

Garments of Glory and Beauty

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Es geht um den 28. Kapitel von Exodus, und ich habe gesagt, dass wir eine gewisse Sektion des Kapitels lesen, Exodus, Kapitel 28, Genesis, Exodus.

Es geht um den 28. Kapitel von Exodus, und ich habe gesagt, dass wir eine gewisse Sektion des Kapitels lesen, Exodus, Kapitel 28, Genesis, Exodus. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty.

[00:01:08] And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearters, 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. And these are the garments which they shall make, a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broided coat, a mitre, and a girdle.

And they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother and his son, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.

[00:02:03] And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen with cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof, and so it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod which is upon it shall be of the same according to the work thereof, even of gold, and of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the children of Israel, six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. [00:03:01] 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 altars of gold. 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, verse 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 thou shalt make it. Four square it shall be, being doubled. A span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set it, and will leave the stones, jumping down to verse 21. [00:04:19] Every one with his name shall they be, according to the twelve prophets. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains, and again will jump down, except to notice in verse 28 that the breastplate be not loose from the ephod.

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 Lord, unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.

[00:05:01] And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Cumim. 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. And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. And there shall be a hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof. It shall have a binding of woeful work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of a hapergen, that it be not rent. And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet round about the hem thereof, and the bells of gold between them round about it. A golden bell and a pomegranate upon the hem of the robe round about it. [00:06:12] And it shall be upon Aaron to minister, and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out that he dine on him. And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, holiness to the Lord. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre, upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the most holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts. And it shall be always upon his forehead, that he may be accepted before the Lord. [00:07:09] And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework. And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles and bonnets, that thou shalt make for them for glory and for beauty. It's laid on my heart tonight, beloved brethren, in a simple way, to look a little at the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:08:04] Instead, however, of turning to the epistles of the Hebrews, I thought we might turn to this passage in Exodus 28 and look at it in a simple sort of way. The language of types, I may say, is quite as real as any other type, as any other language. And God sometimes uses these clear figures in order to bring home to us, may I say, in an attractive way, in an attractive way, truths that are of the greatest moment to ourselves. Now I find, beloved brethren, that it's an immensely precious truth that God has not only brought his people into grace, he's not only brought them into nearness, he's not only brought them into favour, but the wonderful thing is that he would sustain us in this place. [00:09:11] And I do hope, beloved brethren, that we shall find in these studies the amazing grace of our God, who would not only bring us into nearness, again one would say, in the favour, but would maintain us here. And I hope this lesson will come home to us very clearly as we go down this chapter. Now I suppose that anyone coming near to the tabernacle of old might perhaps have thought that the colours were not very arresting.

The colour of the court, fine twine linen. The colour of the coverings, badger skins. Certainly there was the blue and the purple and the scarlet and the fine twine linen in the hangings of the court and the hangings of the holy place. [00:10:14] But surely anyone who came into the environs of the tabernacle, catching a glimpse of Aaron, must have had their eyes transfixed. And the brighter the light that shone on Aaron, the more they'd be amazed at the beauty of that man. Now I hope, beloved brethren, that we can see that there is a difference between Aaron and our Lord Jesus Christ.

So far as Aaron was concerned, the garments were what made Aaron conspicuous. But when we come to consider our Lord Jesus Christ, may I say, is the person who makes the garments conspicuous.

[00:11:15] And therefore I hope tonight, and I'll ask the older brethren to bear with me, as we look at this passage in a simple sort of way, I hope that the one who will stand out from the page is the Lord Jesus himself, in all his attractiveness and beauty, and we might be engaged with him. Two of the sisters, I may say, who I reckon upon as prayer helpers in connection with these weekend journeys,

I've shared with them the matter of the subject for tonight. Oh, they said, when we were girls, many of the homes of the saints had pictures of Aaron in his garments of glory and beauty. Well, perhaps this isn't the case in 1972. [00:12:12] So it falls to the speaker, as far as he is able, to make Aaron and his garments and more, the one whom he sets forth, vivid to everyone in this room tonight. And for the sake of order, I want to dwell more particularly upon the following, and I will seek to proceed in order. First of all, let us have a look at the ephod, the priestly garment.

The ephod and its colour. And secondly, could we then consider the breastplate, the second item, made of the same material. Thirdly, could we consider the stones that are seen here, on the shoulder in the breastplate.

