

Exodus 26-28 Chapter Study

INTRODUCTION

Outline For Exodus

I. The Exodus • Chs. 1-13:16

II. The Journey to Sinai • Chs. 13:17-40:38

A.-F.

G. At Mt. Sinai • 20-40

Under G. we've covered 1. through part of 16.

16. 25-27 • The pattern for the Tabernacle X X

As I mentioned in our study last week as we began our investigation of the tabernacle plans given by God to Moses, the tabernacle is an awesome foreshadowing of the person and work of the Messiah

Down to the minutest detail, the tabernacle and all its priestly service is an incredible picture and type of Christ.

And there are many great tapes and books that examine the tabernacle from that perspective.

While I would love to examine all these details, it would lengthen our study in Exodus into many more weeks.

Another thing it would do, and I've noticed this in some of the studies on the tabernacle I've read & listened to, in a *focus* on how the tabernacle portrays Christ, there's a kind of *neglect* of the tabernacle itself and how it functioned as the tent of meeting for the children of Israel.

So in our study, we're going to *first* just review the text and consider the tabernacle itself – as the center of worship in the camp of Israel.

Then, once we've covered the whole structure and it's service, we'll come back and see how it is a picture of Christ.

So far in our look at the tabernacle, we've covered . . .

a. the offering for the tabernacle materials - 25:1-9

b. the ark of the covenant - 25:10-22

c. the table of showbread - 25:23-30

d. the golden lampstand - 25:31-40

As we've looked at these things, we've seen some *highly detailed instructions* about how they were to be made.

There's a tendency as we read these instructions on the construction of the tabernacle and the priest's garments and service, to grow a bit *weary* with the details.

We'll see that especially tonight in the first chapter – so let's begin by reviewing what God said to Moses about the tabernacle – 25:40

And see to it that you make *them* according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

As we ended our study last week, we saw that this word "pattern" is a technical word that refers to what we would call *blueprints*.

God told Moses that when it came time to execute the building of the tabernacle, he was to make sure it was made EXACTLY as had been shown him – no deviations.

Hebrews 8 & 9 tell us why - because the tabernacle was a replica of God's throne room in heaven.

And the priesthood that served in the tabernacle was prophetic of the ministry of the Messiah.

So – the details we see here aren't merely pedantic, arcane, dull words.

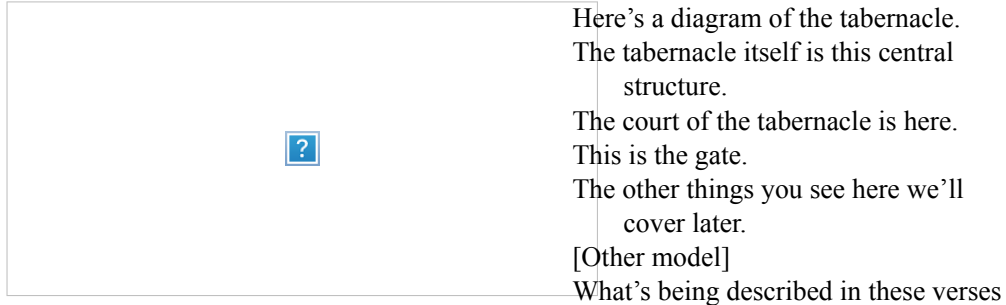
They are invitations to us to build an even clearer picture of the glory that awaits us in heaven.

CHAPTER 26

e. the tabernacle curtains & coverings – 26:1-14

1 “Moreover you shall make the tabernacle *with ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them.*

The word tabernacle means “tent” and what’s being described here is the *main structure* that constituted the tabernacle.



are the curtains that formed the covering of the tabernacle.

There were 10 separate curtains made of the finest white linen.

Into each curtain were woven artistic designs of cherubim, using blue, purple, and red thread.

The cherubim are special heavenly creatures which we always find around God’s throne.

They seem to be a kind of heavenly body or honor guard to God.

We get several partial descriptions of them in the scriptures and they are beings of such august majesty and glory that they inspire awe and worship in and of themselves.

The reason why cherubim were to be embroidered into the curtains of the tabernacle was because the tabernacle represented the throne room of heaven, which is the scene of the actual cherubim.

