



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V24 N40 October 2, 2022

WAY OUT

“The Cost of Coming Close”

Exodus 28:1-29:46

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

Hebrews 1:3



Q?

Why is the consecration of the priests important?

Since God is omnipresent, all creation lives in his presence. So all people, whether righteous or wicked, live in his omnipresence—given all people have a creature to Creator relationship to God. But only the righteous live in his personal presence—given only the righteous have an “Abba Father” relationship to God. Paul tells his Christian readers, “The Spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Ro 8:15-16). The familial relationship to God that Christians enjoy is a benefit of their New Covenant relationship to him that comes by faith in Jesus Christ, the mediator of that covenant. Forgiveness from sins is theirs through the “once for all” sacrifice of himself and access into his very presence is theirs through his ongoing ministry as their high priest.

According to one theologian, Jesus functions as priest in two ways (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 626-27). First, Jesus offered a perfect sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 9:11-12 reads: “But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by *his own blood*, thus obtaining eternal redemption.” He offered “the sacrifice of himself” (9:26) because “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (10:4). Grudem writes: “Jesus fulfilled all the expectations that were prefigured, not only in the Old Testament sacrifices, but also in the lives and actions of the priests who offered them: he was both the sacrifice and the priest who offered the sacrifice. Jesus is now the ‘great high priest who has passed through the heavens’ (Heb. 4:14) and who has appeared ‘in the presence of God on our behalf’ (Heb 9:24), since he has offered a sacrifice that

ended for all time the need for any further sacrifices” (626). By his sacrifice, Christ has suited us for a relationship with the Father.

Second, Jesus continually brings us near to God. In Old Testament times, Aaron and his sons functioned as sacred personnel to facilitate the encounter between God and his people in worship. Among other things—like trimming lamps, replacing the bread of the Presence, and burning incense—they offered animal sacrifices to atone for sins. But only Aaron, the high priest, was allowed to enter the very presence of God in the holy of holies, other priests were not even allowed into the holy place. And Aaron was only allowed to enter the holy of holies yearly on the day of atonement (see Lev 16). But Jesus has gone into the heavenly equivalent of the holy of holies, the very presence of God himself in heaven. Christ did not enter a tabernacle made by the Israelites, which was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, “now to appear for us *in God’s presence*” (Heb 9:24)—as our advocate (1Jn 2:1-2). Hebrews 6:19-20 reads: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the *inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered* on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.” Therefore, the author of Hebrews can make this amazing statement: “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to *enter the Most Holy Place* by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, *let us draw near to God* with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” Lest one miss the point, Grudem writes: “Jesus has opened for us the way of access to God so that we can *continually* ‘draw near’ into God’s *very presence* without fear but with ‘confidence’ and in ‘full assurance of faith’” (627, italics added).

Read Exodus 28:1-29:45
Cf. Leviticus 8:1-36

28:1-5

1 "Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests. 2 Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honor. 3 Tell all the skilled workers to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest. 4 These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests. 5 Have them use gold, and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen."

