

Exodus 28

Verses 1-5

The Priesthood

“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. ² You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. 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. 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. ⁵ They shall take the gold and the blue and the purple and the scarlet *material* and the fine linen.

“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.

Now that God had communicated all of the information to Moses that he would need to oversee the building of the tabernacle, its furniture and equipment, it was time to give Moses the instructions for the priesthood.

Aaron will be the first High priest and his 4 sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar will be the first priests. However, Nadab and Abihu will only serve 1 day as priest and be struck dead by God for not following the word of the Lord.

See pic 2805

Nadab and Abihu

Day	Event	Scripture
1 - 7	7 days of Ordination	See Lev. 8:33
8	The first day of their ministry	See Lev 9:1
8	The Lord puts them to death	See Lev 10:1-2

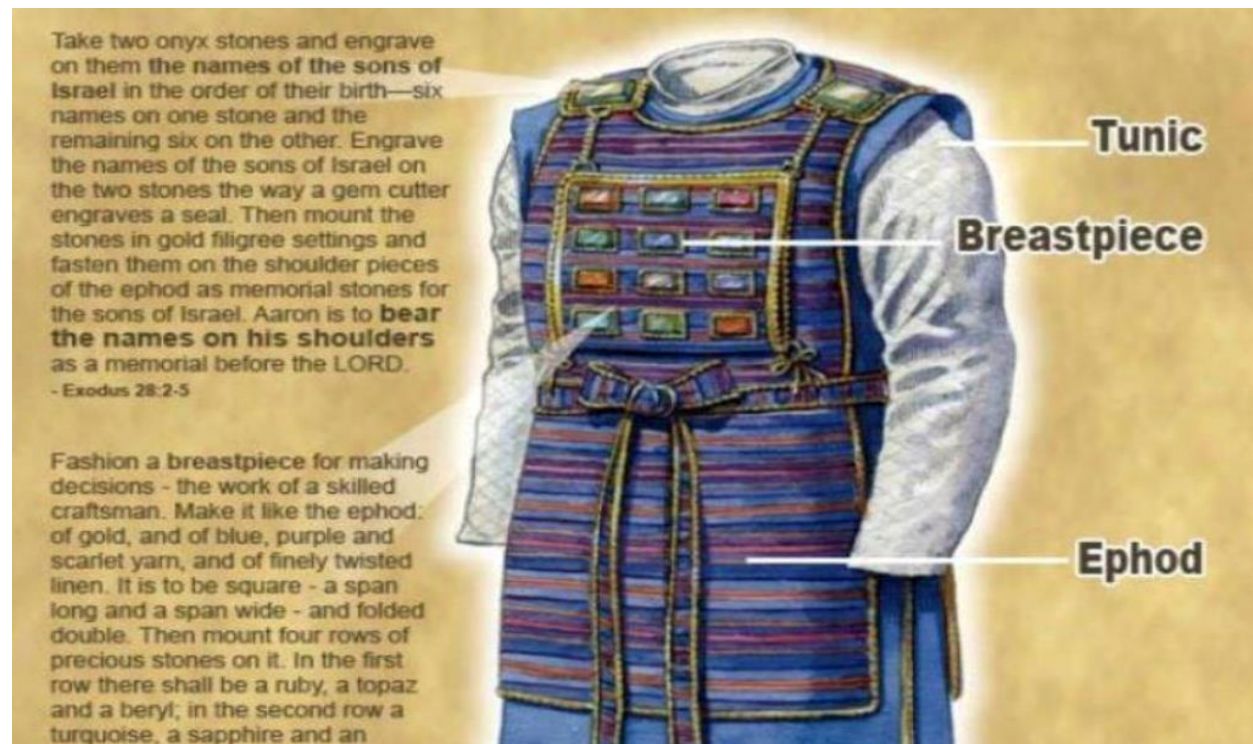
Verses 6 – 14

The Ephod

“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. ⁷ It shall have two shoulder pieces joined to its two ends, that it may be joined. 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. ⁹ You shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six of their names on the one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, according to their birth. 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. 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. ¹³ You shall make filigree *settings* of gold, 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*.

