

- Continuing with our study of the tabernacle and its relationship to Christ
 - So far we've covered the construction of the tabernacle itself
 - The foundation, the walls, the veil, the curtains, etc.
 - And we studied how each of these things pictures Christ
 - We also studied most of the furniture of the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place
 - We looked at the ark, mercy seat, lamp stand, and table of the presence
 - We still need to examine one other article in the Holy Place, the altar of incense coming in chapter 30
 - Today we are going to study the outer courtyard and one piece of furniture in the courtyard
 - And we will learn about the priesthood
 - Most of the priesthood duties are recorded in Leviticus
 - But the garments and the consecrating of the priesthood are detailed in these chapters
- Tonight we start with the brass altar

[EX. 27:1](#) “And you shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits.

[EX. 27:2](#) “You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze.

[EX. 27:3](#) “You shall make its pails for removing its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze.

[EX. 27:4](#) “You shall make for it a grating of network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners.

[EX. 27:5](#) “You shall put it beneath, under the ledge of the altar, so that the net will reach halfway up the altar.

[EX. 27:6](#) “You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze.

[EX. 27:7](#) “Its poles shall be inserted into the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried.

[EX. 27:8](#) “You shall make it hollow with planks; as it was shown to you in the mountain, so they shall make it.

- The altar was not designed in the way we tend to see altars today
 - It was a square box made of wood overlaid with brass
 - The box was 7.5 ft square and 4.5 feet high
 - The corners of the altar had horns protruding outward
 - Inside the box halfway down was a grate made of brass which sat under a ledge running around the inside of the altar

- The entire altar was carried using wood poles covered with brass
- The altar is often portrayed as sitting on raised ground
 - There is no prescription in scripture for raising the altar
 - Yet it is a consistent feature of ancient descriptions
 - In fact, the word altar means “high place”
- The design of the altar was specifically made for sacrificial animals to be placed within the box of the altar to be consumed by fire
 - The fire was left burning continually on the grate
 - The grate was designed to ensure that oxygen reached the burning fire from underneath
 - The pieces of meat were placed on top of the coals and burned with the wood until they became ash
- The tools used to tend the fire and the altar were all made of brass as well
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 - There was a pails and shovels to remove the ashes from underneath the altar
 - There were forks to position the pieces of meat on the fire
 - There were basins to hold the blood of the sacrifice
 - And a firepot to move hot coals inside the tabernacle to light the fire at the altar of incense
- The altar was positioned on the grounds of the tabernacle court directly in front of the entrance of the compound
 - The fire in the altar was never allowed out for as long as the tabernacle stood
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 - And as the tabernacle was initially commissioned, the fire in the altar was first lit by God Himself, we’re told
 - This same fire lit the fire in the altar of incense in the Holy Place
 - It was here that Jews brought their sacrifices as required under the Law
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 - In addition to the sacrifices required by individuals for their, the priests conducted the daily sacrifices required by the Law
 - Every morning and every evening the priests would offer a sacrifice of a lamb
 - These sacrifices involved pouring out the life blood of an innocent animal and then burning the animal in fire
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 - Depending on the sacrifice, the blood would either be applied to the horns of the altar or to the altar of incense in the tabernacle
 - If the blood was applied to the horns on the altar, then the priest was required to eat some of the sacrificial meat
 - If the blood was brought into the tabernacle, then the priest was prohibited from eating the sacrifice

- One way or the other, the HP brought the sacrifice before the Lord, either by the blood or by his presence in the tabernacle
- The rest of the blood was spilled out at the base of the altar
- So if we were to enter the gate of the tabernacle, we need to image a raised brass box continually burning
 - At the base of the altar would be literally a river of blood running away from it
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 - And on the horns of the altar, are the dried smears of thousands of applications of blood
 - And the priests are continually bringing sacrifices to the altar and periodically removing the ashes
 - When worshippers brought a sacrifice before the altar to atone for sin, they were required to kill the animal themselves
 - So the image you have of the altar is one of blood and death continually
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 - Blood spilled for sin
 - The death of innocents cause by the sin of men
 - The burning of flesh to atone for sin
 - And this is the first thing you see as you enter the tabernacle
- The altar presents a clear illustration of Christ's sacrifice
 - First, nothing else of the tabernacle is even visible, much less available to a worshipper until that person has encountered the altar of God
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 - Likewise, no one can enter the house of God unless and until they have encountered Christ on the cross
 - The cross was the place where the Lord made Himself to be a sacrifice for the sins of God's children

[HEB. 7:26](#) For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

[HEB. 7:27](#) who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

- And just like a visitor to the tabernacle couldn't bypass the altar on the way to the Holy Place, neither can we "get around" the cross in our effort to find God

[1COR. 1:18](#) For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

[1COR. 1:19](#) For it is written,

“I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE,
AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.”

