

# EXODUS 28 – BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Sermon Alignment Handout

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We all need God. If we try to live this life without him more than likely we will pursue temporal goals and self-absorption. But if we open ourselves up to the possibility of a relationship with the Living God, we open ourselves up to a life purpose greater than our own self-fulfillment. How do we get to God though? How do we meet God where He is? That's where the High Priest comes in.

## **I. The Role of the High Priest'**

When we think about God, we usually think about a Supreme Being that is far away, that doesn't come close to his people because he is too important or too mighty. In some ways that is true, God's Holiness is so other that if we were to come into his presence in an unworthy way, we would be vaporized. But God's desire is to come close, to live in relationship with his creation, and that was the way it was when he created everything.

Everything changed when sin entered the world through disobedience. Ever since then people have been trying to find a way back to God.

For the Israelites, God gave them a means to at least come into his presence for a short period of time and that is where the High Priest came in. He was the representative of God, the Ambassador, if you will, to be the spokesperson for God. The High Priest also represented the people before God, he brought sacrifices and offerings to atone for their sins and to make peace.

Questions:

- 1) Do you feel isolated from God?
- 2) What are some ways you try to bridge the gap?
- 3) How successful are these methods?

## **II. The Priestly Garments and their meaning v 2 “For Glory and For Beauty”**

Verse 2 tells us the significance of the priestly garments are for glory and beauty. Like a high fashion designer creates for beauty and attention, God's design for the garments of

the high priest were for beauty, but also for glory. The main pieces of the garment were the Ephod and the Breast piece. These two pieces were woven of blue, purple, scarlet, and gold threads. They were bound together with gold chains and rings. They had stones embedded in them on the shoulder pieces and on the breast piece with the names of the tribes of Israel. These were to remind the High Priest that he was carrying his people on his shoulders and over his heart; and they were precious stones because people are precious to God.

Questions:

- 1) Does this seem like an ostentatious demonstration to you?
- 2) Why do you think it was important for the high priest to be dressed in this way?
- 3) What are some modern-day corollaries to the garments of the High Priest?
- 4) What might be some good reasons for having such fancy garments for the Priest?

### **III. Christ the Great High Priest**

While Aaron and the Levitical Priests wore fancy gowns with embedded jewels, Christ came in a lowly manger, surrounded by animals, shepherds and angels. Hebrews 5 says Christ was the great High Priest of the order of Melchizedek. Basically, Christ was of a higher order than Aaron as Melchizedek predated Exodus. When Christ died on the Cross, the veil in the temple was split down the middle, opening the Holy of Holies for all to enter in. However, the only way to enter is through the blood of Christ shed on the Cross, to repent of our disobedience and to receive the gift of new life in Christ.

Questions:

- 1) Read Genesis 14:17. Who was Melchizedek?
- 2) Read Hebrews 7:1-3. How does Christ compare to Melchizedek?
- 3) How does Christ compare to Aaron?
- 4) How can we come into the presence of God in a worthy manner?
- 5) What is your worship practice? Do you practice the disciplines of prayer, silence, humility, sacrifice, self-denial. Perhaps that is something you would like to investigate more deeply.

#### **IV. Our Priestly Duties**

Even though we have a Great High Priest in Christ, like Aaron's sons we also have priestly duties that we can carry out every single day. The New Testament tells us we are a Royal Priesthood (1 Peter 2:9), we are worship warriors (2 Chronicles 20:21), and we are representatives of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). We are to put on Christ in our everyday lives, but these are not the vestments of the High Priest, these are not outward beauty but an inward beauty, the same way Christ lived. Colossians 3:12 describes to us the garments of righteousness that we are to wear to the world around us as we represent Christ to a dying world.

#### **Questions:**

- 1) Read 1 Peter 2:9. What does it mean that we are a Royal Priesthood?
- 2) Read 2 Chronicles 20:21. How did the priests represent God in a time of war?
- 3) Read Colossians 2:12-15. What are the garments of righteousness we wear that represent Christ to the world?
- 4) How can you better represent Christ wherever you live, work, study or play?