“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.

See Pic 2810



⁹ You shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six of their names on the one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, according to their birth.

See Pic 2815 Onyx stone



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.

The High Priest was a representative of all Israel so all the tribes names were written on these two stones according to the order of their birth. However, the Onyx stone represented the tribe of Ephraim which was home to the Tabernacle for 300 years.

See pic 2820 Shiloh in the tribe of Ephraim



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. ¹⁶ It shall be square *and* folded double, a span in length and a span in width. ¹⁷ You shall mount on it four rows of stones; the first row *shall be* a row of ruby, topaz and emerald; ¹⁸ and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond; ¹⁹ and the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row a beryl and an onyx and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree. 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. ²² You shall make on the breastpiece chains of twisted cordage work in pure gold. ²³ You shall make on the breastpiece two rings of gold, and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. ²⁴ You shall put the two cords of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

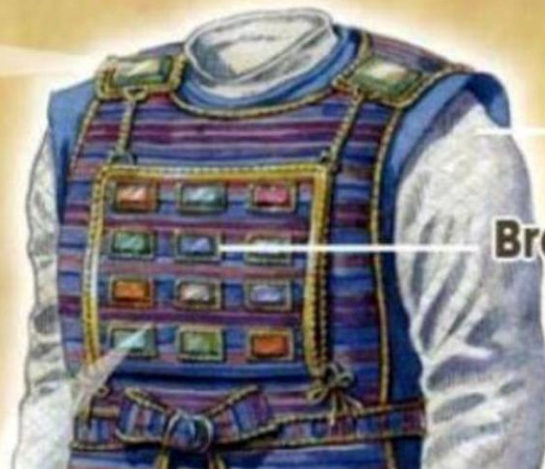
¹⁵ “You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet *material* and fine twisted linen you shall make it.

Some versions use the term Breastplate meaning a piece of armor that fits over the chest, but this is clearly an ornament that covers the heart of the High Priest. The breastpiece fit on top of the ephod and the 12 stones represented the 12 tribes of Israel.

See pic 2825

Take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel in the order of their birth—six names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the way a gem cutter engraves a seal. Then mount the stones in gold filigree settings and fasten them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the LORD.

- Exodus 28:2-5



Tunic

Breastpiece

¹⁷ You shall mount on it four rows of stones....

See pic 2830

1  Sardius Reuben	2  Topaz Simeon	3  Carbuncle Levi
4  Emerald Judah	5  Sapphire Issachar	6  Diamond Zebulun
7  Ligure Nephtali	8  Agate Gad	9  Amethyst Asher
10  Beryl Manassah	11  Onyx Ephram	12  Jasper Benjamin

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.

The Urim and Thummin were in the pouch of the breastpiece.

See pic 2835



The word judgment here refers to making decisions, as they were used to determine God's will on important matters. The High Priest could ask yes or no questions and then pick a stone from the pouch. We don't know for sure how often this was used but the result was seen as an answer from God.

David called for the Urim and Thummim several times.

1. See 1 Samuel 23:9

⁹ But David knew that Saul was plotting evil against him; so he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here."

2. See 1 Samuel 30:7

⁷ Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.

Verses 31- 35

The Robe

³¹ “You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 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. 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: ³⁴ a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, all around on the hem of the robe. 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.

³¹ “You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue.

See Pic 2840

The Robe



This robe was seamless, woven in one piece and had openings for the head and arms.

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:**

The High Priest stood out among the other priests because of the robe, ephod and breastpiece. His presence could be heard because of the bells.