[1COR. 1:20](#) Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

[1COR. 1:21](#) For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

[1COR. 1:22](#) For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom;

[1COR. 1:23](#) but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

[1COR. 1:24](#) but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

- The materials of the altar represent the judgment poured out on Christ on the cross
 - The entire altar was wood covered by brass
 - Wood again denotes Christ’s humanity, having been born on earth
 - While brass and fire are always a picture of God’s judgment
 - Furthermore, though Christ received the judgment of God and experienced the fire of God’s wrath, His body was not consumed
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 - Just as the wood underneath the brass was not consumed by the fire
- The horns represent Christ as well
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 - Horns are often a picture of power and might in scripture
 - The power of God is demonstrated in Christ’s power to cover all sin
 - And the power of Christ to conquer sin and death by His death
 - Horns were also the place the animals were secured while they were sacrificed
 - Just as Christ held Himself to the cross
 - Men built the altar according to God’s direction, just as Romans built the cross that held Christ
 - But Jesus placed Himself on the cross
 - He is pictured by the horns in the way they hold the sacrifice to the altar
- Finally, the blood of Christ was shed at the cross, which is clearly pictured by the altar
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 - His blood was poured out at the base of the cross when the soldier pierced His side with the sword

- Just as the animal's blood is spilled at the base of the altar
- Then there is the blood applied to the horns of the of the altar
- And in Heaven, we're told Christ applied His blood in the Heavenly Tabernacle

[HEB. 9:11](#) But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; [HEB. 9:12](#) and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

- Just as the High Priest would take blood into the Holy Place on the Day of Atonement, so does Christ enter by His own blood
- Even the altar's raised posture pictures Christ raised up on the cross
 - In fact, we can more clearly understand another event in Israel's time in the desert when we compare it to the altar in the tabernacle
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 - In Numbers 21 the Lord is angry with the Israelites for their grumbling against Moses
 - So He sends fiery serpents among the people, and the bite of the serpent causes them to die
 - Through Moses, the Lord gives the people a chance to live
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 - Moses constructs a brass serpent and places it on a staff
 - He hoists the staff in the air and all those who look upon the brass serpent would live
 - The Gospel of John tells us that the serpent on the staff pictures Christ lifted up on the cross and we can see the symbols clearly
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 - First, the serpent is a picture of Satan's handiwork in the garden, bringing men into a state of sin
 - And the result of the serpent's work is death for all
 - But Christ became sin for us, as pictured by that serpent, and then hung on a cross
 - And the serpent was made of brass to signify God's judgment for sin resting on Christ
 - And everyone who looks upon Christ in faith will receive eternal life
- Continuing in our outward movement from the center of the tabernacle, we reach the boundary of the tabernacle compound

[EX. 27:9](#) "You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side there shall be hangings for the court of fine twisted linen one hundred cubits long for one side; [EX. 27:10](#) and its pillars shall be twenty, with their twenty sockets of

bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver.

[EX. 27:11](#) “Likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings one hundred cubits long, and its twenty pillars with their twenty sockets of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver.

[EX. 27:12](#) “For the width of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits with their ten pillars and their ten sockets.

[EX. 27:13](#) “The width of the court on the east side shall be fifty cubits.

[EX. 27:14](#) “The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits with their three pillars and their three sockets.

[EX. 27:15](#) “And for the other side shall be hangings of fifteen cubits with their three pillars and their three sockets.

[EX. 27:16](#) “For the gate of the court there shall be a screen of twenty cubits, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver, with their four pillars and their four sockets.

[EX. 27:17](#) “All the pillars around the court shall be furnished with silver bands with their hooks of silver and their sockets of bronze.

[EX. 27:18](#) “The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits, and the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits of fine twisted linen, and their sockets of bronze.

[EX. 27:19](#) “All the utensils of the tabernacle used in all its service, and all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, shall be of bronze.