2 The length of each curtain *shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits. And every one of the curtains shall have the same measurements.*

Each of the 10 curtains were to have the same measure; 42 feet long by 6 feet wide.

3 Five curtains shall be coupled to one another, and *the other five curtains shall be coupled to one another.*

The 10 curtains were to be separated into 2 groups, each being 5 curtains long, attached at their *long* sides; thus making a length of curtain, 42 feet long by 30 feet wide.

4 And you shall make loops of blue yarn on the edge of the curtain on the selvedge of one set, and likewise you shall do on the outer edge of *the other* curtain of the second set. ⁵ Fifty loops you shall make in the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make on the edge of the curtain that *is* on the end of the second set, that the loops may be clasped to one another. ⁶ And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains together with the clasps, so that it may be one tabernacle.

The two sets of curtains were joined by 50 gold clips passing through the same number of cloth loops sewn into one edge of each set of curtains.

The reason why the curtains were separated to begin with and not just made as one big sheet was because of the fact the tabernacle was a *portable structure*.

It had to be disassembled and moved and then reassembled. One massive sheet of linen 42’ feet wide by 60’ long would be too unwieldy to handle and move.

But the 10 curtains which were then joined into two units, and then combined into one also spoke of diversity in unity.

Heaven will eventually be the scene of Jews and Gentiles being made into one people who stand before the throne of God, in the presence of the cherubim, to sing His eternal praises.

As we’ll see later, the dimension of the tabernacle was 15’ wide by 45’ long and 15’ high.

This means the full curtain would completely cover the tabernacle and fall down to 18” above the

ground on each side.

- 7 “You shall also make curtains of goats’ hair, to be a tent over the tabernacle. You shall make eleven curtains. ⁸ The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; and the eleven curtains shall all have the same measurements. ⁹ And you shall couple five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves, and you shall double over the sixth curtain at the forefront of the tent. ¹⁰ You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain of the second set. ¹¹ And you shall make fifty bronze clasps, put the clasps into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. ¹² The remnant that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. ¹³ And a cubit on one side and a cubit on the other side, of what remains of the length of the curtains of the tent, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and on that side, to cover it.**

Goat’s hair is black, and is the material used in the Bedouin tents of today.

When woven, it produces a felt-like material that is incredibly durable.

This curtain was made of 11 panels, each measuring 45’ by 6’.

Like the linen curtain, these 11 panels were then combined into two sections, one 5 panels the other 6.

These were then attached to one another via 50 loops and bronze clips making a massive black covering 66’ by 45’.

This was then draped over the tabernacle, completely covering the sides and back.

In fact it was 6 feet longer than was needed to cover the top and back, so 3 feet of it were folded over at the door and 3 feet at the back.

- 14 “You shall also make a covering of ram skins dyed red for the tent, and a covering of badger skins above that.**

Over the goat’s hair curtain two more coverings were placed, although no measurement is given for them.

No measurement was needed because the instruction to place them *over* the goat’s hair curtain meant they had to be the same size.

The first covering was to be a leather covering of ram’s skins that had been dyed red, and over that was the hide of – the NKJ has “badgers.”

The Hebrew word was little used and archaic and the earlier translators didn’t know what it meant so they settled on badgers.

More recent scholarship points to the seal, and such material was indeed known from that time.

Seal skins would provide an extremely durable and weatherproof covering for the tabernacle.

Consider the order of curtains and coverings listed here.

Fine linen with artistic design - Black goat’s hair - Red leather - Rough, tough seal skin.

Looking from a distance, it would be a rather unattractive and plain structure, with nothing at all to comment it.

But passing within, one sees beauty beyond description.

As I mentioned, we’ll see later how all of this speaks of the person and work of Christ.

f. the tabernacle walls – 26:15-30

- 15 “And for the tabernacle you shall make the boards of acacia wood, standing upright. ¹⁶ Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the width of each board.**

These wooden boards would frame the walls of the tabernacle.

Each board was 15 feet long and 2¼ feet wide.

- 17 Two tenons shall be in each board for binding one to another. Thus you shall make for all the boards of the tabernacle.**

The word 'tenon' is literally "hands."

