

The Holy Garments

by Henry Law

The sermon explores the significance of the Holy Garments in Exodus 28 and how they represent Christ's purity, righteousness, beauty, and glory.

Scripture: Exodus 28:39

Topics: "Christ's Righteousness", "High Priesthood"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the significance of the Holy Garments worn by the high-priest, emphasizing that every detail was designed 'for glory and for beauty' to reflect the splendor of God. The inmost coat symbolizes Christ's spotless righteousness and active obedience, providing the foundation for our salvation. The robe in pure blue represents heaven and Jesus as our High Priest, while the pomegranates and golden bells on the hem signify the countless souls saved by Christ's sacrifice. The ephod with its diverse hues showcases how all rare graces are combined in Christ, and the breastplate with precious jewels engraved with the names of Israel's tribes demonstrates Jesus' deep love and care for His people.

Transcript

"You shall make Holy Garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty." Exodus 28:2

If ever eyes beheld an object in which splendor shone, it was the high-priest in his Holy Garments. God planned each part 'for glory and for beauty.' Hence every brilliant color sparkled. Hence richest jewels cast back dazzling rays. The rainbow's varied hues, the sun's meridian light, seemed to concentrate in a human form. Earth brought her best. Art framed them with a Spirit-given skill.

Reader! such is the figure to which these humble pages would now invite your gaze. But you will look in vain if you see nothing but the costly robes. Here is delight for faith's enraptured heart. Jesus is here! What is beauty, but His form, His grace, His work! What is glory, but His manifested sight! This workmanship would never have seen birth, except to show His all-surpassing worth.

Spirit of Truth, look down! We long for clearer vision of the Lord. It is Your sovereign province to display Him. Cause, then, these Holy Garments to fulfill their office.

First, there was the inmost coat. Its texture was of finest linen. Exodus 28:39. It covered the whole frame. It clothed the arms and flowed down to the ground. It thus showed purity from head to foot. Do any ask--Where can such full-length purity be found? The Gospel answers by revealing Christ. He is one blaze

of spotless righteousness. This truth is the firm pedestal of all our hopes. If one defect had touched Him, He must have needed an atonement for Himself. But being sinless, He can take the sinner's place. He hangs a sinless body on the cross. He gives a sinless soul to bear God's wrath. Thus wrath is satisfied!

This snow-white tunic exhibits, also, the righteousness which Christ wrought out on earth. His active obedience covers the whole surface of the law. Heaven's palace must have heaven-pure garments. Christ weaves them. Christ bestows them. Faith takes them, and is thus made fit for the throne of God.

Reader! think well; you must sink low in hell, except a righteous Savior cleanses your guilt. You cannot stand before God's eye, except you face Him righteous as He is righteous. You cannot breathe in heaven, except a newborn nature love its holy climate. The hands of Jesus hold all this mercy for you. His holy blood is perfect atonement for sin. His full obedience is your royal robe. His Spirit can impart all grace. Behold the High-priest in this inner tunic, and let its snow-white hue teach you these truths.

The coat was tightly fastened by a belt. To gird the loins was to prepare for toil. Activity is thus insured. This sign, then, shows our Jesus equipped for all the labors of redeeming service. It was no light task to save souls. Mountains of difficulty must be overcome. Untiring strength must be put forth. He promptly exerts all of His energy. He meets each foe. He clears each obstacle. He rests not until the path from earth to heaven is free. Yet He will work until His flock is safely gathered home. He worked on earth because He greatly loved. He works in heaven because He loves as greatly.

Reader! see Jesus all activity to save. He never weakens nor loiters nor desists. One thing He does. He girds His loins for labor. Are you as earnest to be saved? Are you as active to seek Him? Are you as zealous to subserve His cause? His persevering zeal should shame man's listless indolence. His belt is reproach to our ungirded loins.

Above the coat a robe was placed. Exodus 28:31. In measure it was less. It had no covering for the arms. It scarcely reached below the knees. But its chief difference was its lovely hue, and the magnificence of the bordering hem. The color was pure blue. It thus reflected the clear canopy of heaven. The high-priest ministered in a sky-blue robe. Thus Jesus brings all heaven to our thought. Heaven is in His every word. His hands extend the gift of heaven. To see Him now is heaven begun. To be with Him forever is heaven complete. Faith knows no heaven but Him. Reader! see Jesus as your High-priest in azure robe, and you will die to earth, and earth will die to you. A brighter scene will win you to love brighter things.

This robe had a rich fringe. Its hem was a broad belt of pomegranates and golden bells. These pomegranates were richly worked in purple, blue, and scarlet. Of all the fruits, this is most rich in seed. Therefore it is fit emblem of luxuriant shoots. Here Jesus is portrayed, as the 'Everlasting Father' of a countless race. His blood is sown on earth; a harvest of saved souls springs up. Mark the crowds who throng the throne of glory. They all are produce of redeeming love. Mark all who in the wilderness of earth show signs of new-imparted being. They all derive existence from one stem; they all are fruit of one regenerating Spirit. We see the ornamented edge, and we adore the truth, 'So shall your seed be.' Gen. 15:5.