[00:13:16] Fourthly, let us consider the curious girdle of the ephod. Now, if you've noticed, reading down this passage, there are two girdles. There's the curious girdle of the ephod, as well as the girdle that is found on the embroidered coat, the checkered vest. I just mention this because it's a point that's sometimes overlooked. And then we shall consider the robe of the ephod. And then the embroidered coat, what Mr. Darby gives in his translation as the checkered vest. And then we'll have a wee look, perhaps, at that plate of gold. Holiness unto the Lord. [00:14:06] I think if we looked at these together, we'll have enough, and more than enough, for the little time we are together. As such, he could proceed as far as the holy place. And as distinctive to that dispensation, the censer was found in the holy place. Carried into the holiest of all, only once a year, and then not without blood.

[00:15:06] But we can see in Aaron, in this wonderful passage, two other very clear lines of teaching. And these will be what will be engaging us more particularly in our meditation this evening. First of all, we can see in Aaron, the one who has been established by God as a nail in a short lace, before ever he comes out in the coming day of display.

And the second line of teaching that we shall see is, that in his inside place, in constant priestly ministry, he sustains his people in their wilderness journey. And more than that, three times over, we had at the commencement of this chapter, that he may minister unto me. [00:16:10] Now I do hope that these preliminary remarks might set us free when we come to consider these items of Aaron's guidance.

May I say tonight, I have my eye on every section of the meeting. There are truths here that are good for the oldest saint.

There are truths here for the youngest believer. Because one can see in a world like this, and the spirit of God himself describes it as perilous times, we need to be many a time having recourse to this high priest.

[00:17:02] And I hope we'll see him in his effectiveness and his beauty for the oldest saint, as well as for the youngest believer, get to know this high priest. So when we approach then the ephod, which particularly sets forth the official glories of the Lord Jesus Christ, we find, I think I can say, though I've never read this, and I hope the brethren will put me right afterwards, we find an exemplification of what we have in Hebrews chapter 2. We see not yet all things put under his feet, but we see Jesus crowned with glory and with honor. The gold here seems to set forth the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. And having regard to the coming day of display, we know that he will be manifested as the mighty God, Isaiah 9, or the great God and our Savior, Titus 2 or 3. [00:18:20] The gold speaks of deity. The blue speaks of the heavenly man, and he is indeed the Lord out of heaven. The purple, which is

a combination, I suppose, of red and blue, sets forth him who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

In the scarlet color, we can see great David's greater time. And in the fine, fine linen, we know that a king shall rule in righteousness. When you come to consider the priestly grace of the Lord Jesus, it isn't my purpose to go through all the colors in the ephod, but just to draw attention to a striking addition that are found in the details of Aaron's garments and a very striking omission.

[00:19:30] So far as the ephod is concerned, it's one of the, I suppose, 24 references to blue and purple and scarlet and fine, fine linen that are found in the Pentateuch. There is the important addition in this case of gold. Now, later on in Exodus, we know that the people beat the gold into plates and cut it into wires, and these were woven into the priestly garment of the ephod.

[00:20:08] Those of you who are familiar with the epistle to the Hebrews will know that in chapter 1, God, who in sundry times and divers manners spoke to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us in his Son. And in this chapter, we have a very striking demonstration of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. And as you proceed through the epistle to the Hebrews, time and time again, you find that the Spirit of God is exalting this high priest before our house. Consider, in connection with Mesut Melchizedek, how great this man was. And this priest, who sustains his people in the wilderness journey, is none other than Jesus, the Son of God. [00:21:07] This addition of the gold in the ephod is a very clear testimony to the fact that the blessed man at God's right hand is God.