29:1-9

1 "This is what you are to do to consecrate them, so they may serve me as priests: Take a young bull and two rams without defect. 2 And from the finest wheat flour make round loaves without yeast, thick loaves without yeast and with olive oil mixed in, and thin loaves without yeast and brushed with olive oil. 3 Put them in a basket and present them along with the bull and the two rams. 4 Then bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the tent of meeting and wash them with water. 5 Take the garments and dress Aaron with the tunic, the robe of the ephod, the ephod itself and the breastpiece. Fasten the ephod on him by its skillfully woven waistband. 6 Put the turban on his head and attach the sacred emblem to the turban. 7 Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his head. 8 Bring his sons and dress them in tunics 9 and fasten caps on them. Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Box "so" indicating *purpose* in 28:1.
- Circle "sacred" in v. 2.
- Underline "dignity and honor" in v. 2.
- Circle "skilled workers" in v. 3.
- Circle "consecration" in 28:3.
- Circle "consecrate" in 29:1.
- Box "so" indicating *purpose* in v. 1.
- Circle "young bull" in v. 1.
- Circle "two rams" in v. 1.
- Circle "anoint" in v. 7.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. The high priest's vestments are called "sacred" or "holy." How so?
2. Explain the significance of the high priest's garments *in toto* rather than piece by piece.
3. What do you infer from the fact that the same colors, same sorts of fabrics, and same skilled workmen were used to make the high priest's garments as to make the tabernacle?
4. The consecration of Aaron and the other priests is mentioned in both Ex 28:3 and 29:1. What does "consecrate" mean and why bother with the ritual?
5. The consecration begins with the ceremonial washing of Aaron and his sons with water (29:4). What would this suggest about *them* and about *God* to those who witnessed their consecration?
6. A "young bull" is sacrificed in connection with the consecration of Aaron and the priests (vv. 10-14). Explain why the priests "lay their hands on its head" (v. 10) and why is it called "a sin offering" (v. 14).
7. Explain why the priests "lay their hands on the head" of the first ram sacrificed (v. 15) and why it is called "a burnt offering" (v. 18).
8. After the priests lay their hands on the head of the second ram and it is sacrificed, some of its blood is put on the lobes of the priests' right ears, the thumbs of their right hands, and the big toes of their right feet (v. 20) — signifying what?
9. Explain what the consecration of the tabernacle, as well as Aaron and his sons (v. 44), made possible (v. 45-47).
10. **Discussion:** Aaron's vestments and his consecration ceremony have *revelatory* value for us. Talk about what they reveal about God, worship, and his servants.

Commentary On The Text

Exodus 28:1-29:47 contains a lengthy description of the garments of the priests and the priests' consecration ceremony. The record's combination of *terseness* and *specificity* make it as difficult to know *exactly* what the garments looked like as it is to know *exactly* what the tabernacle furnishings looked like, leaving *exactly* what the ceremony looked like in doubt, too. Fortunately, not knowing *exactly* does imply not knowing *at all*. Chapter 28 contains a description of the *priests' garments*; chapter 29 contains a description of the *priests' consecration*. Both chapters open with summary accounts of what is subsequently described in more detail. Exodus 28:1-5 gives a general description of the priests' garments. Exodus 29:1-9 gives a general description of the priests' consecration ceremony. While reading the extended passage is necessary to understand the broader context of these two paragraphs, the focus of this study will be on the six verses of chapter 28 and on the nine verses of chapter 29.

In 28:1, the LORD tells Moses: "Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests." Such a high calling demanded a "sacred" or "holy" (think "unique") uniform that set them apart and made them recognizable as priests. How else would they dress? In everyday clothes? Certainly not! The fact that Aaron's vestments employed the same colors, the same sorts of fabrics, and were to be made by the same skilled workmen as would also construct the tabernacle and its furnishings conveys "honor and dignity" on the high priest and links him to the liturgy of the tabernacle. The engraved gems he wore identify him as the priestly mediator between Israel and Yahweh. Six important garments are mentioned: 1) a breastpiece, 2) an ephod, 3) a robe, 4) a woven tunic, 5) a turban, and 6) a sash (v. 4). A "plate of pure gold" to be attached to the turban (vv. 36-38) and linen undergarments (vv. 42-43) are mentioned later in the chapter. Regarding the priests' garments one theologian writes: "They wear costly, sacred garments to give them dignity and honor: an ephod with its breastpiece, robe, tunic, turban, and sash. The ephod is made from costly material and reaches from the breast to the hips. It has shoulder straps with two onyx stones engraved with the names of the twelve tribes. In other words, God and his people, bound in mutual communion through their mediator, meet in his throne room. The breastpiece is a single piece of fabric folded double to form a square pouch. It has gemstones on its front bearing the names of the twelve tribes into God's very presence, and it hold the Urim and Thummim, which mean 'lights' and 'perfection' and begin with the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. They were used to receive oracles from God (Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; 1 Sam. 23:6-13; 28:6;

Ezra 2:63), but we do not know what they looked like or how they worked . . . Under the ephod he wears a blue robe, the robe of people of high social standing (1 Sam. 18:4; 24:4). Bells around the hem identify and protect him when he enters a zone of sanctity" (Bruck K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 461).

