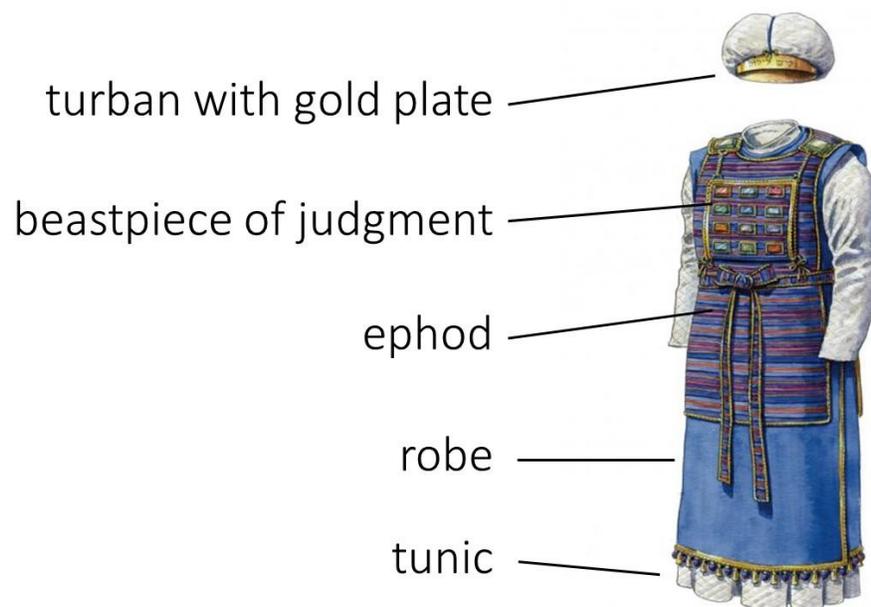


June 30, 2019

Speaker: Eric Naus **Series:** God With Us **Passage:** Exodus 28

Community Group Questions: "The Priest We Really Need"

In Exodus 28, God gives Moses instructions for making the clothing of the priests who would serve at the Tabernacle, and he puts a special emphasis on the High Priest and his garments. Read chapter 28 aloud together as a group and use the graphic below to identify the various pieces of clothing that are mentioned along the way.



(Image from ESV Study Bible, Crossway, 2008)

1. **The High Priest represented God to the People.** We see this in a couple of ways. First of all, his ephod and breastpiece were made of the same colors as the inner curtains of the Tabernacle (compare Exodus 28:6 with 26:1). Because of this, the High Priest was “visually one” with the Tabernacle itself. He “wore God’s colors,” and therefore, he represented God visually. Secondly, the High Priest was given charge of the important decision-making device known as the Urim and Thummim. These ancient “dice” allowed Israel to discern God’s will in matters of national importance. The High Priest, as the holder of these dice, was able to represent God’s will to the people on important occasions.

The Bible is clear that Jesus fulfills the role of the High Priest! Read John 14:9, Colossians 1:15, and Hebrews 1:1-3. How does Jesus represent God to us? What would you say to an unbeliever who wanted

to know God, but was uninterested in exploring Jesus? As a believer, what are you doing on a regular basis to get to know Jesus more, and therefore, to understand God more?

2. **The High Priest represented the people to God.** This was represented in a number of his garments. His shoulders had two beautiful onyx stones, each with 6 of the tribes of Israel inscribed on them, and therefore, he “carried the people on his shoulders” into the presence of God. The breastpiece had 12 distinct, precious stones, each with a different tribe of Israel inscribed on it. In this way, the High Priest “carried the people over his heart” as he approached God. Every Israelite would know that they were represented there as a part of one of those tribes. Finally, the High Priest had a golden label on his turban, which stated, “Holy to the LORD.” The High Priest was ritually holy because of an elaborate ceremony involving washing, anointing, and animal sacrifices (See Exodus 29). But as he stood in God’s presence with the golden label, he represented *all the people* as holy unto God!

Jesus represents his people before God, as our Great High Priest! Take time to read the following passages: Hebrews 9:11-12, Hebrews 10:11-14, and Hebrews 7:23-25. How does Jesus fulfill the sacrifices and the priesthood in these passages, and what does that mean for us as believers?

Why is it so important that Jesus is our high priest “permanently”? What kind of assurance should that give us in our everyday lives, especially when we struggle against sin and doubt?

When we think about the precious stones that the Israelite High Priest carried into God’s presence, with the people’s tribes engraved there, we can rightly imagine our own names carried into God the Father’s presence by Jesus, our Great High Priest. What kind of confidence should this give us as we journey through the ups and downs of our Christian lives?

What does it mean that Jesus “intercedes” for us now (see Hebrews 7:25 and Romans 8:34)? Does it encourage your heart to know that Jesus prays for you? What strength should we find in this doctrine?

Prayer suggestion: Spend time praising Jesus for the work he does for us as our great high priest. Bring your requests to him, picturing him as our Great High Priest.