

# Exodus 28-31 • Israel's Priesthood Explained

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Open your Bibles to Exodus chapter 28. Exodus chapter 28. We're going to get into it.

I want you to know that one of my goals when I'm teaching through the Old Testament, and particularly stuff like what we're going to be doing here in Exodus, is to help you to connect the dots between what you're reading here in Exodus, with how it applies to the New Testament, and how it applies to your life.

We're not just trying to read through the Old Testament just to say that we read through the Old Testament. We want to know how it applies. We want to know the connection. What is the connection? And there are all kinds of them, and you're going to see that, I trust tonight. So let's get into it here.

Chapter 28, and this sounds like it's something that only somebody who makes clothes would like to read, because these are instructions for how they were to make the priestly garments for Aaron and his sons. And it goes like this.

It says in verse 1, *“Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. <sup>2</sup> And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, (I want you to notice these next words) for glory and for beauty.” (ESV)*

Now isn't that interesting? He isn't just saying, hey guys, make these guys a uniform that will set them out, or set them apart as a high priest. He says, these need to be glorious, and they need to be beautiful. And we read this and we ask the question, Why? Why? Why does it have to be glorious? Why do their clothing, why does it have to be beautiful?

Well, it's because the high priest is a picture of Jesus. And that's the point that God is making with the priesthood in Israel because the role and the function of the high priest is a picture of what Jesus would come to do. When we ask the question, what is the role and the function of a high priest? Actually the Bible

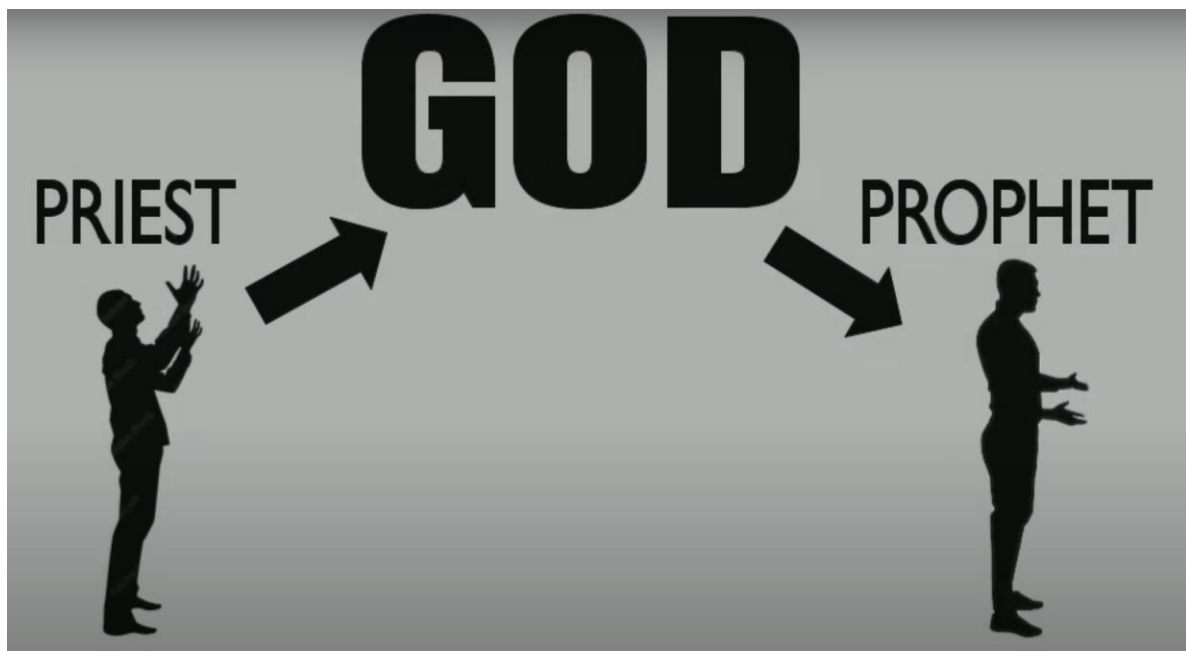
gives it to us and it's in the New Testament Book of Hebrews, chapter 5. Let me put this on the screen. The author of Hebrews writes,

**Hebrews 5:1-4 (ESV)**

*For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.*

*For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. (in other words, he understands) Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.*

You can see here in this passage from Hebrews, that the role of the priest is to act on behalf of men. In other words, he goes to God on behalf of men. Now what that means is, he has his back to men and his face to God. But do you know that's the opposite of a prophet? Let me show you this on the screen. I made this little thing because I'm very visual and I know some of you are too.



