

Series: Exodus
Title: Beauty and Glory of our High Priest
Text: Ex 28: 2-14
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As we look today at the high priests garments, remember, the word of God assures us that these garments typify the Lord Jesus Christ—“*a figure for the time then present*” (Heb 9:9), “*a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things*” (Heb 10:1)

But Christ has now come and fulfilled everything typified in the shadow—he is the very image. Therefore, we are not to dress in these garments. When Christ declared his work finished, *the veil rent* in two declaring the old covenant law is fulfilled. Also in Matthew 26:65—being so angered with Christ “*the high priest rent his clothes.*”—the high priest’s garments were not to be torn (Lev 21; 10)—it declares the priesthood is changed to Christ. So the law has been changed to the law of faith and love, liberty and grace and the priesthood has been changed to Christ our High Priest—“*for the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law*” (Heb 7:12);

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

These garments were absolutely necessary. Without them God would not receive the high priest. They picture Christ's glory and beauty. On the day of atonement the High Priest wore other garments: spotless white linen—foreshadowing the personal righteousness and holiness by which Christ was fit to undertake the work of putting away the sins of His people. But when the high priest *finished* that work, he put on these garments “*for glory and for beauty*”—picturing Christ’s fitness as our risen Intercessor in God’s holy presence by which our worship and service is perfect before God.

Exodus 28: 3: And thou shalt speak unto all *that are* wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office. 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.

Today, we will focus on two outer garments: *the ephod and the breastplate*—**Exodus 28: 6: And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work.**

The ephod was made of two parts, one covering his back, the other his front; joined together at the shoulders by golden clasps. The gold was interwoven. This was not goldthread but real gold.

Exodus 39:3: And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work.

The spotless linen typifies the holy humanity of Christ; the gold, Christ’s divine glory as God; the colors, the perfections of His character as both God and Man in one person. The fitness of our High Priest, the fitness of his intercession for us before God is that he himself is perfect glory and perfect beauty, as both Jesus the Man and the Son of God in one person—

Hebrews 4; 14: we have a Great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God...

Exodus 28: 7: It [the ephod] shall have the two shoulderpieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. 8: And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; *even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.* 9: And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: 10: Six of their names on one stone, and *the other* six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. 11: With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. 12: And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod *for* stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial. 13: And thou shalt make ouches of gold; 14: And two chains of pure gold at the ends; of wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.

15: And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it. 16: Foursquare it shall be *being* doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. 17: And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: *this shall be* the first row. 18: And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. 19: And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 20: And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. 21: And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes. 22: And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the ends of wreathen work of pure gold. 23 And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. 24: And thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breastplate. 25: And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen chains thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put *them* on the shoulderpieces of the ephod before it. 26: And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate in the

border thereof, which *is* in the side of the ephod inward. 27: And two *other* rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart thereof, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. 28 And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that *it* may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod. 29: And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the LORD continually. 30: And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Proposition: The ephod and the breastplate together teach us that Christ intercedes for his people in *perfect strength, perfect wisdom and faithfulness, and perfect love.*

PERFECT STRENGTH

Exodus 28: 11: With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold. 12: And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod *for* stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial

Christ intercedes for his redeemed in the beauty and glory of perfect strength. Christ bears the names of each elect child of God on his shoulder like the high priest had the names of the children of Israel on these shoulder pieces—for a memorial to remind us his elect Israel and before the Lord for a memorial.

Isaiah 9: 6: The government shall be upon His shoulder.

Christ's shoulder represents his perfect strength. The government of at least three things is on Christ's shoulder: the government of fulfilling the righteousness of the law, the government of the world for his people, the government of converting and delivering his people to the Father.

One, the government of fulfilling the righteousness of the law is on his shoulder. The sinless substitute bore the enormous load of the sin of all God's elect upon his shoulder on the cross. Our sinless Substitute abhorred the sin and despised the shame. Yet, he bore our sin in his own body on the tree. The whole massive load was on his shoulder

Having been made sin for us, Christ bore on his shoulders the full weight of God's wrath, which was our cursed death. The GodMan submitted so that death had dominion over him for a time. The GodMan was buried in a grave and came out to show his people death shall never have dominion over us. Christ put away the sin of his people by the sacrifice of himself (Isaiah 53:6). He honored God the Father to the highest, declaring the righteousness of God—that he is a just God and a Savior; Just and Justifier of every believer.

Therefore, right there in God's holy presence, the government of interceding for his people rests on Christ's omnipotent shoulders. The strength of his intercession represented by his shoulder is that he justified each sinner for whom he died. The strength of his intercession is that in Christ—by his doing and dying—God is honored and his law is fulfilled by each one for whom Christ died. The strength by which God hears him is his precious blood. Do you think that is strength enough to cause God to hear his Son?

