

Bible Study November 5, 2025

Exodus 28 The Priest's Garments

God commands Aaron and his sons to serve as priests and holy garments are to be made for them. Their garments, like the tabernacle, are to be made from precious materials and decorated with vivid colors, representing the glory of the Lord who is present amid His people.

God was teaching His people how to worship Him. He designated ministers, called priests, to oversee the Tabernacle and to help the people maintain their relationship with God. These men were from the tribe of Levi, and a descendant of Aaron. The priests maintained daily sacrifices, maintained the Tabernacle, and counseled the people on how to follow God. They were held to a higher standard as their function was to represent the people before God. Jesus is now our High Priest (Read Hebrews 8).

God used the skilled craftsmen and tailors to make the priestly garments. The ephod was a type of apron made of two pieces, front and back, joined at the shoulder with a strap and a stone on each shoulder. These two stones had six of the 12 tribes engraved on each shoulder. The priest symbolically carried the burden of the whole nation on his shoulders as he represented them before God.

The Urim and the Thummim were placed in the breastplate. These names mean "Curses" and "Perfections" and refer to the nature of God whose will they reveal. They were used in a yes and no decision. Today, we believe we discern God's will through the action of His courts – Session, Presbytery, and General Synod.

Vs 28:33-35 Every aspect of the tabernacle and the priests are meant to teach Israel that the Lord is holy. The bells served to prepare the priest that when he is entering the presence of the Lord to do so reverently and carefully. According to Jewish tradition, one end of a length of rope was tied to the high priest's ankle and the other end remained outside the tabernacle. If the bells stopped tinkling while he was in the Holy Place, the assumption that he had died could be tested by gently pulling on the rope.

The Hebrew word for “priest” is “kohen”. Today that is where the last name Cohen comes from. The priest is the Levite who stood as an intercessor for the people before God. These priests offered sacrifices to the Lord on behalf of the people, that they might be reconciled to Him. Today Jesus is our High Priest, and we are a priesthood of believers as He dwells in us. Thanks be to God!