The priest, once again, on the left there, his function has him, he's going on behalf of the people, so he has his back to the people, but he's talking to God.

He's praying to God. He is doing what he does to secure the forgiveness of the people who are behind him. All right.

Now the prophet, on the other hand, he has his back to God because he has heard from God and now he is speaking God's message to the people. And so he's looking at the people. He's directing his view to those who he is bringing the message to. And so you can see the difference between the role of priest and prophet here as it relates to what they do.

And then the writer of Hebrews actually goes on and says this, check this out from Hebrews chapter 4.

**Hebrews 4:14-15 (ESV)**

*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, (he's talking about Jesus here) Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Isn't this beautiful? He's not only helping us to understand the role of the priest, he's helping us to understand that because God became a man, He understands the issues that mankind deals with. He understands our weaknesses. He understands how we are tempted. He understands our quirks, our whacked out craziness.

He knows it, He understands it because He has been involved. He has jumped into the fray with us as human beings. He didn't just check out humans from afar, He became one of us, so the very one who became one of us, is now functioning in that priestly role. Okay.

Have you ever thought when you're praying, I wonder if God understands even what I'm going through? He understands what you're going through.

And because He understands and He is intimately acquainted with what you are going through, He intercedes for you with the Father, right? You have a high priest who goes to the Father on your behalf. It's it really is a beautiful picture.

This is why the garments for the high priest needed to reflect the majesty and the importance of the position. All right.

Now, notice this as we go on and keep reading in verse 3. He says, *“You shall speak to all the skillful, whom I have filled with a spirit of skill, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him for my priesthood.”*

We're going to actually talk more about this, hopefully with in the last chapter we're going to cover tonight. But you'll notice that God is actively working to impart what He calls the *“spirit of skill”* to individuals who are going to actually make these garments.

And I believe that this is a statement that God is making, that He is basically telling you and me that He is the source of all skill. I believe it, 100 percent. I don't care whether you were involved or ever could be involved in something as grand as making a high priest garment like this. It doesn't matter what skill you have.

If you have a skill, if you have a talent, if you have an ability, it came from God. And so the question is, since He is the source of all skill and He gives those skills to you and me, are we using our skills for the glory of God or are we using them for our own glory?

Because that's a very real possibility, that we would live all of our lives taking our skill, whatever it may be, and just using it for me. In other words, using it to get attention for me. And a lot of people do it every day, even Christians. God is the source of all skill, are you using it for His glory.

Verse 4. He says, *“These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests. <sup>5</sup> They shall receive gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen.”*

Let me, up on the screen here, you can see a rendering. And you can just look at that as we continue reading through here.



*“<sup>6</sup> “And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple (that must have been just gorgeous) and scarlet yarns, and of fine twined linen, skillfully worked. <sup>7</sup> It shall have two shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together. <sup>8</sup> And the skillfully woven band on it shall be made like it and be of one piece with it, of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen.*

*<sup>9</sup> You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, <sup>10</sup> six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. <sup>11</sup> As a jeweler engraves signets, so shall you engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall enclose them in settings of gold filigree.*

*<sup>12</sup> And you shall set the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance (look at this) for the sons of Israel. And Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders for remembrance.” Isn't that beautiful?*

Here He says, whenever Aaron goes before Me to minister in the Holy of Holies, the names of the children of Israel will be engraved on his garment. Remember, Aaron is a picture of Jesus, our High Priest.

And here's the deal. Your name is engraved in the heart of the Lord as He brings you before the Father. The children of God are constantly given to the priest. In other words, He brings you before the Father all the time. It's just such a beautiful, beautiful picture.

Verse 13. *“You shall make settings of gold filigree, <sup>14</sup> and two chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; and you shall attach the corded chains to the settings. <sup>15</sup> “You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work. In the style of the ephod you shall make it—of gold, blue and purple and scarlet yarns, and fine twined linen shall you make it. <sup>16</sup> It shall be square and doubled, a span its length and a span its breadth. <sup>17</sup> You shall set in it four rows of stones. A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; <sup>18</sup> and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; <sup>19</sup> and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; <sup>20</sup> and the fourth row a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold filigree.”* You can imagine how absolutely stunning, this was.