Romans 8: 34: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them

Believer, "[when] any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ *THE RIGHTEOUS*, And he is the propitiation for our sins" (1 Jn 2:1). He is himself the strength of advocacy with the Father.

Two, the government of the world in general and of Christ's church in particular is upon His shoulder. He is the King of nations, as well as King of Saints. God said, "*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*" (Ps. 2:6). God the Father made his Son "*Lord over all his house, and ruler over all his substance*" (Ps. 105:21). The GodMan, our great High Priest, proclaims, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*" (Matt. 28:18). Christ is all powerful everywhere all the time, "*Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known*" (Ps 77:19). He rules the world for our good and his glory.

Three, the government of our conversion is one his shoulder. He knows each child he redeemed by name like as Aaron had the names of all the sons of Israel on his shoulder. On Christ's shoulder is the name of each lost sheep he redeemed. It shall be by our great Shepherds' perfect strength that each one is found and saved.

Luke 15: 4: What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5: And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his

shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

Christ finds each and every one of his lost sheep, lays it upon his shoulder. He does not put it on our shoulder to get home. He carries his sheep home. He himself is the key and power to open our hearts and reveal himself to us

Isaiah 22: 22: And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

The weak, idol-god of this world, *“They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him” (Is 46:7)*. But our great Shepherd bears us on his shoulder-- *“Even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry and will deliver you” (Is 46:4)*.

Think on this brethren, the Spirit teaches, *“At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:10-11)*. Christ rules all things in heaven and earth by his sovereign power to bring the gospel to each of redeemed so that in our life here on earth, his name is declared in our hearts and we are made willing to bow the knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Brethren, thank God, he has laid our help *“upon One that is mighty” (Ps 89:19)*.

PERFECT FAITHFULNESS AND WISDOM

Exodus 28: 8: And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen...30: And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Christ intercedes for us in the beauty and glory of his perfect faithfulness and wisdom. The girdle around the loins points us to Christ’s faithfulness to God and to his people as our great High Priest. The Urim and Thummim means light and perfection; it points to Christ wisdom in bearing the righteous judgment of his elect before the Lord continually.

Isaiah 11: 1: And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Christ is Light and Perfection of *“wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the LORD.”* As he did on earth, right now, from his throne in glory, as he rules all things for his people, *“he does not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness he judges the poor, and reproveth with equity for the meek of the earth.”*

Believer, that means whatever is happening in your life and mine is right and equitable. With righteousness Christ is judging what we need, when we need it and how long. He reproveth us in our hearts with equity. As for our enemies, with that same righteousness, he smites them with the rod of his mouth. With the ease of blowing out a candle, he slays the wicked.

Does he do this for us continually?—*“righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”* He is moved—his very being is controlled—by righteousness and faithfulness to God and his people. In this earth and in his intercession with the Father on our behalf, he only does that which is right for us and he does so in perfect faithfulness—he *‘bears the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.’*

Brethren, think what infinite wisdom that must be which comprehends, accomplishes, and uses all things for his own glory, and the salvation of our souls! In Christ are *“hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3)*. That is why God makes him Wisdom unto us. And that makes me put my hand on my mouth and cease complaining about his providence for me.

PERFECT LOVE

Exodus 28: 29: And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the LORD continually.

Christ intercedes for us by the beauty and glory of his perfect love. As the high priest had these precious jewels with the names of each son of Israel *on his heart continually*, so Christ has the names of each precious elect child of God on his heart continually as he intercedes for us in God’s holy presence. His jewels are precious in his sight—

Malachi 3: 17: They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Exodus 19:10-11...ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine.

When you spend a lot of money on a jewel it is precious to you. We are redeemed with his precious blood: no wonder we are precious in his sight. This breastplate was bound to Aaron's heart—so we are bound to Christ's heart. Children of God, do you imagine Christ forgets you? Never! You are bound to his heart. You are enclosed there in gold settings. Our names are written in stone on Christ's heart. Therefore, he is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Ps 18:24).

Isaiah 49: 15: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16 Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

Having loved his own, he loves them perfectly unto the end. In perfect love he says, *“I will pray the Father; for you”*; in perfect love *“He maketh intercession for us”* (Jn 16:26; Rom 8: 34). His perfect love is particular for his elect alone—*“I pray for them; I pray not for the world”* (Jn 17:9). He shall add to his church each child that should be added because in his perfect love he said, *“Neither pray I for these alone but for them that shall believe on me through their word”* (jn 17:20).

Believer, we are saved by the intercession of our great High Priest: 1) The government is on his shoulder; 2) He rules in perfect wisdom and faithfulness 3) He does so for those he has everlastingly loved. Let us come now to his table and remember him!

Amen!