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- The court was framed by a fence constructed of linen and wood pillars
 - The pillars were set in bronze or brass
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 - The linen curtains was suspended by silver hooks
 - The dimensions of the court were 150 feet by 75 feet
 - The wall rose 7.5 feet
 - There was a gate on the eastern wall, so that once you entered the tabernacle you moved east to west
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 - The gate was thirty feet across and consisted of another linen screen
 - The court created by this wall was the court of the Jews
 - The entire structure of the tabernacle made a point of inclusion and exclusion and the wall reinforced this notion
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 - Only God’s chosen people could enter the tabernacle grounds
 - Gentiles were forbidden to ever enter even the outer court

- The Law of Moses established this barrier
 - The Law created a partition between Jew and Gentile
 - And there was no more visible reminder of that division than the outer wall of the tabernacle
- And among Jews, only Levites could enter the Holy Place
- And among Levites, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only one day each year
 - During this one day event, the High Priest offered atonement for the sins of the entire nation under the covenant
- Jesus broke down these walls of partition by His sinless life and sacrifice on the cross
 - First, Paul says Jesus broke down the barrier of the Law separating the Jew and Gentile

[EPH. 2:13](#) But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

[EPH. 2:14](#) For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,

[EPH. 2:15](#) by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

[EPH. 2:16](#) and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

- Secondly, Jesus eliminated the division of priesthood among God's people by putting an end to the Law of the covenant

[HEB. 7:11](#) Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?

[HEB. 7:12](#) For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

[HEB. 7:13](#) For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

[HEB. 7:14](#) For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

[HEB. 7:15](#) And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek,

[HEB. 7:16](#) who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life.

- The Law of Moses established a priesthood in the family of Aaron and his descendants
 - Those priests served the tabernacle of the Law
 - But Jesus wasn't born of the family of Aaron
 - He was born of the tribe of Judah
 - So He wouldn't have even been qualified to serve as a priest under the Law
- By His death, He fulfilled and put to an end the Law
 - And therefore the change in law also brought about a change in priesthood
 - Because Jesus serves in a different order, one defined not by a physical characteristic but by His immortality, Hebrews says
 - So now all who are born again in Christ can share in His priesthood duties
 - And so we all can enter the Holy Place of God's word and prayer
 - And none of God's people excluded
- This is why Peter says believers are part of a royal priesthood

[1PET. 2:9](#) But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- Thirdly, Jesus is our High Priest, Who has entered the Holy of Holies in the Heavenly tabernacle
 - And He lives there to make intercession for His children on a daily basis

[HEB. 7:23](#) The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, [HEB. 7:24](#) but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

[HEB. 7:25](#) Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

[HEB. 7:26](#) For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

[HEB. 7:27](#) who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

- While the High Priest was excluded 364 days of the year, Jesus is present 365 days of the year

- So we can all approach boldly to the throne of God since Christ brings those needs before the Father on our behalf everyday
- Now the Law transitions to a discussion of the priesthood garments and some of the duties
 - Keep in mind we still haven't described two pieces of furniture in the tabernacle
 - They have been left for later because of their significance
 - Remember everything is described from the center outward according to the purposes they serve
 - These remaining items of furniture have different purposes than everything else described so far

[EX. 27:20](#) "You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually.

[EX. 27:21](#) "In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the LORD; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.

- The last two verses of chapter 27 begin to introduce the duties of the tabernacle priests
 - First, they were responsible for beating oils to create the oil for the lamps
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 - And the oil lamp must burn continuously
 - It could never be extinguished
 - This instruction creates another illustration
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 - We know the lamp is an illustration of the light of God's truth found in His word
 - As servants of God, we can (and should) put our effort into working with the HS to gain an understanding of God's word and share that light with others
 - But unless our HP ignites that oil, our efforts cannot produce illumination
 - Furthermore, the seven lamps represent the fullness of the HS resting upon Christ

[IS. 11:1](#) Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

[IS. 11:2](#) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

- The lamp is perpetually lit, a sign of Christ's constant presence in the life of every believer by the presence of His Spirit in us
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[EX. 28:1](#) “Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me — Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons.

[EX. 28:2](#) “You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

[EX. 28:3](#) “You shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me.

[EX. 28:4](#) “These are the garments which they shall make: a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe and a tunic of checkered work, a turban and a sash, and they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister as priest to Me.

[EX. 28:5](#) “They shall take the gold and the blue and the purple and the scarlet material and the fine linen.