*“<sup>21</sup> There shall be twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel. They shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. <sup>22</sup> You shall make for the breastpiece twisted chains like cords, of pure gold. <sup>23</sup> And you shall make for the breastpiece two rings of gold, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece. <sup>24</sup> And you shall put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. <sup>25</sup> The two ends of the two cords you shall attach to the two settings of filigree, and so attach it in front to the shoulder pieces of the ephod. <sup>26</sup> You shall make two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod.*

*<sup>27</sup> And you shall make two rings of gold, and attach them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, at its seam above the skillfully woven band of the ephod. <sup>28</sup> And they shall bind the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, so that it may lie on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, so that the breastpiece shall not come loose from the ephod.”* Talk about getting into detail.

*“<sup>29</sup> So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart, when he goes into the Holy Place, to bring them to*

*regular remembrance before the Lord. <sup>30</sup> And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, ...*” That's even fun to say.

The words, by the way, Urim and Thummim, literally mean lights and perfections, and scholars are unsure about how they were used. We it seems that they were like two stones or something like that, but we know that they were connected to the breast piece and we know that they were used to inquire of the Lord. That's really all we know. We don't really know exactly how that happened.

Middle of verse 30 here, “*...and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the Lord. Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before the Lord regularly.*”

<sup>31</sup> “*You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. <sup>32</sup> It shall have an opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding around the opening, like the opening in a garment, so that it may not tear. <sup>33</sup> On its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet yarns, around its hem, with bells (check that out, it had bells on it, these are real bells that ding, bells) of gold between them, <sup>34</sup> a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, (in other words, there you go, that's how it's going) around the hem of the robe. (all the way around) <sup>35</sup> And it shall be on Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the Holy Place before the Lord, and when he comes out, so that he does not die.*”

This is interesting, isn't it? And it's a little bit even intriguing that the Lord doesn't give us more information about this whole issue concerning these bells they put on the hem of the garment. And it has created all kinds of speculation and even stories about how this worked and so forth.

But most people believe that since the high priest, remember, was the only person that was allowed into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies behind the veil, the bells would have provided a constant reminder to those outside that he was in there doing his work and that he hadn't been struck dead by doing something wrong. And so the bell was, it's like, okay, there's the bell, he's still good. He's all right, sort of a thing.

There was a there was a story that circulated years ago that they used to tie a rope around his leg so that if he did die, they could pull him out without going in but that was actually just fiction. Anyway.

Verse 36 goes on, it says, *“You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, ‘Holy to the LORD.’<sup>37</sup> And you shall fasten it on the turban by a cord of blue. It shall be on the front of the turban.<sup>38</sup> It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate as their holy gifts. It shall regularly be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”*

Now I need you to stop there for a minute because we just read something that's hard to understand, and it's in verse 38, it says again, *“It shall be on Aaron's forehead, (and then this is the statement that is a little bit challenging, it says) and Aaron shall bear any guilt from the holy things that the people of Israel consecrate (in other words, bring) as their holy gifts.”* Isn't that interesting?

Aaron shall bear the guilt of the people of Israel who bring their holy offerings to God. And you say, what do you mean? What do you mean Aaron shall bear the guilt? Well, what you need to understand, what they're saying here, is that the people who bring their offerings and sacrifices to the Lord.

God is assuming that they're not going to handle things properly. And that these people are such sinners, that they are going to mess up. They're going to make mistakes, and they're going to incur guilt related to even bringing their offerings. I mean, here they're coming, they're bringing a sacrificial animal so that they can be forgiven and they're going to make mistakes on the way. They're going to make mistakes, even bringing their sacrifice.

In other words, the people can't even make proper sacrifices without sinning and so Aaron is going to bear their guilt before the Lord. What's that a picture of? That's Jesus. That's Jesus.

Listen, we are bringing sacrifices to the Lord today, too. Do you know that we can't do it on our own? Do you know that even we can't? We bring, and the most important sacrifice that you and I bring to the Lord today is ourselves. Have you ever done that?

Have you ever said to the Lord, I offer you myself. Have you ever done it perfectly? Because I haven't. I've never offered myself perfectly. I make mistakes even in my offerings. I have to make my offerings through my High Priest, and so do you, and you know what, that's exactly what Peter told us. Let me show you this on the screen from 1 Peter 2:5. He says,



## **1 Peter 2:5 (ESV)**

*...you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

*...you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a (look at this) holy priesthood, to (do what) offer spiritual sacrifices (are they acceptable on their own? No, they're) acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

You see that we make spiritual sacrifices to the Lord, we offer up ourselves. We offer up our... We might say, Lord I'm tired of cursing when I get angry, I offer up my mouth to you as a sacrifice. I offer up my tongue that you might cleanse my mouth and I might start using it for your glory and not for stupid responses.