18 And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards for the south side.

19 You shall make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards: two sockets under each of the boards for its two tenons. 20 And for the second side of the tabernacle, the north side, there shall be twenty boards 21 and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under each of the boards. 22 For the far side of the tabernacle, westward, you shall make six boards. 23 And you shall also make two boards for the two back corners of the tabernacle. 24 They shall be coupled [or "doubled"] together at the bottom and they shall be coupled together at the top by one ring. Thus it shall be for both of them. They shall be for the two corners. 25 So there shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver—sixteen sockets—two sockets under each of the boards.

This gets a little complicated and difficult to visualize, so let me try to simplify it a bit.

The tabernacle door faced east, so the north and south walls were the long sides, with the western end being the closed, narrow end.

The North & South walls were 20 boards or 45 ft. long and 15' high.

The West end was 6 boards wide and with the addition of the two corner boards and the overlap of the sides came to a total width of 15 ft.

Along the edge of each board was a tab and ring assembly referred to as *tenons*, which allowed the boards to be ganged together – like our chairs here.

In the bottom of each board two more tabs were made so that each board could then be set on a base made up of two silver sockets.

Each socket was made of a talent of silver – about 75 lbs. each, making a base for each board that weighed 150 lbs!

The silver that was used to make these sockets came from the *redemption money* paid by the children of Israel, symbolic of their belonging to God.

The acacia wood used to make these boards was in ready supply there in the desert.

There's some really cool pictures here that we'll come back to in a moment.

26 "And you shall make bars of acacia wood: five for the boards on one side of the tabernacle, 27 five bars for the boards on the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the far side westward. 28 The middle bar shall pass through the midst of the boards from end to end. 29 You shall overlay the boards with gold, make their rings of gold as holders for the bars, and overlay the bars with gold. 30 And you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain.

Besides the stability provided by the ganging tabs and hooks and the silver base, 5 gold covered wooden bars would provide additional support for the walls.

The middle bar would actually pass through the center of the boards, while the other 4 would pass through rings attached to the sides of the boards.

Notice that no mention of the gold overlay on the wooden walls is made until v. 29.

This is remarkable when you realize that the finished wall would look like solid gold! No wood whatever would show!

Why then does the gold overlay get left until the end?

The wood, coming from the desert, speaks of the *humanity* of the children of Israel.

Growing in the form of an acacia tree, it is bent and twisted, shaped by the grueling conditions of the wilderness.

But then it is cut down and shaped by the skillful hand of the carpenter, who straightens it and molds it into a sturdy board.

This speaks of the work of God who takes us out of the wilderness of this world by the painful experience of conviction and the union of our death with Christ on the Cross.

But then what does the Lord do with our fallen, twisted humanity?

The Master Carpenter molds and shapes us, straightens us and makes us into a sturdy board that frames the structure of His Church.

Just as those acacia wood boards that stood in the presence of God were set on silver, provided by the redemption price – so we stand before God based on the redemption price paid for us – the blood of Christ, who was sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver.

Those wooden boards, taken from the desert, were set on silver, which itself was set on the desert floor.

In the same way, you and I have been taken out of this world to be useful to God and to stand in His presence, even while we still live in this world – but we are separated from it by our redemption in Christ.

Those boards were also joined to one another by tenons and poles – speaking of our union in the Spirit; we are many, but we are One in Christ!

It is only after describing all of this that the wooden walls are said to be covered with gold, which speaks of the divine.

Though we are human, God has placed His Spirit in and on us.

As it says in 2 Peter 1:4, we are made partakers of the divine nature, not that we become gods, but that we are united with Him through the work of His grace and redemption.

g. arranging the tabernacle – 26:31-35

31 “You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. 32 You shall hang it upon the four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Their hooks *shall be* gold, upon four sockets of silver.

This veil marked the barrier between the two inner rooms of the tabernacle, the *Holy Place*, from the *Most Holy Place*, or what is also called the *Holy of holies*.

[Diagram]

The passage between the rooms was made up of 4 pillars of acacia wood covered with gold, from which hung the veil.

33 And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring the ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between the holy *place* and the Most Holy. 34 You shall put the mercy seat upon the ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy. 35 You shall set the table [the table of showbread] outside the veil, and the lampstand across from the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side.