And what a confidence this gives us when we draw near to this priest in his divine capability to make the situation, even last evening in our local prayer meeting, brother after brother, brother after brother, brother after brother, bringing exercises before the Lord. And how precious to feel that we are bringing them to one who has a divine capability. All power in heaven and upon earth is given unto him. And here is the one who is able to succour, sympathise, and save the uttermost of them that come unto God by him. [00:22:11] But the omission in connection with the ephod, may I say, is, for some of us anyway, even more striking. And I'm going to press this home to every brother and sister here as being one of the most precious points in instruction in the whole of this chapter. What is missing in the ephod? Well I'm sure some of you who are more familiar with the passage will say at once, what is missing in the ephod is the cherubim. In the veil there was a cherubim. In the curtains, cherubim. But when you come to the ephod there is no cherubim. And I'm going to tell you at once why this is so precious and so practical so far as this high priest is concerned. [00:23:11] This cherubim, this executor of divine judgment, this one who discerns what is according to God and judges accordingly, this cherubim is a most frightening creature. But I can see in this high priest that there is every appeal to draw near to him. And oh would God that this could rest on the heart of every brother and sister in this room. The best friend to have is Jesus. We sang it in the Sunday school but it's truth that's good for all times. He knows the worst about you and he loves you just the same. And this is the little point you may have noticed we were singing about in our hymn. His heart is filled with tenderness. His very name is love. [00:24:13] I was rather struck many years back looking at the moral glory of the Lord Jesus written by J.G.Bellet by a passage that arrested me at the time and when I was thinking of the absence of the cherubim I thought I'll just have a look and see whether I can find it again. And I could, page 17. J.G.Bellet is quoting from someone else and he says, some people will trust in angels, some will go to saints, but I would rather trust the kindness of Jesus. And those of my Christian brethren who are a little old now will know that there are some things you can't divulge to your nearest but you can pour them out in the presence of this heart. [00:25:13] And what's more he attracts you into his presence. I notice in Hebrews that he is presented as a merciful and faithful high

priest and I would God that we could all just see every one of us whatever might be the pressure on the heart that the best one and the one come time that we are the last to come to is this great high priest. He's got divine capability as seen in the Lord with his heart beat. Indeed we sing in another hymn, his very name is love, it assures us of sympathy in heaven, whatever makes us more. Now we mustn't get too delayed, I would just like to notice secondly the breastplate.

[00:26:16] In the breastplate which is on the ephod, mention is made of its dimensions, four square handbreadths.

And again I haven't seen any comment about this, but I have an impression that the handbreadth is at five fingers, I'm not sure, but five in the scripture is a figure of weakness. Although we have an old brother in our meetings who constantly reminds us and I think it's good to be reminded of it, it's conscious weakness acknowledged in the presence of acknowledged power. [00:27:03] Now there's a difference. Five, weakness, we're all weak, but five in the scripture is weakness acknowledged in the presence of one who can turn weakness into power. I'm going to leave the breastplate to pass on quickly to the next item which are the gems which are on the shoulder in the breastplate and then an allusion to the Urim and the Thummim. Now some of us who have been in the meetings now for a few years and heard these things talked about have heard this connected with 2nd Timothy chapter 1. May I put, God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

[00:28:05] Now that's been said in our meetings for a good many years, but it's worth remembering again. Because in those shoulders, the stones according to Perth in the ouches of gold, we get a figure of the place of strength in which all the people of God are born up in the presence of our God. Ouches of gold, now the gold here doesn't seem to be a figure of deity so much as divine righteousness. And every child of God, whether advanced like the Apostle Paul or simple Christian in 1972, according to their birth, their sustenance, we're all in the same position, that's on the shoulder according to your birth. [00:29:06] When you come to the breastplate, those 12 stones, it's the breastplate of judgment.

Now that little word judgment can be also rendered according to the manner of, you are different from me.

And I heard a little statement the other day that I thought was uncommonly good, that the Lord Jesus, so great is he, he needs every gift to set him forth in testimony, and the Lord Jesus Christ will need every saint to set him forth in glory. Now on that breastplate, we're all on his heart according to his own choice.

[00:30:05] And it's immensely precious to know that you in your small corner, I in mine, something to do for God, we're found in the place of affection. He would assure us that we have a place in his heart. Now as far as the Urim and the Thummim is concerned, lights and fictions, it seems to be a reminder that the saints are maintained according to the lights of his own presence and the fictions of that standing. In these five other references to the Urim and the Thummim, which will be a separate address, and I'm not going to embark on it now, it seems to be connected with the ascertaining of the divine mind, a proof deriving with Urim and Thummim. [00:31:08] Now I would connect this with what we get in James chapter 1, if any man lacks witness, let him ask of God to give this to all men liberally and afraid not, and it shall be given unto him. And there are many situations individually, and there are many situations collectively, where we need to have light from heaven, guidance from God, to know what we're to do in this new situation. It's never been this way before, indeed that's what the

scripture says, it has not been this way heretofore, but in a situation like this, there is the assurance in the priestly grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that there'll be a clear indication if we are but near enough as to what is the divine mind as to what we do in this situation. [00:32:12] I know that some expositors, there are a lot of them, to discuss themselves at the university, you know they're connected with the faithful lot, cast in the lot, where let others expatiate whatever they like in relation to Urim and the Thummim, let's just get it clearly from the scripture, it's connected with the mind of God and wisdom of heaven in relation to the Thummim. This is the situation that we are present in. Fourth item, which is the curious girdle.