Well, we can't even do that perfectly. We sin in the midst of offering sacrifices. And we have to make our sacrifices through Jesus Christ. He's the one who cleanses us, redeems us and makes our sacrifices acceptable. If your sacrifices and my sacrifices are acceptable, it's because of Jesus, it's not because of you. And that's the picture that God is giving through Aaron.

Verse 39, *"You shall weave the coat in checker work of fine linen, and you shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash embroidered with needlework."* And there you go.

That's all the garment of the high priest. The last verses are the more day to day garments for Aaron and Aaron's sons. And his sons, remember, are the men who are in line to become high priest when Aaron dies.

It says, <sup>40</sup> *"For Aaron's sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for glory and beauty. <sup>41</sup> And you shall put them on Aaron your brother, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests."* And we're going to go through a chapter here that, in the next chapter, it's all about that ordination process.

<sup>42</sup> *You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs; <sup>43</sup> and they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place, lest they bear guilt and die. This shall be a statute forever for him and for his offspring after him."*

I have to wonder if this is where the Mormons got their holy underwear thing. I really do. I don't know that much about it, but I have to wonder if this is where they got it, which is crazy. Well, the whole thing is crazy, but..., and when it comes to Mormonism. But anyway, there you go, so you have the garments that are made for Aaron and his sons.

Chapter 29, this is the ordination. There had to be a process by which Aaron and his sons would be ordained to the priesthood. And that basically, whether you use the word, ordained or consecrated, it means, to be chosen and set apart. All right, and you see that next word there.

Verse 1. *“Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. Take one bull of the herd and two rams without blemish, <sup>2</sup> and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil. You shall make them of fine wheat flour. <sup>3</sup> You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and bring the bull and the two rams. <sup>4</sup> You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. <sup>5</sup> Then you shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the coat and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod. <sup>6</sup> And you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban. <sup>7</sup> You shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him.”* See, when they anointed people, it got poured, not dabbed in those days.

*“<sup>8</sup> Then you shall bring his sons and put coats on them, <sup>9</sup> and you shall gird Aaron and his sons with sashes and bind caps on them. And the priesthood shall be theirs by a statute forever. Thus you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.”*

And you could think that the chapter could end right there, but oh no, we have a lot more detail to go through regarding the sacrifices that are made.

*“<sup>10</sup> “Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting.””* Remember, the tent of meeting was originally the tent that Moses erected to go and meet with God. Then when they built the temple, they began to call that, the tent of meeting, and so the name got transferred. There you go.

It could be referring here, if they were ordained before the tabernacle was actually built. And I don't know if we know for sure, it could have been the tent of meeting where Moses just met with the Lord, or it could have been the tabernacle. But anyway, I want you to notice that he says, *“Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull.”* And I want to explain what that is all about.

The practice of laying hands on the head of the sacrificial animal was a way of commuting the sins of the worshiper, the human, to the sacrificial animal, which then died in the place of the worshiper.

And of course, what was God teaching the nation of Israel. He was teaching them about forgiveness through sacrifice or substitution, okay? Forgiveness through sacrifice and substitution.

And it was all intended to lead them to understand the future work of the Son of God. They shouldn't have had any problem understanding what Jesus came to do. I mean, the Jews, I'm saying. Because God prepared them to understand these things by the entire sacrificial system that He set up for them.

He goes on to say, <sup>11</sup> *Then you shall kill the bull before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting,* <sup>12</sup> *and shall take part of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar.* <sup>13</sup> *And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar.* <sup>14</sup> *But the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung you shall burn with fire (where?) outside the camp; (why?) (because it is unclean and as He says,) it is a sin offering.*”

So they burned what they, what was appropriate for the sacrifice on the altar. But they took the rest of the animal that was unclean and they burned it outside the camp, right? And this is called the awful, and it's just those parts of the animal that were unclean.