[Diagram]

h. the door of the tabernacle – 26:36-37

36 “You shall make a screen for the door of the tabernacle, woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. 37 And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold; their hooks *shall be* gold, and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

This provided the door for the tabernacle and was similar to the veil, although there would be 5 gold covered wooden pillars instead of 4 to secure the screen to.

The door hanging is called a *screen* as opposed to a *veil* because its construction would be less *dense*; it would be a more open weave.

CHAPTER 27

i. the altar of burnt offering – 27:1-8

1 “You shall make an altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—the altar shall be square—and its height *shall be* three cubits. 2 You shall make its

horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay it with bronze.

This describes the altar of burnt offering that would stand in the court in front of the tabernacle.

It was made of bronze covered acacia wood and measured 7½ ft. square by 4½ ft. high.

The horns of the altar referred to the raised corners and were the most sacred part of the altar. This is where the blood of the sacrifices offered on the altar was applied and was supposed to affect the effect of the sacrifice or offering.

The rest of the altar was too hot because of the fire in it, but the horns, standing on the corners, and raised, were cool enough to touch, so the priests or a worshipper could grab hold of the altar, thus identifying with the sacrifices being offered on it.

When a person was seeking refuge, he or she would grab hold of the horns of the altar, thus claiming *sanctuary*.

The altar of burnt offering was covered with bronze as opposed to gold because bronze is a metal that can endure the intense heat of the altar.

Because of this, bronze becomes identified with judgment in the Bible.

³ Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. ⁴ You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze; and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. ⁵ You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar.

The utensils necessary for all the sacrifices that would be offered on the altar were also fashioned of bronze.

The altar was essentially a box with the center hallowed out and a grate in it so the fire below would consume the offerings on top.

This box would be placed on top of a shallow platform that would be made for it so that the fuel for the fire could be added and air could get to it.

⁶ And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. ⁷ The poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it. ⁸ You shall make it hollow with boards; as it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make it.

In order to make it light enough to transport, the altar wasn't solid wood; the inside was hollow.

When someone entered the tabernacle court, the first thing they saw was the altar of burnt offering.

Since this was the place that people brought the sacrifices for their sins, it was a graphic reminder that there is *no access* to God except through substitutionary sacrifice.

Many people today think they can come any old way to God, as if He is just happy they *want* to come to Him and will accept them on any terms.

They couldn't be more mistaken.

There is one way to God, and that is through Jesus Christ, who became our substitute on the Cross.

There is no place of acceptance before the Father except through the Son.

Look at what God says yet again here in v. 8 –

. . . as it was shown you on the mountain, so shall they make it.

God says this again and again – be sure to make it just as it was shown you!

Not – hey, here's one way you can make it, but if you don't like that way, feel free to make any innovations you want.

Hey, there are many ways to Me – so, you can make curtains, or not.

You can make gold covered wooden walls, or not.

In fact, let's forget all about walls, after all walls could keep some people out and I wouldn't want anyone to think that I'm being narrow-minded!

This is not the way God tells Moses and the children of Israel to go about preparing the place where he will meet with them and they will be able to meet with Him.

No – in the tabernacle there was only one gate, one path, one door, one way into the presence of

the Holy God.

One Way!

Have you come by the One way God has made into His acceptance and presence – by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ?

Or are you trying to sneak in some other way?

j. the court of the tabernacle – 27:9-19

⁹ “You shall also make the court of the tabernacle. For the south side *there shall be* hangings for the court *made of* fine woven linen, one hundred cubits long for one side. ¹⁰ And its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *shall be* bronze. The hooks of the pillars and their bands *shall be* silver. ¹¹ Likewise along the length of the north side *there shall be* hangings one hundred *cubits* long, with its twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of bronze, and the hooks of the pillars and their bands of silver.

This describes the walls of the courtyard.

The fence would be 150 ft. long and made of linen.

It would be suspended from 20 pillars, probably made of acacia wood set in a base of bronze, and capped with a crown of silver which would hold the 7½ ft. tall linen fence.

¹² “And along the width of the court on the west side *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits, with their ten pillars and their ten sockets.

The narrow west end of the courtyard fence was 75 ft. and was suspended by 10 pillars.