In 29:1, the LORD tells Moses: "This is what you are to do to consecrate them, so they may serve me as priests." What Moses was to do included gathering everything needed for the ordination/consecration ceremony (vv. 2-3), which included "a young bull (ideal for eating, not an old, tough animal) and two perfect rams (it would be easy and not much of a sacrifice to get imperfect ones since farmers cull all but the best males, which they keep for breeding) as well as a variety of wheat flour bread, cakes, and wafers, the latter being unleavened but of high quality, made with plenty of oil" (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 621). Then Moses was to bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tabernacle where they were to be washed — "symbolizing the removal of ceremonial uncleanness (cf. Heb 10:22) and thus signifying the purity that must characterize them" (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ex 29:4) — and dressed, and Aaron to be anointed with oil (vv. 4-7). His sons were to be dressed in tunics, caps were to be placed on their heads, and sashes were to be tied on them all, including Aaron (vv. 8-9). Three sacrifices were to be offered during the ceremony: a bull for a sin offering (vv. 10-14; cf. Lev 8:14-17), a ram for a burnt offering (vv. 15-18; cf. Lev 8:18-21), and a second ram for a wave offering (vv. 19-37; cf. Lev 8:22-35), also called "the ram for ordination" (v. 22) and a fellowship offering (v. 28). The priests lay their hands on the animals to signify their identification with them and the significance of their sacrifice. The sin offering atoned for any unforgiven sins the priests may have previously committed (i.e., not for their *justification* but for their *sanctification*, cf. 1 Jn 1:9). Being wholly consumed by fire on the altar, the burnt offering signified the priests' devotion of their entire beings to God and his service. The wave offering, a portion of which was burned on the altar along with the burnt offering (v. 25), and a portion of which was eaten by the priests at the entrance to the tent of meeting (v. 32) "was waved, not from right to left, but back and forth toward the altar and the priest" (John D. Hannah, "Exodus," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 153), symbolizing that a portion was being given to God and a portion kept by the priests (cf. Lev 8:27-31). Interestingly, some of the second ram's blood was put on "the lobes of the right ears of Aaron and his sons, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet" symbolizing again the dedication of their entire beings to God. The entire ceremony was to be repeated for seven days (vv. 35-37).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *sacred*

Cf. “holy garments”

(ESV, HCSB, NET). The priestly garments were “holy” in that they were uniquely designed and uniquely made of distinct materials, setting them apart for their unique purpose. Compare the incense that had a unique blend of fragrant spices and that was reserved for a particular use. “Do not make any incense with this formula for yourselves; consider it holy to the LORD. Whoever makes incense like it to enjoy its fragrance must be cut off from their people” (Ex 30:37-38). These were not everyday garments; they were worn only while the priests ministered in the tabernacle, a priestly uniform of sorts. “The priests had to wear these garments when they served in the tabernacle ritual, but they could not wear them at other times (35:19; Lev. 16:4, 23, 24)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Exodus,” 2022 ed., 256, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf).

v. 2 *dignity and honor*

“Because Israel was begun as a theocracy rather than a monarchy, the sort of vestments that conferred dignity and authority that a king might have worn in other cultures were worn by God’s high priest in Israel as a way of confirming the high priest’s role as representative of Yahweh for the purposes of worship” (Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, NAC, 604). Note also that “the fabrics and colors of the materials for the garments (v. 5) were the same as those also used for the lovely inner curtains and entrance curtain of the tabernacle itself . . . making the vestments similar to and reflective of the ‘dignity and honor’ (v. 2) of the tabernacle” (Stuart, 605).