Now, here's the deal. Here's the deal. I want to connect another dot for you. This idea of burning the hide of the animal and the other unclean parts outside the camp was one that wasn't lost on the author of the New Testament Book of Hebrews. In fact, he wrote about it and he wrote about how that very process of taking those unclean parts outside the camp, applies to you and me. Here's what he said from Hebrews chapter 13. He says,

**Hebrews 13:10-14 (ESV)**

*We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.*

*We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin (yeah, those) are burned outside the camp. (look at this, here's the connection) So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. (he's talking about the fact that Jesus was considered unclean, He was rejected, right? By the religious leaders and so forth, and so what's the connection?) Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.*

Guys, this speaks of persecution. Every once in a while, I'll hear Christians talking about persecution. I even followed for a while, this gal on Instagram that just really has made it her life calling to call attention to the persecution of Christians around the world. But I realized after a period of time that what she was doing, and I'm not trying to criticize, please understand, but, what I felt like she was trying to do was she was saying, this is happening, and this is wrong, and it needs to stop.

Then I started going through the Word of God, and I see passages like here where the author of Hebrew says, Jesus suffered outside the gate, and that's a picture. That's a picture of what they used to do with that part of the animal that was unclean. And Jesus suffered outside the gate, so let us go to Him and let's, let us bear the reproach that He bore.

You see, Jesus was rejected, and so the connecting point for you and me is, that we're going to be rejected by the same world that rejected Jesus. And we can't expect any different, right?

If they crucified our Lord who had no sin and they found a reason to crucify Him, what are they going to do to you and me? Well, listen, Jesus talked a lot about that in the gospel accounts. He prepared us in many ways to understand this principle that, when you connect yourself to Jesus, the world is going to hate you. It's as simple as that.

And so that's why the Bible says, when you're going through suffering, don't think it's strange, like something weird is happening to you. (1 Peter 4:12) This is exactly what Jesus said was going to happen. Not only should we accept it, here's the point, we should embrace it.

Because what the Bible says as it relates to suffering is it says this, to this, you were called. (1 Peter 2:21) Yeah. To this you were called. Hey, pastor Paul, I don't know what my calling is? Well, part of it's to suffer. How'd that grab you?

Yeah. We want to talk about the fun calling where people are going to notice me, but you and I have a calling in Christ to suffer. Yeah, so let us go to Him outside the city. The city is the picture of the world. Let us go to Him outside and let us gladly bear the reproach that He bore and the scorn.

Verse 15. *“Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, (and then again, that's that same process of commuting sins) <sup>16</sup> and you shall kill the ram and shall take its blood and throw it against the sides of the altar. <sup>17</sup> Then you shall cut the ram into pieces, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and its head, <sup>18</sup> and burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord. It is a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.*

<sup>19</sup> *“You shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, <sup>20</sup> and you shall kill the ram and take part of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tips of the right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the great toes (that means the big toe) of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the sides of the altar.”*

And we read this and we go, huh? What are they doing here? This is a little bit strange. What's this all about?

Well, remember people, this is their ordination. This is their consecration service where they're being ordained and consecrated to this work of being a priest and what goes along with it.

And you'll notice here, that the blood is applied to the right ear, the right hand, and the right foot. And the reason for this is that God is basically accommodating their thought process as it relates to right versus left hand. Do you understand?

We don't think of this so much today, but people back in those days believed that the right hand was the superior hand. In fact, they called the right hand the hand of strength. Right? I've told you this many times before, as a father, if you were a father and you had a son, you would call him, the son of my right hand.

Jesus is seated now at the right hand of the Father, right? Because that is a picture in the Bible of power and rightness. All right.

Why are they anointing the right hand, the right ear, the right foot? Well, it was due to the fact that the people believe that right handed people were superior so

God is accommodating them. We know that's not the case, but He's doing it in a way as to say that they are the best of them, the most superior of them, is committed to the work of the Lord. Okay.

In other words, it's giving their best. It's taking of these men of their best and consecrating it to the Lord. Jesus used similar language, even in the New Testament, you guys remember that, right? Let me show you this on the screen from Matthew 5. He says,

**Matthew 5:30 (ESV)**

*...if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*

*...if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*

Obviously He's not talking literally here. He's not saying to mutilate yourself, He's speaking figuratively. But why does He say right hand? Because the people believe that was their best hand.

He's saying, even if your best hand causes you to sin. He went on to say, if your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. Why didn't He say left eye? Well, again, it was common, commonly believed among the people that the right is the best. Your right eye is your best, your right hand is your best, your right foot is your best. Right? Your first born son is the son of your right hand and he's the best, and he gets the lion's share of the inheritance. You understand how things are being said here. God is using figurative language to speak to the people in their current understanding.