[EX. 28:6](#) “They shall also make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of the skillful workman.

[EX. 28:7](#) “It shall have two shoulder pieces joined to its two ends, that it may be joined.

[EX. 28:8](#) “The skillfully woven band, which is on it, shall be like its workmanship, of the same material: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen.

[EX. 28:9](#) “You shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel,

[EX. 28:10](#) six of their names on the one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, according to their birth.

[EX. 28:11](#) “As a jeweler engraves a signet, you shall engrave the two stones according to the names of the sons of Israel; you shall set them in filigree settings of gold.

[EX. 28:12](#) “You shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of memorial for the sons of Israel, and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for a memorial.

[EX. 28:13](#) “You shall make filigree settings of gold,

[EX. 28:14](#) and two chains of pure gold; you shall make them of twisted cordage work, and you shall put the corded chains on the filigree settings.

[EX. 28:15](#) “You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen you shall make it.

[EX. 28:16](#) “It shall be square and folded double, a span in length and a

span in width.

[EX. 28:17](#) “You shall mount on it four rows of stones; the first row shall be a row of ruby, topaz and emerald;

[EX. 28:18](#) and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond;

[EX. 28:19](#) and the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst;

[EX. 28:20](#) and the fourth row a beryl and an onyx and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree.

[EX. 28:21](#) “The stones shall be according to the names of the sons of Israel: twelve, according to their names; they shall be like the engravings of a seal, each according to his name for the twelve tribes.

[EX. 28:22](#) “You shall make on the breastpiece chains of twisted cordage work in pure gold.

[EX. 28:23](#) “You shall make on the breastpiece two rings of gold, and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece.

[EX. 28:24](#) “You shall put the two cords of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece.

[EX. 28:25](#) “You shall put the other two ends of the two cords on the two filigree settings, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, at the front of it.

[EX. 28:26](#) “You shall make two rings of gold and shall place them on the two ends of the breastpiece, on the edge of it, which is toward the inner side of the ephod.

[EX. 28:27](#) “You shall make two rings of gold and put them on the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the front of it close to the place where it is joined, above the skillfully woven band of the ephod.

[EX. 28:28](#) “They shall bind the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it will be on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece will not come loose from the ephod.

[EX. 28:29](#) “Aaron shall carry the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment over his heart when he enters the holy place, for a memorial before the LORD continually.

[EX. 28:30](#) “You shall put in the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron’s heart when he goes in before the LORD; and Aaron shall carry the judgment of the sons of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

[EX. 28:31](#) “You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue.

[EX. 28:32](#) “There shall be an opening at its top in the middle of it; around its opening there shall be a binding of woven work, like the opening of a coat of mail, so that it will not be torn.

[EX. 28:33](#) “You shall make on its hem pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material, all around on its hem, and bells of gold between

them all around:

[EX. 28:34](#) a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, all around on the hem of the robe.

[EX. 28:35](#) “It shall be on Aaron when he ministers; and its tinkling shall be heard when he enters and leaves the holy place before the LORD, so that he will not die.

[EX. 28:36](#) “You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, ‘Holy to the LORD.’

[EX. 28:37](#) “You shall fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban.

[EX. 28:38](#) “It shall be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

[EX. 28:39](#) “You shall weave the tunic of checkered work of fine linen, and shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash, the work of a weaver.