I think I can see some who would like to take up these subjects, seeing a subject in every one of these scriptures. [00:33:05] But suffice it to say that this curious girdle of the ephod clearly has a very clear line of teaching for us.

Just to understand it for a moment, this ephod was connected at the shoulder place, but thereafter it hung down, and what held it in position was the ephod, was the girdle of the ephod. Now what is the spiritual position? Kingship and priesthood are connected with the mediatorial system and will end when the Lord Jesus delivers the kingdom up to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

It rather looks from the scripture that headship will go on to eternity. [00:34:01] But in this curious girdle of the ephod, we find that this high priest is now engaged in a service which will only continue for a spate of periods. May I say that it does throw up into wonderful relief that present moment in which we are found today.

There's a blessed man in the glory of God, there's a divine person down here, and have you ever thought that this is an era which is quite distinctive in the ways of God from eternity to eternity? We find ourselves connected with that faith system and that priestly grace at God's right hand. I don't know whether you ever feel this, perhaps particularly at the supper, when you're taken outside of yourselves for a moment, [00:35:06] livingly linked with this high priest, that there's a service of God in the spirit's power that we won't even have when we're in his immediate presence. And I think one can see that in this curious girdle of the ephod, there's another voice to our hearts of the very wonderful moment in which we are found today. Now I want to spend a little moment on this robe of the ephod. The ephod doubtless sets forth his official glory, but in the robe of the ephod we have his personal glory, and lower down in connection with the embroidered coat we have his moral glory more particularly brought before us. [00:36:03] This robe of the ephod, all of blue, reminds us that this high priest is heavenly in character. The son of man which is in heaven, John 3, and the sphere of his priestly service, as well as the person who is there, is altogether heavenly. And this is set forth in that. What I want you particularly to notice is that in connection with the construction of this robe of blue, there was a finding round about the top, like the opening of a herbergen.

Now if you don't know what a herbergen is, you're just exactly in the position that I would be in until I consulted the Oxford Dictionary. [00:37:01] And I discover that it's a sleeveless coat of mail.

Now Mr. Darby so describes a coat of mail, but I like the little point that it is sleeveless. Perhaps it brings home to your mind, as it certainly brings home to mine, that the one who wears a sleeveless coat of mail is one who wants to be brave in order to grapple the enemy. That it should not be. Now there seems to be a clear indication in this robe of the ephod, as to the triumphant character of the pathway of the Lord Jesus Christ in life and in death, which qualifies him in a priestly way to take up the cause of the people of God as they pass through this wilderness. [00:38:12] The horse and the rider

has he cast into the sea. The horse seems to be a figure here of death. The rider, the devil himself. And when you turn over to Hebrews chapter 2, we read that through death he has destroyed him that hath the power of death, that he might deliver them for all their lifetimes. When you turn over to the 16th chapter of John, you find that the Lord Jesus says, Be of good cheer, in the world ye shall have tribulation, but I have overcome the world. [00:39:01] And back in Luke's gospel you remember, a strong man armed, his goods are at peace.

But if a stronger than he come upon him, he taketh away all the armor in which he trusted, and he spoileth his goods. And all this seems to be, and much more, indicated in this coat of mail. This one, dear one again, who is qualified for the priestly position, is the one who has met the devil in the wilderness, in the garden. The one who has overcome the world.

And we know from Roman chapter 8 that God has condemned him in the flesh, so that the world, the flesh, and the dead have all been taken care of, in the one who now in priestly dress is found in the presence of God. [00:40:07] Now I must pace and answer the doubt of getting the cup. We come now to the embroidered coat.

Mr. Darby gives it as a check of zest. I throw this out to the Bible students, and perhaps they'll help me on it afterwards. This is one of the instances where it's not fine twine linen, but it's just linen. Linen in the embroidered coat.

Linen in the turban. Why? Well, there may be an importance to be connected with this little word, embroidered. I gather from those who are expert in it, that it gives the impression of damask. Is that what you call it? Well, whichever way you look at it, I think it wonderfully brings forward to us, [00:41:04] for our meditation, beloved friends, the moral glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, bringing forth fruit in the seed.

This is what comes to light as the foundation of the priesthood of our Lord Jesus.

