

Our Great High Priest

Holy Garments (Exodus 28:2, 40)

"Make special clothing for Aaron to show his separation to God, garments that will dignify his work."

The High Priest wore a white linen tunic which covered his body. Over that he wore a blue robe with bells and pomegranates at the bottom. Over the robe, he wore the ephod, an apron to the knees; it covered both the front and back, which were joined together with two precious stones on the shoulders (inscribed with the names of the tribes). Over the ephod, he wore a breastplate holding twelve gems, symbolizing the tribes. Between the ephod and the breastplate was a pocket which held the Urim and Thummim (lots used for discovering God's will). He did not wear shoes (holy ground), but he had a sash around his waist and a turban with a crown on his head. On the crown was a gold medallion on which was inscribed: "Set Apart as Holy to the Lord." Along with the white linen, the garments were a mixture of gold, blue, and scarlet thread (Exodus 28, 29, 39).

Make Ready (Ex. 28:43)

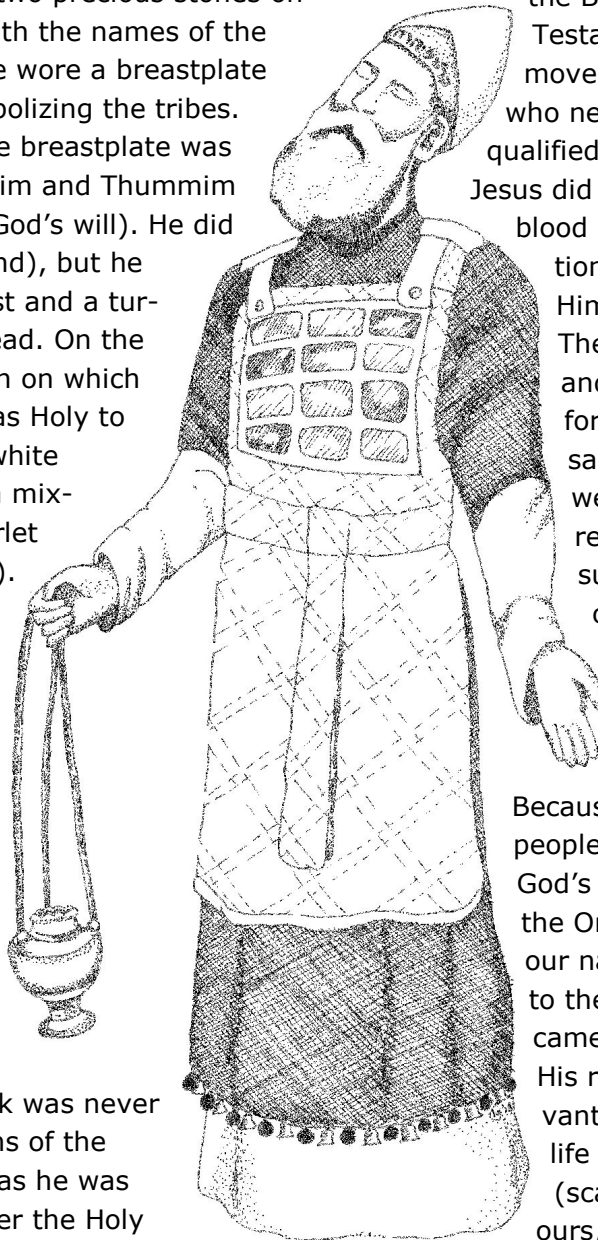
"These laws are for Aaron and his descendants."

The priests had to be 30 years old to serve and come from the lineage of Aaron, the Levite. After being anointed and ordained through blood sacrifices, the priest assumed his duties. Sacrificing was perpetual. His work was never done. Through him, the sins of the people would be forgiven, as he was allowed once a year to enter the Holy of Holies (God's presence) by the blood of the sacrifice from the brass altar and by the incense from the golden altar. Having the names and gems of Israel on his person, the High Priest mediated or interceded for God's people.

Our Great High Priest (Hebrews 3:1)

"Jesus is the High Priest of our confession."

Jesus is our great High Priest. Though He was not from the lineage of Aaron, He was from the line of Melchizedek, a priest who came before Aaron (Gen. 14:14-20; Heb. 5:6; 6:20). Jesus started His ministry at age 30, was anointed by the Holy Spirit, and washed or ordained by John the Baptist. The priests in the Old Testament had to sacrifice to remove their own sins first, but Jesus, who never knew sin, was more than qualified to remove the sins of others. Jesus did not sacrifice an animal, whose blood was only a temporary solution, but rather He sacrificed Himself and shed His own blood. The offering of Himself, sinless and pure, removed sin's penalty forever and ended the need for sacrifice. His words on the cross were, "It is finished!" Upon His resurrection and ascension, Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father in heaven; sitting down was something that Old Testament priests were never allowed to do.



Because of Jesus' sacrifice, God's people (Christians) have access into God's presence. He is our mediator, the One who wears the ephod with our names on it. He represents us to the Father. To summarize, Jesus came from heaven (blue), gave up His royalty (purple), became a servant (apron), and lived a sinless life (white), but shed His blood (scarlet) and gave up His life for ours, so that we might gain mercy (Mercy Seat) at the judgment throne of God (Ark of the Covenant). Praise be to our Great High Priest!