- In the opening of chapter 28, Aaron and his sons are identified as the family who will carry the burden of the priesthood throughout all the generations of Israel
 - The garments worn by Aaron, the first High Priest, were specifically intended to mark them for duty
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 - They consisted of six pieces
 - They were required for working in the service of the tabernacle
 - The priestly garments were intended to consecrate Aaron and his sons in v.3
 - The word consecrate means to be dedicated in holiness
 - The priests were wearing garments that set them apart for this duty in a holy way, apart from sin
 - Also, in v.2 and elsewhere, the garments are said to be for beauty and glory as well
 - We’ll examine each item briefly
 - The ephod and breast plate were one piece
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 - The ephod was the gold woven front piece worn over the shoulders
 - On top of each shoulder, the ephod held a single onyx stone
 - Engraved in each stone were the names of the sons of Israel, six on one stone and six on the second
 - Attached the ephod was a breastplate containing 12 jewels representing the 12 tribes
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- And behind the breastplate was a pouch contained two stones called the Unim and Thummin
- They were given to Israel to discern God's will on questions they brought before the Lord
 - The word Urim means "lights" or "illumination"
 - The word Thummim means perfection or completion
 - The LXX translates them "Revelation" and "Truth"
 - Together they represent complete illumination
- When the High Priest wanted to ask God a question, he must phrase the question in the form of a yes/no answer
- Then he would either cast the lots the stones as lots (or some say one stones would light up) indicating God's answer
- This method of discerning God's will was less efficient then sending a prophet to speak to the people
 - Still, it served to give Israel divine direction in the face of difficult questions
 - The stones were not special except that God had designated them to be so
 - They remained in the possession of the priests until the Babylonian invasion and destruction of Jerusalem
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 - That event ushered in the Age of the Gentiles, according to Daniel
 - And at that point, the ark and the breastplate of the High Priest were both lost forever
- The meaning of the breastplate and ephod was to bear burdens
 - The jewels and engraved onyx stones represent the people of Israel
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 - So the High Priest was bearing the burdens of Israel as he performed his duties on their behalf
 - He bore their sins and he had their needs "on his heart"
 - As the High Priest enters the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies each year, he brought those burdens with him
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 - Much as he had to bring either the blood of each sacrifice or eat the meat before entering the Holy Place
 - Symbolically, the High Priest was the representative of the people
 - And every symbol must be connected to a reality for the symbol to have meaning
 - And this symbol represents the reality of how Christ bore our burdens as our High Priest
 - And He has children on His heart even as He intercedes for us now
- Next we look at the gown or robe of the High Priest
 - He wore a gown of fine linen
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 - It included a finely woven hem upon which hung pomegranates and bells

- The pomegranates provided weight to the gown to ensure it never raised up in a wind exposing the nakedness of the priest
- And the bells would ring as the high priest moved, drawing attention to his position and authority
- Folklore holds that the bells served another purpose on the Day of Atonement
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 - In v.35 we hear that the bells will prevent the High Priest from dying as he enters the Holy Place
 - Folklore developed that if the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement without bells, he was struck down
 - In that sense, the bells saved the High Priest from death
- Furthermore, the myth held that should his sacrificial offering not be pleasing to the Lord for any reason, the High Priest would be struck down dead
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 - Because no one could go in after him, the priests would tie a rope to his leg and listen for the bells
 - If they stopped, the assumption was he died and they would pull him out
- This is not true, as this analysis from the Biblical Studies Foundation and Zion Messianic Jewish Fellowship Congregation explains:

The Biblical Studies Foundation (loosely associated with Dallas Theological Seminary), similarly reports that their research has put the “the rope around the ankle-or-waist-or-maybe-the-leg” legend “to rest.” They also point out that Aaron was to wear a blue ephod with bells on its hem ([Exodus 28:31-35](#)), when he entered the Holy Place (not the Holy of Holies) ([Leviticus 16:2-4](#)). When he enters the Holy of Holies, he washes and wears special linen garments, not the ephod with bells. “If there are no bells to jingle, there is no need for the rope either.”

A Messianic Jewish Fellowship points out the potential difficulty of dragging a dead priest out of the Holy of Holies: “You could only drag out the priest if he died in the Holy place. The way the curtains of the temple were designed, the priest could not have been dragged out of the HOLY of HOLIES. The veil was made using many layers of cloth. The thickness was over three feet. The curtains overlapped and made a small maze through which the priest walked...”

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- His headgear was also intended to mark him for duty and provide spiritual cover

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- The front of the head piece had a pure gold plate that said Holy to the Lord
- The High Priest also wore a sash and tunic of fine linen
- The rest of the sons of Aaron wore less ornate outfits

[EX. 28:40](#) “For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty.

[EX. 28:41](#) “You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests.

[EX. 28:42](#) “You shall make for them linen breeches to cover their bare flesh; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs.

[EX. 28:43](#) “They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they enter the tent of meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur guilt and die. It shall be a statute forever to him and to his descendants after him.

