*

(v36-38) *"HOLINESS TO THE LORD"* - Warren Wiersbe writes, "It comes as a shock to some people to learn that Jesus did not die to make us happy; He died to make sinners holy. *"Be holy, for I am holy"* was a frequent command to the Jews (Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7,26; 21:8) and it's repeated in 1 Peter 1:15-16 for believers today.

*The first step toward happiness is holiness. If we're right with God, then we can start being right with others and with the circumstances of life that trouble us. If you aim for happiness, you'll miss it, but if you aim for holiness, you'll also find happiness in the Lord."*

- The Hebrew expression *"to bear iniquity"* is applied either to one who suffers the penalty of sin (Exodus 28:43; Leviticus 5:1,17; 17:16; 26:41, etc.), or to one who takes away the sin of others (Genesis 50:17; Leviticus 10:17; 16:22; Numbers 30:15; 1 Samuel 15:25, etc.).

In several of these passages, the verb is rightly rendered to forgive. **The iniquity which is spoken of in this place does not mean particular sins actually committed, but that condition of alienation from God in every earthly thing which makes reconciliation and consecration needful.**

(v39-43) **A PRIEST is to be ANOINTED, CONSECRATED AND SANCTIFIED:**

- **(1) To Anoint** – Is to authorize, or set apart, a person for a particular work or service (Isaiah 61:1). The anointed person belonged to God in a special sense. The phrases, "*the Lord's anointed,*" "*God's anointed,*" "*My anointed,*" "*Your anointed,*" or "*His anointed*" are used of Saul (1 Samuel 26:9,11), David (2 Samuel 22:51), and Solomon (2 Chronicles 6:42).

In the New Testament, **all who are Christ's disciples are said to be anointed; they are God's very own, set apart and commissioned for service** (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 - *Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*)

*Anointing* in the New Testament also refers to the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which brings understanding (1 John 2:20,27). **But this is also a spiritual anointing, as the Holy Spirit anoints a person's heart and mind with the love and truth of God.**

- **(2) To Consecrate** - The act of setting apart, or dedicating, something or someone for God's use. In the New Testament, the *supreme example of consecration is Christ himself* (John 17:19; Hebrews 7:28; 10:10). But believers are also *consecrated by Christ* (John 17:17; 1 Peter 2:9), and are urged to *consecrate themselves as well* (Romans 12:1; 2 Timothy 2:21).

One of the results of our consecration by Christ is that we are now a *priesthood of believers* (1 Peter 2:9) with *direct access to our heavenly Father* (Ephesians 3:11-12).

- **(3) To Sanctify** - The process of God's grace by which the believer is separated from sin and becomes dedicated to God's righteousness. Accomplished by the Word of God (John 17:7) and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:3-4), sanctification results in holiness, **or purification from the guilt and power of sin.**

- **Sanctification: God's Work!** - We are sanctified by **God the Father** (Jude), **God the Son** (Hebrews 2:11), and **God the Holy Spirit** (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). As Paul prayed, "*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely*" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Sanctification is a process that continues during our lives as believers (**Hebrews 10:14**). Only after death are the saints referred to as "perfect" (**Hebrews 12:23**).

- **Sanctification: The Believer's Work!** - Numerous commands in the Bible imply that believers also have a responsibility in the process of sanctification. We are commanded to "**be holy**" (Leviticus 11:44; 1 Peter 1:15-16); to "**be perfect**" (*meaning complete, mature*) (Matthew 5:48); and to "**present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness**" (Romans 6:19).

Writing to the church of the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul made a strong plea for purity: "**This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God**" (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5).

> LEARN, LOVE and LIVE your calling to the PRIESTHOOD, turn to REVELATION CHAPTER 5.

> Let's make Paul's prayer our prayer for ourselves and all believers:

*"And may the Lord make you increase in love and abound in love...so that He  
may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before  
our God and Father at the coming of our  
Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints"*

**1 Thessalonians 3:12-13**