

Let the Journey Begin

a study in the book of Exodus

Holiness to the LORD - Exodus 28

Lesson 20

The LORD's words "minister to Me" are used three times in Exodus 28. An important responsibility of the priest was to minister to the people. Yet, their first obligation was to minister to the LORD. If they forgot their obligation to the LORD, they would soon begin to minimize their responsibilities to the people. God's people today must also remember our responsibility to the LORD and to others. As you study, may you discover God's parallels between God's calling on the priests of the Old Testament and the New Testament believer.

Read Exodus 28:1-4 and 36-39

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *LORD*, *Aaron*, *his sons* and *priest*.
Key Words: the phrase *minister to Me*, *LORD*, *Aaron/sons/priest*, and *holy/holiness*
3. Notice the words marked *holy* and the words that follow. What did God designate as holy?

Read Exodus 28:1-4 - The Holy Garments

1. Those first called into the priesthood were Aaron and his four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. The priests were set apart for service to represent the people to God and God to the people. They were to look different and act different than others. Thus God ordained specific garments and accessories for them to wear. These garments were referred to as *holy*, indicating that they had been set apart by God for His purposes. What other two words were used to describe them in verse 2?
 - a. These words indicate a respect for the office of priest, not necessarily the person. These garments were to be worn only when the priests were performing the duties of the priesthood. Why is it important to honor positions ordained by the LORD?
2. According to verse 3, who was Moses to speak to to *make the garments*?
 - a. Notice these people were to be *gifted* and *filled with the spirit of wisdom*. Consider someone you know whom you can describe as *gifted* and *filled with the spirit of wisdom*. What have you observed?
 - b. Consider what the following verses reveal about the *spirit of wisdom* as you record them:
Deuteronomy 34:9

Proverbs 2:6
 - 1.) What is the difference between God's *wisdom* and man's wisdom? (Challenge: use Scripture to support your answer)
 - c. What difference do you think it would make if an artisan used God's wisdom to make the garments instead of his own?
3. What garments are specified in Exodus 28:4?

The breastplate was a piece of beautifully embroidered fabric, nine inches square when folded double. It hung on the high priest's chest, supported by two golden chains attached to the shoulder clasps. On the breastplate were twelve jewels, arranged in four rows, each stone representing one of the tribes of Israel. Within the folded breastplate were kept the Urim and Thummim which the high priest used to determine the will of God for the nation.

The ephod is the transliteration of a Hebrew word for a simple sleeveless linen garment that reached to the ankles. It was embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet threads. The ephod was of two pieces, front and back, held together on each shoulder by a jeweled golden clasp and at the waist by the beautiful girdle. The names of six tribes of Israel were engraved on each onyx stone on the shoulder clasps, according to their birth order.

The robe, worn under the ephod, was distinctive in at least three ways. It was seamless. The collar around the opening for the head was woven so that it would not tear. Thirdly, around the hem of this garment hung pomegranates made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, with golden bells hanging between them. The pomegranates symbolized fruitfulness and the golden bells gave witness that the high priest was ministering in the holy place.

The skillfully woven tunic was something like a simple shirt, covering the entire body from the neck to the feet, with sleeves reaching to the wrists. It was to be woven of fine linen and of some sort of pattern.

The turban was worn only by the high priest, while the other priests wore linen bonnets. At the front of the turban was the golden plate (attached by a blue cord) that read, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD".

4. Leviticus 8 describes the consecration of Aaron and his sons as the people gathered to observe this holy moment. Verses 7,8 relate the putting on of the garments mentioned in Exodus 28:4. List each step of this procedure.

- a. Why do you think it was important for the people to witness this ceremony?

Read Exodus 28:36-39 – The Inscription on the Golden Plate

1. The most important part of the turban was the plate of pure gold that was to be attached to it. Record the words that were to be engraved on it.
 - a. Using your own words, describe what this statement means

- b. These words indicated that first and foremost the high priest was the servant of God, not of man. How would wearing something with these words be a reminder to:

the priest

others

2. The engraved plate stating, *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*, served as a reminder. What physical reminders are helpful for you to remember your place before the LORD?

- a. If you do not have any reminders, what might you buy or make now that would serve as a reminder to you?

3. Reflect upon these words from verse 38. *That Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts.* Even the gifts and sacrifices the priests would bring before the LORD were touched with iniquity. When the priest brought them in God's appointed way, God accepted them. Considering this, answer the following questions:

Why was it important for the priest to make the offering?

Why must an offering be offered according to God's prescribed way?

Jesus, Our High Priest

1. The purpose of the book of Hebrews is to demonstrate how Jesus is better than (and the replacement for) the Old Testament ways of approaching God. According to Hebrews 2:17, why was it necessary that Jesus *be made like His brethren* (become as a man)?

- a. Define the word *propitiation*.

2. *Therefore, holy brethren, partakes of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus* (Hebrews 3:1). Jesus is the one who represents us. We no longer need a human priest. Record the words of the following verses that remind us of our Great High Priest, Jesus.

Hebrews 4:14

Hebrews 4:15

Hebrews 7:26

Hebrews 8:1

Hebrews 9:(25)26

a. Why is Jesus better than an earthly priest?

Holiness and the Believer:

1. Believers may not physically wear a golden plate inscribed, *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*, yet God sees us as separated unto Him. Record the words of 1 Peter 1:15.

a. What is your understanding of what God intends regarding the believer being *holy*?

2. The word, *sanctified*, speaks of the setting apart of the believer for God's purposes. Using the book of Hebrews, what do the following verses declare?

Hebrews 2:11

Hebrews 10:10

Hebrews 10:14

a. Using your own words, summarize God's intention for each believer.

3. Bask in the wonder of God declaring believers to now, not only have direct access to Him, but to be *priests*, representing Him to others, as you record the following verses:

1 Peter 2:5

Revelation 1:6

Review:

1. What is your understanding as it relates to:
God's requirements of *holiness* in the believer

Jesus, our High Priest

The believer's privileges as a *priest unto God*

The believer's responsibilities as a *priest unto God*

2. Share one thing that has spoken to you because of this study.

*and having a High Priest over the house of God,
let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,
having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience
and our bodies washed with pure water.*

- Hebrews 10:21,22

Observation Worksheet

Exodus 28:1-4 "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. 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. 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.

Exodus 28:36-39 "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. 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.