Verses 36 - 39

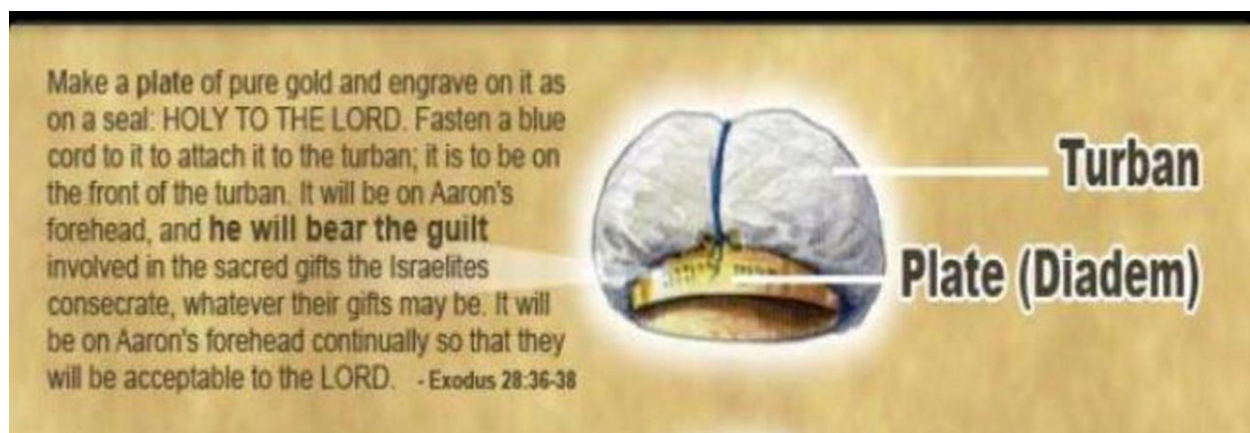
The Plate, Turban, Tunic and Sash

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.’ 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. 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. 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.**

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.’ 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.**

See Pic 2845

Plate and Turban



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.**

See Pic 2850

Take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel in the order of their birth—six names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the way a gem cutter engraves a seal. Then mount the stones in gold filigree settings and fasten them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to **bear the names on his shoulders** as a memorial before the LORD.

- Exodus 28:2-5

Fashion a **breastpiece** for making decisions - the work of a skilled craftsman. Make it like the ephod: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. It is to be square - a span long and a span wide - and folded double. Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. In the first row there shall be a ruby, a topaz and a beryl; in the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and an emerald; in the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; in the fourth row a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. Mount them in gold filigree settings. There are to be **twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel**, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes. ... Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, **he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart** on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD.



The Tunic was all white and had a checkered look to it. It had a cloth sash (belt) around the waist. The cloth belt is not visible in this picture.

The High Priest served as a mediator between God and the people, offering sacrifices for their sins and interceding on their behalf. He also held administrative and political authority, overseeing temple finances and maintaining order.

On the Day of Atonement he offered sacrifices, including a bull for himself and the other priests, and a goat for the sins of the people. He then confessed the sins of the people onto a goat, which was sent into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

Verses 40-43

Tunic, sashes, caps and linen breeches

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. 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. ⁴² You shall make for them linen breeches to cover *their* bare flesh; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs. 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.

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.

See pic 2855



While the clothing of the High Priest was very distinctive the clothing of a priest was much more functional because of his duties at the Tabernacle.

⁴² **You shall make for them linen breeches to cover *their* bare flesh; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs.**

See pic 2860



King David was not a priest but he should have been wearing something like this when he danced before the Ark.

See 2 Samuel 6:14 – 16, 20

¹⁴ **And David was dancing before the Lord with all *his* strength, and David was wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁵ So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with joyful shouting and the sound of the trumpet.**

¹⁶ **Then it happened, as the ark of the Lord was coming into the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked down through the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she was contemptuous of him in her heart.**

²⁰ **But when David returned to bless his *own* household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, “How the king of Israel dignified himself today! For he exposed himself today in the sight of his servants’ female slaves, as one of the rabble shamelessly exposes himself!”**

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.

For a priest, not wearing his underwear at the Tabernacle brought the death penalty.