¹³ The width of the court on the east side *shall be* fifty cubits. ¹⁴ The hangings on one side of the gate *shall be* fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. ¹⁵ And on the other side *shall be* hangings of fifteen *cubits*, with their three pillars and their three sockets.

The eastern side of the courtyard fence was the gate, which saw the sides fences only come in a total of some 22½ feet, leaving an opening into the courtyard of 30 ft.

¹⁶ “For the gate of the court *there shall be* a screen twenty cubits long, woven of blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. *It shall have* four pillars and four sockets.

The gate opening itself was covered with a separate piece of linen 30 ft. long and decorated with special designs.

This gate piece was like an open flap that was suspended from pillars like the rest of the courtyard fence.

¹⁷ All the pillars around the court shall have bands of silver; their hooks *shall be* of silver and their sockets of bronze. ¹⁸ The length of the court *shall be* one hundred cubits, the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits, *made of* fine woven linen, and its sockets of bronze. ¹⁹ All the utensils of the tabernacle for all its service, all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, *shall be* of bronze.

That concludes the description of the making of the tabernacle.

k. tending the lampstand – 27:20-21

²⁰ “And you shall command the children of Israel that they bring you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually. ²¹ In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which *is* before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD . *It shall be* a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.

God had given the direction for the making of the lampstand in ch. 25.

Here He tells Moses to call for an offering of the highest grade olive oil for use in the lamp.

The priests are to tend to it daily, making sure it never goes out.

These 2 verses seem at first reading to be out of place.

They seem to fit better in Ch. 25 where we're told of the lampstand for the first time.
But they are placed her for good reason.

2 Timothy 3:16 says that ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for us.

Jesus said that not one jot or tittle of God's Word would pass away.

Scripture doesn't just contain the ideas of God – it is the very word and *words* of God.

2 Timothy 3:16 says literally “all the writings” – meaning the movement of the pen making the mark – that's what's inspired.

There's a goofy idea today, popular in liberal circles, that the Bible is not the Word of God so much as it *contains* the word, or really the *ideas* of God.

These ideas of God, while eternal and infallible, are expressed in the Bible in fallible and temporal words of man.

This modernist view of inspiration says that the only way to know what is truly from God is to trust them, the experts, to decipher the *real* meaning of the text.

They would take the Bible out of our hands and replace it with an edited version that teaches their particular flavor and brand of religious faith.

We reject this view of inspiration!

We believe the Bible is inspired, all of it, not just in it's ideas but in its very words; nay, in it's letters; nay, even as the rabbis say, in the spaces *between* the letters!

Vs. 20-21 are *not* misplaced – they come right here, inserted between the description of the tabernacle and the priesthood for good reason.

You see, as God moves from speaking about the tabernacle to the priesthood and the service to be rendered *in* the tabernacle, He wants the people to remember what the tabernacle and the priesthood were all about – it was all about meeting with Him, about their relationship with Him and what that relationship would make of them!

God did not want the tabernacle and the priesthood to degenerate into nothing more than a religion, a ritual.

The tabernacle, in all its grandeur and glory was but a *tool*.

The priesthood in all its complexity & glory was merely the means to an end, and that was to restore the relationship between God and man, so that man could become all that God created him to be.

All of this was perfectly summarized in that lampstand – which represented the nation of Israel being the light of God to the world.

The pure olive oil came from pressing, just as it is out of our being pressed that the Lord conforms us to the image of His Son.

The oil speaks of the Holy Spirit who is the fuel for the fire of our lives.

The priests were told to tend the lamps, trimming the wicks to make sure they didn't smoke but gave off a pure, clean light.

In the same way, our priest, Jesus Christ, trims and prunes us, making sure that our lives give forth a pure, clean light, not a sooty one made unclear by the flesh or the distractions of the world.

Now we shift to the service of the priests

CHAPTER 28

17. 28-30 • *The Priesthood Instituted*

a. the priesthood initiated - 28:1-4

¹ “Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron *and* Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

The priesthood would later expand to the entire tribe of Levi, from which Moses and his brother Aaron came, but at this point, there were only 5 priests inaugurated to the role; Aaron and his 4

sons.