Verse 21. *“Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. He and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.*

<sup>22</sup> *“You shall also take the fat from the ram and the fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and the right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination), <sup>23</sup> and one loaf of bread and one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD. <sup>24</sup> You shall put all these on the palms of Aaron (in other words, put it in their hands) and on the palms of his sons, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD.”* And a wave offering is a bit of a mystery.

What we think we've learned, is that the priest would wave, and they received these things in their hands, and they would wave these things toward the altar, but then they would bring them back again, signifying that the sacrifice was offered to God, received back by the priest, and thus shared. It's a sharing as this wave offering is going by. It's the best we can come up with.

Verse 25, *“Then you shall take them from their hands and burn them on the altar on top of the burnt offering, as a pleasing aroma before the LORD. It is a food offering to the LORD.*

<sup>26</sup> *“You shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron's ordination and wave it for a wave offering before the LORD, and it shall be your portion. <sup>27</sup> And you shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering that is waved and the thigh of the priests' portion that is contributed from the ram of ordination, from what was Aaron's and his sons'. <sup>28</sup> It shall be for Aaron and his sons as a perpetual due from the people of Israel, for it is a contribution. It shall be a contribution from the people of Israel from their peace offerings, their contribution to the LORD.”*

In other words, what remained of that ram was then given to Aaron and his sons and that would be consumed by them as part of the ceremony, the ordination ceremony. In other words, in our language, we would say as part of their ordination ceremony, they had a barbecue. Yeah, that's basically it right there.

And by the way, do you notice they're burning all the fat? You guys know what fat smells like? Have you ever been out on a walk and your neighbor's barbecuing and you smell something? You go, oh man, that smells great. That's exactly what the offerings smelled like, cause it was all the fat that they were burning, and it probably smelled incredible. I don't know why I added that, but I just thought you should know.

Other than that, it's kind of a bloody mess. I mean, really, I would not want to have been a priest in those days because they must've been just like covered in blood all the time.

But again, God was showing that forgiveness is a bloody business and there's a lot of death. There's a lot of death, there's a lot of death involved with forgiveness. Yeah.

Verse 29, *“The holy garments of Aaron shall be for his sons after him; they shall be anointed in them and ordained in them. <sup>30</sup> The son who succeeds him as priest, who comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the Holy Place, shall wear them seven days.*

<sup>31</sup> “You shall take the ram of ordination and boil its flesh in a holy place. <sup>32</sup> And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket in the entrance of the tent of meeting. <sup>33</sup> They shall eat those things with which atonement was made at their ordination and consecration, but an outsider shall not eat of them, because they are holy. <sup>34</sup> And if any of the flesh for the ordination or of the bread remain until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

<sup>35</sup> “Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you. Through seven days shall you ordain them, (wow, their ordination process took a whole week) <sup>36</sup> and every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall purify the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it to consecrate it. <sup>37</sup> Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it, (in other words, everyday) and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

<sup>38</sup> “Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. <sup>39</sup> One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. <sup>40</sup> And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. <sup>41</sup> The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD. <sup>42</sup> It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. <sup>43</sup> There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory. <sup>44</sup> I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. <sup>45</sup> I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. <sup>46</sup> And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am (YAHWEH) the LORD their God.”

Chapter 30. It says, “You shall make an altar...” We'll put it on the screen for you so you can see it. Here's a rendering of it.





*“...on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. <sup>2</sup> A cubit shall be its length, (You'll remember, a cubit was about 18 inches) and a cubit its breadth. It shall be square, and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it. <sup>3</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and around its sides and its horns. And you shall make a molding of gold around it. <sup>4</sup> And you shall make two golden rings for it. (You can see in the picture the poles that go in those rings aren't there, but) Under its molding on two opposite sides of it you*

*shall make them, and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. <sup>5</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.”*

Now we come to the altar of incense, What's that all about? Is that just to make things smell nice in the Most Holy or in the Holy Place? No. You know what the altar of incense is? By the way, did anybody...? Back in the 70s, some of you weren't alive. Burning incense was really got popular in the 70s. I hated it mostly, it stunk. But I think that this incense was really beautiful and you'll see how they make it in a moment.

But what is incense a picture of in the Bible? It's a picture of your prayers coming before God, as a sweet aroma that just sifts heavenward. Let me show you, a couple of Scriptures. Psalm first of all, Psalm 141.