I'm afraid I've forgotten to mention the pomegranates and the bells. But I'll just mention this in passing, that the pomegranate is nicely balanced with a bell. May one again say that the bell is nicely balanced with the pomegranate. And you find this balance perfectly in the Lord himself, of course. But you find it in teaching in the 15th chapter of John, where you get the pomegranate, [00:42:03] the fruitful notes, before you get the testimony at the end of the chapter, He shall bear testimony unto me, and the reverse order in Acts chapter 2, where you find Peter standing up, the bell is sounded, but at the end of the chapter, you find that they had all things common, and the fruit was found. Now I'd better draw to a close, but I think we ought to notice this wonderful inscription that is found on the plate of gold. When Aaron came into the holy place, the light would shine on that plate of gold, and written upon it is, holiness unto the Lord.

Could one say, brethren, there may possibly have been a tendency with us [00:43:07] to mix up in our thinking righteousness with holiness.

God has not only set up his people in his presence in righteousness, this is a judicial matter, no charge laid to God's elect and natural righteousness, but more than this, God brings his people into his presence in holiness, holy and without blame for him in that.

Now this high priest maintains everything according to only one standard, and that standard is

holiness unto the Lord.

And in this particular chapter, it's not with a view to frightening us off, though it is a most colonizing consideration, [00:44:05] that everything that is offered must be according to this standard. But we find that Aaron, bearing the iniquity of the most holy things, presents those offerings according to the divine standard.

Now perhaps this may come home to you in connection with the burnt offering in Leviticus 1. Do you remember that the humblest offering there was the turtle dove, and the priest had to put the dress and the feathers to the north side of the altar. But even in regard to that which remains, and there can't have been much except as it shall be accepted for him.

And beloved brethren, I take this to be an encouragement to us, the youngest as well as the oldest, coming into God's presence [00:45:02] in connection with the most holy things. The standard is there, and the priest will speak to it. The standard is maintained, and the encouragement will be. Now as I draw to the close of this, could one seek to just draw together what one might call one of the practical considerations in this meditation. The first thing that one would see is how immensely attractive God's presence is, and how immensely attractive this high priest is.

I'm going to revert to what I said earlier in this meeting, that there is no cherubim in the ephah.

[00:46:04] And one can see in the epistles of the Hebrews that we are encouraged to draw near in connection with every detail of our wilderness journey.

Hebrews 2 for the supper, Hebrews 4 for sympathize, Hebrews 7 to say to the uttermost, I then will come unto God by you. There is an immense attractiveness about this high priest. He would draw us in. Come near to me, my brethren, he would say. But more than this, if in those early chapters of Hebrews it's on our side, from chapter 8 to chapter 10, we get a new priest and a new sanctuary, a new covenant and a new sacrifice, it's on God's side.

[00:47:01] It comes over, we get at the commencement of this chapter, that he may minister unto me.

There are two lines for us to take out of this chapter, beloved brethren. One of them is representation.

This high priest is always in the most holy place. He's there representatively for you and for me. He's always on his shoulder in his breastplate and the Urim and the Tammim are available for us. Representation.

Always remember that Aaron also had four sons.

And in association with this high priest, we read in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, Asked your Lord.

Through heart and through assurance of faith, having our hearts twinkled from an evil conscience, [00:48:02] our bodies washed with pure water, he goes in, but the wonderful talking grace is that we go in. And one would seek to have resting upon my own heart as I trust may rest upon yours, that we might be found giving him his portion where he ministers unto God, even the Father, in the priesthood.

I guess one final word before I finish.

I think brethren who are older will bear with me a little.

But most addresses that you hear on the tabernacle occur between chapters 25 and 30 in Exodus.

Why is this?

I think it's for the simple reason [00:49:01] that in these early chapters of Exodus we get the design pattern as such.

When you come to chapter 35, the people begin bringing in their offerings.

And in chapter 40, Moses constructs the tabernacle and the cloud comes down. Do you think there might be just a little difference with us in seeing what is the design pattern and secondly, putting it into practice?

And I think that's why we usually hear addresses from the 38th chapter of Exodus and not perhaps from the 35th chapter of Exodus where the people in willing heart, as wise heart as it were, bring in the materials and err.

Well, beloved brethren, this was what was on my heart. [00:50:03] Again, one would say it's very inadequately handled. At least I hope I may have brought home to you something of the immense preciousness of Christ's presence to his regrets to Father's right hand. And let us be encouraged to do so.