



February 9-10, 2013

Exodus 28-31

*“The Priesthood and Jesus”*

Pastor Gary Hamrick

In our study last week, we learned that God used the Tabernacle<sup>1</sup> to commune with his people. In this message, Pastor Gary helped us understand how God also used the priesthood to connect with and commune with the Israelites. The ultimate way God chose to dwell among his people was not in a Tabernacle/Temple built by human hands, but in human flesh when Jesus came and *“tabernacled”* with us.<sup>2 3</sup>

### The Description Of The Priesthood

#### 1. Chosen

- a. God simply and sovereignly chose Aaron, the brother of Moses, and Aaron’s descendants to be priests.
- b. Aaron’s sons were chosen by God to assist their father in the priesthood.
  - i. **Exodus 28:1** - *“Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests.*
- c. As the High Priest, Aaron’s clothing was distinctly different from the clothing his sons wore as “regular” priests.

#### 2. Clothed

- a. **Exodus 28:2-5** - *“Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him dignity and honor. Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his*

---

<sup>1</sup> **Exodus 28:1-8**

<sup>2</sup> **John 1:14** - *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

<sup>3</sup> **Revelation 21:3** - *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”*

*consecration, so he may serve me as priest. These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests. Have them use gold, and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen."*

b. The Ephod

- i. The ephod was an ornate, apron-like garment made with gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread.
- ii. Two onyx stones were mounted on the shoulder straps, one on each side, with each stone having the names of six of the twelve tribes etched on them.
- iii. The etched stones were to be a picture of the high priest bearing the burdens of the people before God.

c. The Breastpiece

- i. The breastpiece was like a vest, and it too was made using gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread.
- ii. On the breastpiece were four rows of three gemstones (one for each of the 12 Tribes of Israel) sewn onto the vest.
- iii. The way the breastpiece was made was to be a picture of the way the priest kept the people of God close to his heart.
- iv. **Exodus 28:29** - *"Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the Lord."*
- v. The high priest was given two stones, called the Urim and Thummim, which were placed inside the vest.
  1. The High Priest used these to make decisions and determine the will of God.
  2. It is believed that one of the stones was white and the other stone was black, one meaning "yes," and the other meaning "no."

d. The Robe

- i. The robe was made entirely of blue cloth, with a hem of blue, purple, plus alternating scarlet pomegranates and bells sewn around the perimeter.

e. The Turban

- i. The turban was made of fine linen, with a gold plate, attached by gold thread, affixed to the front of the turban.
- ii. The inscription on the turban was: Holy To The Lord.
  1. **Exodus 28:36-37** - *"Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it a seal: Holy To The Lord. Fasten a blue cord to it to attach it to the turban; it is to be on the front of the turban."*

iii. A “regular” priest wore white linen robes with white linen undergarments, a white turban, and a colorful sash.

### 3. Consecrated

- a. **Exodus 29:1** - *“This is what you are to do to consecrate them, so they may serve me as priests: Take a young bull and two rams without defect.”*
- b. The second ram was to be sacrificed and the blood placed on the lobe of the right ear, the right thumb, and the right big toe.
  - i. By applying blood to these three areas, God was saying to the priests:
    1. You should hear differently because the blood was on your ear.
    2. You should work differently because the blood was on your thumb.
    3. You should walk/live differently because the blood was on your toe.
- c. The blood was to be a sign that they were holy, set apart, and consecrated.

### The Function Of The Priesthood

4. In addition to attending to the duties of the Tabernacle/Temple, the priests represented God to man, and man to God, served as intermediaries, and offered sacrifices on behalf of the people.
5. **Exodus 29:44-46** - *“So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God.”*

### The Application Of The Priesthood

6. Today, there is no need for a human priestly system by which a person serves as an intermediary between God and man.
7. Jesus is the only true and permanent High Priest.
8. **1 Timothy 2:5** - *“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”*

9. **Hebrews 3:1** - *“Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.”*
10. Everyone who knows Jesus Christ is considered to be a priest when he or she brings people to God to pray for them, and when he or she brings God to people as they share with them, which, in a very modified way, is the only human priesthood that exists today.
11. The way the priesthood works in the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church regarding the priest being a mediator between God and man for the absolution of sins is not biblical.
12. **1 Peter 2:9** - *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*
13. The High Priesthood of Jesus means:
  - a. Jesus has offered himself as a permanent sacrifice for our sins, once and for all.
    - i. **Hebrews 7:23-24, 27** - *“Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood... Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.”*
  - b. We have direct access to God through Jesus.
    - i. Inside the Tabernacle, and later the Temple, there was a curtain that separated man from God, and only the high priest could go behind the curtain once a year to offer sacrifices.
      1. The curtain was 60'x30' and 10" thick.
      2. Some have estimated that it would have taken approximately 100 priests to manipulate it.
    - ii. On the day Jesus was crucified, the curtain was torn in two!
      1. **Matthew 27:51** - *“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...”*
      2. When God tore the curtain in two, he was signifying to us that the barrier that existed between man and God had been removed, allowing access to the Father through Jesus, the Son.
    - iii. **Hebrews 10:19-21** - *“... [now we can have] confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is his body...”*
      1. We no longer have to go through an earthly priest.

2. We no longer have to report our sins to a man so he can absolve us of our sins.
3. We no longer have to do penance or good works to gain God's favor.
4. We have been forgiven once for all by the sacrifice of Jesus, our High Priest, on the cross.
- iv. According to [Hebrews 4:16](#), God now invites us to *"... approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*
- c. Jesus is continually praying for us.
  - i. [Hebrews 7:25](#) - *"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them."*
  - ii. [Luke 22:31-32](#) - *"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail."*

#### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. How did this message help you learn more about the priesthood in the Old Testament?
3. Review and discuss the specific garments and accessories the High Priest wore.
  - a. Spend time talking about the symbolism of the breastpiece, etc.
4. Allow the people in your group to talk about their experiences and understanding of the priesthood in the Catholic, Episcopal or Anglican Church.
5. How did Pastor Gary's message and the Scripture he shared demonstrate what a correct understanding of the priesthood should be?
6. Read and discuss [1 Timothy 2:5](#) and [Hebrews 3:1](#).
7. Read and discuss [1 Peter 2:9](#).
  - a. Prior to hearing this teaching, were you familiar with what is known as "the priesthood of all Believers"?
8. Spend time talking about [Hebrews 10:19-21](#).

9. Does the fact that the Lord continually prays for you help you have confidence in his love for you?
  - a. Read and discuss Hebrews 7:25.
10. How does [Hebrews 4:16](#) help you understand that you are able to “*approach the throne of grace*” on your own, without the help of a priest or anyone else?
11. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: celebrate the fact that they do not need anyone to help them come to God for the forgiveness of their sins or with their burdens and cares; be thankful that Jesus prays continually for them; (read and pray [Hebrews 4:16](#)).

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).