

Series: Exodus
Title: Christ our Holiness
Text: Exodus 28: 31-39
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God ordered Moses to build the tabernacle and everything within it, according to the pattern he was shown in the mount. Why? What did the tabernacle, the priests, their garments and everything else mean?

Hebrews 8: 4:...on earth...there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

The Hebrew epistle gives us warrant to say that Aaron the high priest and his garments were a figure of Christ.

Subject: Christ our Holiness

Most in religion say that holiness/sanctification is accomplished partly by Christ and partly by the believer. Is that an offense to a child of God? Why? It is offensive because Christ is our Holiness! Christ is both our Sanctifier and our Sanctification

Hebrews 2: 11: Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12: saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

So Christ is our Sanctifier. Then we are told in 1 Corinthians 1:30 that of God Christ is made unto us sanctification. So Christ is both our Sanctifier and our Sanctification. 1 Corinthians 1:31 says the purpose is that “he that glorieth let him glory in the LORD.” So for a sinner to boast that man contributes to his holiness is to steal Christ’s glory.

Proposition: Christ Jesus the Lord is the Sanctifier and the Sanctification of his saints.

Division: We see what it took for Christ to be both in the garments of the High Priest—1) The robe and the coat 2) The hem of the robe 3) The Mitre

THE ROBE AND THE COAST

Exodus 28: 31: And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32: And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent...39: And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework.

In order for Christ to be our sanctifier and our sanctification he had to be the perfect, sinless GodMan. That is what we see typified in these two garments. The coat was worn next to the body under the robe. The coat was made of “fine linen.” The robe worn over the coat was “all of blue.” Together they typify that which Christ had to be in order to be our Holiness—that is, perfect God and perfect Man in one person.

The “white linen” of the coat speaks of Christ being the perfect Man. Christ is our Holiness because he is the only perfect Man. As our Head, his people are what he is. Therefore, we read that the “white linen is the righteousness of the saints” (*Rev 19:8*). The white linen typifies the righteousness of Christ by which he sanctifies his people making us his saints.

Our first head, Adam, sinned and plunged all men into sin. Adam represented all men. But the head of God’s elect is Christ. He is the only perfect Man. From conception to death, Christ was sinless in heart and nature. Never once was Christ’s nature corrupted. On the cross he always remained holy even while he bore our sin in his own body.

This robe *all of blue* was worn by the high priest alone. It was blue like the heavens. It speaks of Christ being God from Heaven. Christ Jesus is the GodMan, Mediator

1 Timothy 3: 16: And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

What a word, my brethren! God so sovereignly, everlastingly, immutably loves his elect that God came down himself to work out our salvation. That is who Christ is, the GodMan, Mediator. Therefore all Christ’s works as a Man are eternally accomplished in the power of God so that they are eternally unchangeable. That is why this ephod could *not be rent in two*. Christ’s works are eternal. They cannot be changed by any sin his people commit. Christ accomplished our redemption so that every believer right now HAS eternal redemption. We are not waiting to have such a high priest, right now, “We HAVE such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb 8:1). Our redemption can never be changed because right now, “by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION *for us*” (Heb 9:12).

When Christ is formed in us in regeneration, Christ is the holiness of our new man. It is then that “of God is Christ made unto us righteousness and sanctification” (1 Cor 1:30). Christ alone perfected us by his will on the cross and Christ alone makes us holy and separate in him in regeneration. Concerning Christ’s work for us on the cross, sanctification is not by our will but “By [Christ’s] will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*...For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb 10: 10, 14). Likewise, Christ alone makes us holy within in regeneration—“through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Th 2:13). The same as Christ’s righteousness alone covers our nakedness, Christ’s holiness alone is our holiness.

THE HEM OF THE ROBE

Exodus 28: 33: And *beneath* upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: 34: A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. 35: And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy *place* before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not.

So we have seen that in order to be our sanctification Christ had to be the GodMan. But how is his work applied to us so that we are sanctified within? How does sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth come about? That is what we see in the hem of the robe.

The pomegranate, as we all know, is a fruit. All fruitfulness in a believer comes from Christ. Speaking of Christ as the blessed man, the psalmist wrote, “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Ps 1:3). Do you know what God calls Christ’s church? “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits (SOS 4:12-13). It is Christ who makes his people fruitful, “being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God” (Php 1:11).