Nadab and Abihu were the two elders so stood immediately below their father in terms of ranks. But as we'll see, they were both killed in judgment for sin and their two younger brothers, Eleazar & Ithamar, took their place.

2 And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. 3 So you shall speak to all *who are* gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.

As the high priest, Aaron would have a special uniform that he was to wear only when he went about his priestly duties in the tabernacle and always when he did them.

The garment was to be holy, special; there were to be no fashions in Israel that duplicated it.

It was to be made by artisans upon whom the Lord had given the spirit of skilful craftsmanship.

In the OT, we find that the Holy Spirit came upon people to equip them for a special task or to fill an office for a period of time.

The Spirit would come upon certain men to serve as King.

This is why David prayed in Psalm 51 that the Spirit would not be taken from him after his sin with Bathsheba.

He knew his ability to lead the people was dependent on the work and anointing of the Spirit of God.

God put His Spirit on certain artisans and craftsmen in Israel to make the furnishing of the tabernacle and to fashion the priests' garments.

The ministry and presence of the Holy Spirit is different now in the NT age.

Because of the work of Christ, the Spirit comes to indwell us *permanently*.

Yet He still calls us to different offices and roles in the Body of Christ and equips us with what is needed to fulfill that calling, whatever it is.

4 And these *are* the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.

Six unique garments would make up the High Priest's uniform.

The rest of the chapter gives us the specifics of these 6 things . . .

b. the ephod – 28:5-14

5 "They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and the fine linen, 6 and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen, artistically worked.

When you see the word "*ephod*" think '*apron*.'

The High Priest had a pair of loose white linen trousers, over which went a long white linen tunic tied with a sash.

Over that went a light blue robe and over that went the ephod which was highly colored and decorative.

7 It shall have two shoulder straps joined at its two edges, and so it shall be joined together.

The ephod had a front panel and a back panel which were connected over the shoulders by straps and around the sides by a band --

8 And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which *is* on it, shall be of the same workmanship, *made of* gold, blue, purple, and scarlet *thread*, and fine woven linen.

9 "Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: 10 six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth. 11 With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall set them in settings of gold. 12 And you shall put the two stones on the

shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial. ¹³ You shall also make settings of gold, ¹⁴ and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings.

God wanted it clearly understood that the High Priest's job was to *represent the people*, so he bore their names on His shoulders when he went in to serve in the presence of the Lord in the tabernacle.

c. the breastplate – 28:15-30

¹⁵ “You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it. ¹⁶ It shall be doubled into a square: a span *shall be* its length, and a span *shall be* its width.

The base of breastplate was made of the same kind of material as the ephod.

It was folded over to form a pocket and measured about 9” square.

¹⁷ And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: *The first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; *this shall be* the first row; ¹⁸ the second row *shall be* a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹⁹ the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. ²¹ And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.

Attached to the outside of the cloth base of the breastplate were 4 rows of 3 stones each.

On each stone was engraved the name of one of the tribes of Israel.

²² “You shall make chains for the breastplate at the end, like braided cords of pure gold. ²³ And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and put the two rings on the two ends [or “corners”] of the breastplate. ²⁴ Then you shall put the two braided *chains* of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate; ²⁵ and the *other* two ends of the two braided *chains* you shall fasten to the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front.

The top of the breastplate was held in place by gold chains that attached to the shoulder straps of the ephod.

²⁶ “You shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends [bottom corners] of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the ephod. ²⁷ And two *other* rings of gold you shall make, and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod. ²⁸ They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, using a blue cord, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod.

The bottom of the breastplate was attached via a blue cord to two more anchor spots on the ephod, just above the decorative band that attached its sides.

²⁹ “So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy *place*, as a memorial before the LORD continually. ³⁰ And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

Three times this is called the breastplate of judgment and 3 times it is mentioned as being over Aaron's heart.

All of this is connected to what we see here in v. 30, the Urim & Thummim.

The *Urim & Thummim* were the means the High Priest used for discerning the mind and will of God when it came to direction for the nation.

They were not the magic glasses Joseph Smith used to translate the Book of Mormon!

The words *Urim & Thummim*, literally mean “*lights & perfections*,” and while it isn’t spelled out precisely what they were – reliable tradition tells us they were two identically shaped stones, one white, the other black.