**Psalm 141:2 (ESV)**

*Let my prayer be counted as incense before you and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!*

*Let my prayer be counted as incense before you and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!*

And then you'll remember something that John saw in the Book of Revelation. Chapter 8, he says,

**Revelation 8:3-4 (ESV)**

*And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.*

*And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.*

Isn't that fascinating? Your prayers rise before God as a sweet incense that fills the halls of heaven. I just think that is just amazing.

Verse 6, “*And you shall put it (this is the altar of incense) in front of the veil that is above the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is above the*

*testimony, where I will meet with you. <sup>7</sup> And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps (that means, puts oil in the lamps) he shall burn it, (incense) <sup>8</sup> and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations. ”*

Do you remember in the New Testament, somebody who went to go burn incense before the Lord? It was John the Baptist's father. You guys remember that? Zechariah. Let me show you this on the screen from Luke chapter 1.

**Luke 1:5,8-9,11 (ESV)**

*In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.*

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And you guys remember it freaked him out. And the angel basically told Zachariah, your wife's going to have a son, and Zachariah didn't believe it because she was already past the point of childbearing. But of course that child was born, and that was John the Baptist. You can see that this was going on even in the New Testament.

But there were warnings that went along with these tasks. Look at verse 9 in your Bible. *“You shall not offer unauthorized incense on it, or a burnt offering, (that’s not where those things happened) or a grain offering, and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. <sup>10</sup> Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD.”*

The only time blood touched the altar of incense, was once a year when the high priest would sanctify it for the next coming year. Now we get to the census tax.

*“<sup>11</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup> “When you take the census of the people of Israel, then each shall give a ransom for his life to the LORD when you number them, that there be no plague among them when you number them.” What's going on here?*

God is telling the people, you belong to Me, so whenever you count the people and take a census of them, they have to pay a ransom for their life, otherwise, a plague will come upon the people of Israel. And you guys remember when David took a census of the people and obviously didn't have the people pay that census tax? And a great plague broke out among the people of Israel. Many people died. It's all recorded in 1 Chronicles, chapter 21. If you want to read about it.

But the people were obligated to pay a census tax because they'd been rescued by the Lord, and now they, their lives belong to Him. What does that say to you? Have you been rescued by the Lord? Does your life now belong to him? I think so. Look at 1 Corinthians, chapter 6 on the screen.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (ESV)**

*...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

*...do you not know (Paul writes) that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

And then look what Peter writes in 1 Peter chapter 1.

**1 Peter 1:18-19 (ESV)**

*...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

*...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, (that's not how He bought you, how did He buy you?) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

Do you belong to God? Yup. See what God's teaching them through the Old Testament? You belong. You belong to Me. You belong to Me. You're Mine.

Right? You don't have the right just to go off and live your life the way you think it ought to be lived. I bought it. I bought it with the blood of My Son and you now belong to Me.

Listen, people, that's not oppressive slavery. That's freedom. You know why? Because God is the only One in the universe who's free, so if you belong to Him, you're free. Don't ever think of your Christianity as bondage. It's freedom. Him whom the Son sets free, is free indeed. (John 8:36) All right.

Verse 13. *“Each one who is numbered in the census shall give this: half a shekel (that’s not much) according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as an offering to the LORD. <sup>14</sup> Everyone who is numbered in the census, from twenty years old and upward, shall give the LORD's offering. <sup>15</sup> The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when you give the LORD's offering to make atonement for your lives.”*

And God wants you to know that your worth is the same to Him regardless of whether you've got a lot of money or whether you don't have 2 nickels to rub together. You're the same to Him and He says, *“<sup>16</sup> You shall take the atonement money from the people of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before the LORD, so as to make atonement for your lives.”*

There was a dual purpose to receiving this census tax, and it was to remind the people of Israel that they belong to the Lord, but it was also to fund the ongoing work of taking care of the temple, which of course had a cost connected to it.

Now, more instructions on some furnishings. *“<sup>17</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>18</sup> “You shall also make a basin of bronze, (put that on the screen for you so you can see it) with its stand of bronze, for washing.”*

This is called the bronze basin. It's also referred to as the bronze laver in some Bibles. And it was basically just a big wash bowl, really for the priest because they got really bloody when they were handling the animals. And so they would use this to wash up, right?



*You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, <sup>19</sup> with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. <sup>20</sup> When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. <sup>21</sup> They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations.”* And then the chapter ends with some instructions concerning the anointing oil and incense.