The “golden bell” shows us how this work is accomplished in his children. We read “*it shall be upon Aaron to minister.*” The gospel we preach is concerning Christ’s ministry. “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28; Mr 10:45). From God’s right hand, Christ is still ministering to us through the preaching of the gospel. We read of the bells on the hem of the high priest’s garment “*and his sound shall be heard.*” The gospel is Christ’s sound. The gospel shall be heard. Before whom? “*When he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out*”, that is, before the people. So before the LORD in heaven and before his people the gospel shall be heard. The purpose for this was “*that he die not.*”

So we see that the golden bell represents the preaching of the gospel of Christ by Christ our High Priest through his messengers, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1Co 1:21). To a regenerated child of God the gospel is a joyful sound like the sound of little tinkling bells. “The angel said unto them, Fear not, I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born a Saviour which is CHRIST THE LORD” (Luke 2:11).

The golden bells were upon *Aaron as he ministered*. The gospel we preach is concerning the ministry of our great High Priest, Jesus the Lord. Christ ministered to his people, accomplishing our redemption from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. As our resurrected High Priest, Christ continues to minister to his people, accomplishing our sanctification through the preaching of the gospel, which is the preaching of his faithfulness. Paul declares this plainly in Galatians 3.

Galatians 3: 2: This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3: Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?...5: He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and he that worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6: Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” (Ga 3:5-6)

Christ is he that ministers to us the Spirit. Doing so Christ works the miracles of regeneration, repentance and faith in his people. Does Christ do this work through the preaching of works? Or does he do it through the preaching which declares his faithfulness to save his people? He does it to us through the same gospel by which Christ brought Abraham to believe. That shows us that sanctification is not through the preaching of the works of the law because Abraham was sanctified 430 years before the law was given at Sinai. Our sanctification is through the hearing of Christ’s faithfulness. Through the preaching of the gospel, Christ ministers to us the Spirit working the miracles of sanctification and belief of the truth. That is how we are sanctified.

This gospel we preach is delighted in by the heavenly host the same as it is by us—“*His sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, [before the people].*” God the Father rejoices in the sound of Christ’s gospel before him and so do his people.

Think of this brethren: as the gospel is preached the Lord God and all the host of heaven rejoice in it, as real as we do in the earth! The Lord God and his saints in heaven, as well as his saints in earth behold Christ and rejoice in him as the gospel is preached! All eyes are on Christ!

The purpose of the bells on the high priest hem was *“that he die not.”* Some say the bell was so the priests would know that the high priest had not died when he went into the holiest of holies. But there was no way the high priest would die because he typified our successful sin-atonement High Priest. What then does it mean when it says *“that he die not?”* The continual tinkling bells made it impossible for the priests to forget the high priest. It pictures how God will not allow Christ to die in the minds and hearts of his people. The apostle Peter said God will have us *“put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the truth.”* (2 Pet 1:12) This is why Paul said, *“Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel”* (1 Cor 1: 17). This is why Paul said, *“I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified”* (1 Cor 2:2). As this joyous sound goes forth, *“We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory”* (1 Cor 2:6-7). If you hear and rejoice in the sound of this golden bell, God says you are blessed.

Psalm 89: 15: Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. 16: In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. 17: For thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted. 18: For the LORD *is* our defence; and the Holy One of Israel *is* our king.”

THE MITRE

Exodus 28: 36: And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37: And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. 38: And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

Here we behold why Christ is our Holiness before God. The signet on the miter read *“Holiness to the LORD”* typifying Christ our Holiness. Verse 38 says it was upon Aaron that he might bear the *“iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”*

Believer, Christ has made us priests unto God. He has created a new holy man within us. Yet, the sin of our flesh makes all our spiritual sacrifices to be covered in sin. But do not miss this, God says our sin-tainted gifts are still *“holy things”* to God. How can that be? It is because on the cross, Christ our High Priest bore the *“iniquity of the holy things...that they may be accepted before the LORD.”* Therefore, all our service to God is fully accepted by Christ

1 Peter 2:5: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Therefore, to you who are sanctified children of God, to you in whom God has made Christ sanctification, to you who look to no one but Christ for sanctification and all things, here is the application.

Ecclesiastes 9:7: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

Amen!