The pomegranates were intermingled with golden bells. The high-priest could not stir but melody announced that he was near. Israel's sons found special comfort in this ordinance. Their high-priest passed the veil. He stood before the ark. It was a solemn moment. The spot was tremendous in awe. The thought might rise, Can man draw near to symbols of God's glory and not die? But a sweet note lulls all such fears to rest. The golden bells are heard. All hearts rejoiced. The high-priest faced the mercy-seat

and yet he lived. The golden bells still sound. Faith is no stranger to their voice. Jesus, indeed, is no more seen by mortal sense. The heavens hide Him. He prosecutes His work before a throne unseen by us. And there He lives. The proof is clear and sweet as music from the golden bells. Each tender whisper of His love, each soothing application of His word, each sweet assurance of unfailing care, are sounds which evidence that Jesus lives. The golden bells forever ring the joyful tidings, 'Because I live, you shall live also.'

Believer, look often to the fringe of the blue robe. Jesus is there, the fruitful author of your every grace. Jesus is there, assuring that He lives to give you life.

The ephod was next added. Exodus 28:6. This was a tunic, shorter in form than the preceding robe. But while the robe was simple in one azure shade, this ephod was all radiant in diversity of hue. They shall make it, said the Lord, 'of gold, of blue, of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with skillful work.' Earth brought its choicest produce. Art used its utmost effort. The purpose is most clear. We thus are taught that all rare graces are combined in Christ. His person, which is God and man; His work, which fills all heaven with glory; His tender dealings; His loving heart; His faithful truth; these are the perfection of all charms. None ever see true beauty until Christ appears in His salvation's robes.

Two shoulder-pieces fixed it. No common skill prepared them. Sockets of gold were formed. In each an onyx stone was placed. These stones were engraved with the names of Israel's tribes. O my soul, what streams of comfort issue from this sight! Your name, your very name appears on high, uplifted on the shoulders of your Lord. How then can foes work harm? They may assail, they will assail. But you are high above their reach. Can they scale heaven? The thought is folly. Yet they must lay Christ low before they can touch you. Your seat is safety. Your prop is Deity. Rejoice, be glad. High is your Lord--are you less high? Thus, weak in yourself, you soar above all peril, and sit as more than conqueror on eminence of Almightyness!

Rich is this comfort. But the Lord of comfort yet gives more. It is His will that joy unspeakable should fill His people's souls. A breast-plate therefore is inserted in this ephod's front. No words can show its matchless splendor. Richly embroidered like the ephod, twelve precious jewels were set upon it. Each glittering stone exhibited the name of one of Israel's tribes. This work is all arranged to prove how dearly Jesus loves His own people. The world may scorn them as the vilest dust. But Jesus guards them as His choicest treasure, and put them on as the delight of His delights. Redeemed souls are His chief ornament. He wears them on His heart.

Believer, look to Christ. Mark, He displays His very heart. What do you read there? Your name! Your very name! Do you ask, And can He love me? Surely the manger, the garden, and the cross are proof. But lest such evidence should not suffice, His breast-plate is shown as a scroll written with your name. Be then persuaded. His life is love for you. His heart has never been, and never will be, without your image. You dwell entwined amid His affection's fibers. Your High-priest ever wears this precious breast-plate. He ever shows your name before God's throne. You are inseparable portion of His heart.

This is not all. The breast-plate holds more wondrous treasure yet. But here is mystery which we cannot scan. We know, and it is much to know, that the Urim and Thummin were adjoined. The meaning of the terms is clear. Their meaning is 'light and perfection.' Their holy use is also known. By means of these the Lord revealed His will, and gave responses to the consulting priest. The Gospel of the ordinance is likewise clear. Christ is our light. He is our full perfection. Do we need wisdom? Do we seek guidance? We

may draw near. From His heart pure light will shine. Do we mourn that imperfection cleaves as our very skin? He only can relieve. His blood, His righteousness, His Spirit, His dealings, are perfect and make perfect.

Reader! seek Christ, and light is yours. Seek Christ, and all perfection is your portion. Our Urim and our Thummin are His smile.

The Holy Garments are not yet complete. The head must now receive its crowning grace. For this a mitre is prepared. Fair linen is the substance. A belt of blue surrounds it. On this a golden plate is fixed. And then the glorious name, 'Holiness to the Lord,' shines forth. Exodus 28:36. My soul, look up to heaven. Jesus there ministers to consummate salvation. What is it that His mitre declares? 'Holiness to the Lord.' Adore Him--for such is His just title. His person is 'Holiness to the Lord.' Unspotted purity is His essence. If it were otherwise, He could not take a Savior's place. His work is 'Holiness to the Lord.' He came to set Himself apart, that He might do His Father's will. His blood, His righteousness, His prayers, are 'Holiness to the Lord.' His people, in their souls, their walk, their ways, are 'Holiness to the Lord.' He found them sinners. He made them holy. He gave them new hearts, new lives, to be forever 'Holiness to the Lord.'

Such is our robed High-priest. Is He not glory? Is He not beauty? Who will not love Him? Who will not praise Him? Who will not pray, Glorify me in Your glory! Beautify me in Your beauty! for I am Yours!

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