I'm going to go through this very quickly because it this is basically He's giving them the recipe for their spices. There was, liquid myrrh, cinnamon, aromatic cane, cassia, and you just look through that. It's pretty cool. And they were to take all these things and mix them together for the anointing oil and also for the incense.

And basically, what the Lord said at the very end of the chapter is that, <sup>38</sup> *Whoever makes any like it to use as perfume shall be cut off from his people.”* Because this is special. This is special to the Lord. All right.

Chapter 31 is super short. So we're going to do this really quickly. *“The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>3</sup> and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, <sup>4</sup> to devise artistic*

*designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, <sup>5</sup> in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work in every craft. <sup>6</sup> And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. And I have given to all able men ability, that they may make all that I have commanded you: <sup>7</sup> the tent of meeting, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furnishings of the tent, <sup>8</sup> the table and its utensils, and the pure lampstand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, <sup>9</sup> and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin and its stand, <sup>10</sup> and the finely worked garments, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, for their service as priests, <sup>11</sup> and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place. According to all that I have commanded you, they shall do.”*

And the thing that the Lord gives here, is another reminder about the Sabbath. *“<sup>12</sup> And (He says) the LORD said to Moses, <sup>13</sup> “You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. <sup>14</sup> You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>15</sup> Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. <sup>16</sup> Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. <sup>17</sup> It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’”*

*<sup>18</sup> And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.”*

The last thing that we're going to talk about as we close here, is the Sabbath. And I want to ask you a simple question. When we read those verses. Who did God say the Sabbath was between? Who did He say it was between? Look at verse 13, *“You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between (who?) me and you (who is you? Israel) throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you.”*

Verse 16. *“Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant...”* It was part of the covenant, you guys. Here's my question to you. Are we under the old covenant? No.

And then finally, look at verse 17. *“It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, ...”*

Three times, three times there, He said, who's the Sabbath regulation between? Me and Israel?

Isn't it crazy that Christians, Christians come away and say, we've got to keep the Sabbath. It is really it's just wild to me. It's like, didn't you read the book? Well they did. They did read the book.

Here's the problem. They swallowed hook, line, and sinker, a false teaching, and here it is, the church takes over for Israel. Yeah that's what happened. And the commands that were given to Israel are now transferred to the church. And they believed it. Even though God said in Jeremiah chapter 31, I'm going to make a new covenant and it won't be like the old covenant. And that's in their Bible, too. And I'm talking about Adventists, usually, that's what we call them. People who keep the seventh day Sabbath because they believe they are required by God to keep the Sabbath.

And there's even passages in the New Testament where the New Testament writers say, I'm worried about you. You guys are keeping special days. And then Paul writes, and he says, let no one judge you by a Sabbath day, let no one judge you by what you eat or you drink, or a Sabbath day. (Colossians 2:16)

And yet they continue to maintain their position that you must keep the Sabbath. In fact, you may not know this, but Seventh Day Adventists believe that during the Great Tribulation, the mark of the beast will be worship on a day other than the Sabbath. That's what they believe. That's what they've been taught. That's a problem, you see.

Because it just flies in the face of the Word of God. It's horrible biblical exegesis, and it's just flat out wrong. Now, am I saying..., what am I saying about Seventh day Adventists? I don't know. I think some of them can be genuine in their faith. It's not mine to judge, and I'm glad of that. I am not the judge, and you should be glad of that too, by the way. But am I saying that some of the Adventists are lost? No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm just saying that there's an area where they're wrong. Flat out, dead wrong. Sorry, not going to compromise.

The Sabbath is a beautiful picture of Jesus. Jesus said, I didn't come to abolish the law, I came to fulfill it. (Matthew 5:17) In other words, fill it up. And Jesus is the picture of our Sabbath rest, because what God told Israel was, do not



work on the Sabbath, rest on the Sabbath. And that is what we do in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

And as it relates to what He did on the cross, we do not work for our salvation, we rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ. And that's what the author of Hebrews also goes on to explain in Hebrews chapter 4.

Anyway, that's where we're going to stop. Let's pray.

Father, we thank You. We praise You. We worship You. You are the Lord of our lives. You are the God who fills us with every good thing. And we wait on You every day to nourish and fill us with goodness, and grace, and wisdom, and guidance.

And we thank you for Your Word that You've given. And we thank You for how it's so beautifully shows us a picture of Jesus Christ, the perfect lamb of God, the sacrificial lamb of God by whom we are saved.

And it is in that name we pray, and all God's people said, amen.

God bless you.

Have a good rest of your evening.