They were kept in the pocket formed by the breastplate, behind the stones carrying the names of the tribes of Israel and over the high priest’s heart.

Whenever the nation needed to hear the direction of the Lord in some important decision, the high priest would walk in to the holy place and phrase his question in the form of a yes or no inquiry while fingering the Urim and Thummim.

As he alternately picked up one stone and then the other not knowing which he was holding, some signal would be given him by the Lord; maybe a flaring of the lamp, or a brightening of the glow from the Shekinah in the Holy of holies.

The stone he was holding when the signal from the Lord came was the answer.

d. the robe – 28:31-35

31 “You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32 There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear. 33 And upon its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: 34 a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe all around. 35 And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die.

Under the ephod was a sleeveless blue robe that extended to below the knees.

The collar was to be made in such a way that it would not fray and around the hem it was to have a decoration of little fabric pomegranates, and golden bells.

The bells served the purpose of allowing the people who stood outside to be sure the high priest was officiating on their behalf.

Because the holy places were restricted to only the sight of the priests, the only way the people could join in with their service was by the sense of sound – thus the bells.

As long as they heard the bells, they knew the priest was there before the Lord, serving on their behalf – as represented by the stones bearing their names.

In v. 35, God warned them that the only way the high priest would be allowed into the holy places is if he was properly attired in this manner.

Now, there’s a story you hear often, one that I have even told, that the high priest had a rope tied to his ankle when he went in to serve before the Lord and if the people stopped hearing the bells, they would know the priest had died and they would be able to haul him out by the rope.

Turns out, while this is a fun and plausible story – there is no evidence for it either in scripture or in any Jewish writings.

So if you’ve heard it – forget it!

e. the turban & sash – 28:36-39

36 “You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, *like* the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

37 And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. 38 So it shall be on Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

This head covering was for more than keeping his scalp from getting sun-burned!

The turban was a symbol of being under God's covering and authority.
On the front of it was placed a gold plaque engraved with the words, "Holiness to Yahweh."
This was to be the summation of all that the High Priest did before the Lord and before the people.
When he went in to serve before the Lord, it was on behalf of the entire nation which was set apart from the rest of the world to be His own Covenant people.
When he came forth to stand before the people it was as the representative of Yahweh who is a Holy God.

As we stand before the world, who do we represent?
Whose label, name, slogan do we bear?
Who or what do we identify with?
[Caps/hats]

How very cool it would be if we didn't need to wear a cap or hat with some slogan or logo on it but that our very lives were marked *by*, identified *with* **holiness**.

And notice something here – when God told them to make the high priests holy garments, He didn't say they were to be made of dull, black fabric.

He said in v. 2 they were to be made for *glory and beauty!*

True holiness is not the stale cookies and warm lemonade club.

Holiness is not a joyless, narrow life of rules and regulations; a dull, dour, frowning on anything that appears to be pleasurable.

Oh no – holiness means enjoying the heart and purpose for why we exist, for why we are here to begin with.

It is being restored to relationship with the God who made us, and then enjoying life as He designed it.

I have lived in the world, and I have lived in Christ – and let me tell you, I would not trade my worst day in Christ for a decade of the best this world has to offer.

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.

f. the tunics & trousers for Aaron's sons – 28:40-43

40 "For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty. 41 So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. 42 And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs. 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. *It shall be a statute forever to him and his descendants after him.*

The priests were to wear these special clothes whenever they came into the tabernacle to officiate.

They were to wear them because their task was a holy one, appointed by God, not one they selected themselves for.

And they were to mark their special office by wearing garments fitting the office.

Just as the priests were called to don garments appropriate to their office, so you and I are told to clothe ourselves with the practical righteousness of those who have been born again.

Ephesians 4:17-24

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been

taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²²that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

You see, while the priesthood of Israel was limited just to the tribe of Levi, under the New Covenant, *all believers* are priests -

1 Peter 2:4-5

⁴**Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵you also, as living stones, [or as those boards in the tabernacle] are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

Just as the priest of Israel offered up their sacrifices.

1 Peter 2:9-10

⁹**But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, [as Israel was] His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

And as priests – (Colossians 3:8-10)

⁸**But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.**