v. 3 *skilled workers*

“The fact that the workmen (tailors) who made these garments needed to be wise and skillful (v. 3) indicates the importance that God placed on their production” (Constable, 256). Note these were either the same men or the same sorts of men who would eventually be assigned the task of constructing the tabernacle.

v. 3 *consecration*

Cf. “You are to speak to all who are specially skilled, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, so that they may make Aaron’s garments to *set him apart* to minister as my priest” (NET). “Or ‘to sanctify him’ (ASV) or ‘to consecrate him’ (KJV, NASB, NRSV). It is the garments that will set Aaron apart, or sanctify him, not the workers. The expression could be taken to mean ‘for his consecration’ (NIV) since the investiture is part of his being set apart for service” (*The NET Bible*, 10^{tn} on Ex 28:3).

29:1 *young bull, two rams*

“A bull and two rams were required for the consecration of Aaron and the priests. The animals were to be ritually slaughtered ‘before the Ten of Meeting.’ Although the nature of the offerings is not specified here, the book of Leviticus gives more details . . . the slaughter of the bull, mentioned in Exodus 29, is called a ‘sin offering’ (Lev 8:14). Moreover, the slaughter of the first ram is



AARON IN THE DRESS OF THE HIGH PRIEST.

called a ‘burnt offering’ (v. 18) and the second ram an ‘offering of ordination’ (v. 22)” (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 307). The “offering of ordination,” i.e., “the ram for the ordination” (29:22) is called a “wave offering” in Ex 29:24, a kind of fellowship offering that involved a meal (see 29:28; cf. Lev 8:31). “The second ram was to be prepared as a sacred meal for Aaron and the priests” (Sailhamer, 307). “To Israel had been granted the privilege of being a special people; to Aaron and his sons was granted now the privilege of being a special mediating instrument between that people and Yahweh, their Lord. A covenant meal was always part of such an arrangement (cf. 24:11; 32:6), and that is precisely what is implied in the sharing of the ram of consecration by Yahweh and the priests” (Eugene H. Merrill, “A Theology of the Pentateuch,” in *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, 51).

v. 7 *anoint*

“See Exodus 30:22-33 for details of the composition of this special oil . . . Anointing denoted God’s choice and designation for a special task” (R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, TOTC, 203).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Those whom God selects to serve as ministers of the New Covenant must, like ministers of the Old Covenant, reflect the holiness of God in their character and conduct.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

I've always admired "matchy matchy" families. You know, the family that walks in a room and everyone is color coordinated from head to toe with matching outfits. My mom style was a little more "as long as they walk out the door with clothes on and bonus if they did it themselves." I should have upped the bar a little and included shoes. I can't tell you how many times we stopped to buy cheap shoes because we forgot. My personal clothing style is pretty relaxed and dressing up for me can be a challenge. I've read and heard how you feel better when you look better, and I believe this to be true. I wonder what would happen if I considered my attire in a spiritual light. The priests needed to dress appropriately to approach God. When I get dressed, I take into consideration where I'm going and who I might see, but rarely does God enter the equation. Colossians 3:17 says to do everything for the Lord with thanksgiving—shouldn't this include getting dressed? What if, when I got dressed, I thanked God for clothing me with righteousness, or when I slipped my socks on, I asked God to guide my feet to do His work? When I slide my wedding ring on my finger, I could thank God for my amazing husband. As you help your kids get dressed and prepared for the day, rather than the usual screaming to get ready because you're running late, use this moment as a discipleship tool and invite God into your everyday moment with praise and thanksgiving. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 28:1-6

1. List the parts of the priestly garments. Who were they for?
2. What value did the garments give to the priests?
3. Describe the workers who made the garments.

What Do You Think?

Why was it important for the priestly garments to be different from everyday clothes?

What Do You Do?

Dress to impress this week. Make an effort to consider what you wear and try to look nice, especially for church on Sunday. Do you feel different when you dress up? Do other people think of you differently?

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is fully God/perfectly man and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 18:29

"With your help I can advance against a troop; with my God I can scale a wall."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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