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- Aaron’s sons constitute the lessor priests of the priesthood
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 - They had to wear special clothing as well whenever they ministered
 - They had linen robes and linen britches underneath to clothe themselves fully
 - Notice again that this clothing must be worn to prevent death when serving in the Holy Place or approaching the altar
- Through these mandates the Lord is establishing another picture, once that begins back to Genesis 3
 - In the Garden when Man and Woman sinned, they immediately discovered their nakedness
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 - By their sin, they became indebted to their Creator
 - God is perfectly just and righteous, which means that all sin must be judged
 - God’s perfection is manifested into Creation by His word, and His word cannot be delivered and not be truth
 - Therefore, when God said to Adam that eating the fruit would mean death, then by that word death must be the penalty for sin
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 - So as Adam and Woman ate, they sinned, and in their sin they incurred the penalty God’s word proclaimed
 - After they sinned, they immediately became aware of their jeopardy before God
 - Their consciousness reflected this spiritual change by experiencing feelings of guilt and

vulnerability and shame

- Even without God present, they sensed their jeopardy, and after God appears, they hide in fear for the same reason
- These feelings caused them to sense a need for physical covering
 - They could no longer feel at ease without it
 - Their spiritual exposure brought with it a physical exposure
 - They could not cover or correct for their spiritual exposure, so they did the only thing they could
 - They sought physical covering
- The Lord gave Man and Woman covering of animal skins, which were made available to them by the sacrifice of an animal
 - In [Gen 3:21](#) we're told that God accomplished that first sacrifice for Man
 - He sacrificed an animal, spilling its blood, and used the skins to clothe them
 - That sacrifice was the first physical death in God's creation
 - It was made necessary because of sin
 - So the blood of the sacrifice was a spiritual covering while the clothing was a physical covering
- Through this example, we learn about the relationship between sin and blood and covering
 - First, sin in any form immediately makes necessary death
 - If God is to make an escape possible for sinful man, His wrath for sin must still be satisfied, since God's word still stands
 - So there must be a payment of death for sin
 - And according to scripture, the life of a living creature is held in the blood

[LEV. 17:11](#) 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.'

- The blood is the life of every creature
 - If the blood is poured out of the body, then the life is taken out of the body as well
 - So where sin exists, a pouring out of blood must take place to satisfy God's word concerning sin
 - Secondly, the sacrifice must be a substitute without sin itself
 - We sacrifice animals since they are not creatures capable of sinning against God's Law

- Yet they are under the curse of the Law, since they are from the earth which God has cursed
- So though they are acceptable to God, animal sacrifices cannot put away sin altogether
- Finally, the sacrifice must be offered in a pure and holy manner, apart from sin, or else the sacrifice is defiled and it is no longer a suitable substitute
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 - The priests were sinful men, but for the time they served in the tabernacle, they engaged in ritual cleansing and sacrifice that provided spiritual covering
 - Their garments provided physical covering
 - These things were appointed under the Law so that as the priest's fulfilled their duties under the Law, they were acceptable to the Lord
- So under the Law, the priests are required to wear special clothing as part of the process of making themselves acceptable to God in performing their duties on behalf of the people
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 - Ultimately, these sacrifices were insufficient to address sin
 - Men offered the sacrifices in obedience to the law
 - Their faith brought salvation apart from the Law
 - But the rituals of sacrifice were a constant reminder that sin requires death unless an acceptable covering is provided that is acceptable to God
- We can draw two parallels or illustrations from these things
 - First, Christ's work on our behalf is pictured in lessor form by all these details
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 - Christ lived a sinless life making Him a perfect sacrifice
 - He died and spilled His blood to pay our debt
 - His blood covered the offense of sin, not in an earthly tabernacle but in a Heavenly tabernacle
 - Furthermore, since He was not born under the curse but was born of the Holy Spirit, His death could accomplish what no other could
 - Finally, Jesus was born in human form so He could serve as man's representative before the Throne
 - Since our Representative must be made like us but without sin
 - Just as the High Priest of Israel represented his people but only after being consecrated
 - Secondly, we see a picture of how the saints must serve the Lord today
 - Paul says this in Romans 12

[ROM. 12:1](#) Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

- As we serve in God's house, we serve as priests in the sense that we present our bodies to the Lord as

our sacrifice

- But we must present them in a holy way
 - We must have a covering for our sin before our spiritual service is acceptable to God
- Hebrews puts it succinctly

[HEB. 11:6](#) And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- Romans 1-11 describes God's plan for salvation
 - Romans 12 and onward describes the response of a believer to their salvation
 - You can do Romans 12 unless you've already lived Romans 1-11
 - Just like the priests, we must be covered by the sacrifice of Christ, consecrated for service by our faith, before we can serve the loving God
- Next week we study how these priests were consecrated under the Law and the rest of the tabernacle articles