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## **Exodus 28**

(2020)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Exodus 28.

(A brief overview of the main topics).

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### Topics.

- Holy garments for Aaron, his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.
- The breastpiece, ephod, robe, coat, turban and the sash.
- The two shoulder pieces of gold, blue, purple and fine twined linen.
- Two onyx stones engraved with the names of the twelve sons of Israel.
- Breastpiece of judgment made of gold, blue, purple and fine linen.
- The stones in the breastpiece engraved with name of the twelve tribes.
- The breastpiece of judgment and the Urim and the Thummim.
- The plate of pure gold with Holy to the LORD engraved on it.
- The linen undergarments to cover the nakedness of the priests' flesh.

**INTRODUCTION:** in the book of Exodus, God fulfilled His promise to Abraham by multiplying Abraham's descendants into a great nation delivering them from slavery in Egypt to journey to the Promised Land, and then binding them to Himself with a covenant at Mount Sinai. Moses, under the direct command of God and as leader of Israel, received the Ten Commandments from God, along with other laws governing Israel's life and worship. He also led the nation in building the Tabernacle, a place where God's presence can dwell among his people and where they can make sacrifices for sin. Most Jews and Christians recognise Moses as the author, writing sometime after the Exodus from Egypt (about 1445 B.C.). Note: the promise God made to Abraham will be perfectly fulfilled when Christ returns in glory and all those (Jews and Gentiles) who belong to God's Kingdom are gathered to him. (See also the introduction to chapter one).

**NOTE:** for information of people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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This chapter is about the high priests' garments and the Urim and Thummim that were to be worn over his heart when he went before the LORD.

**Consecrate:** from Strong's Concordance means to pronounce and observe as clean.

**The holy garments:** were made for Moses and his brother Aaron and Aaron's sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, they were to serve the LORD as priests. The holy garments were for glory and for beauty. Moses was to consecrate Aaron and his garments to be a priest before the LORD.

**The ephod of Aaron: the word ephod** from Strong's Concordance refers to a plating of metal as an ornament. Aaron's ephod was made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet yarn and of fine twined linen skilfully woven it had two shoulder pieces attached to its two edges, so that it could be joined together. The garments Aaron wore consisted of a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work and a turban and a sash.

**The onyx stones:** the twelve names of Israel were engraved on two Onyx Stones they had six names engraved on one stone and six names engraved on the other stone. The names on the stones were engraved in the order of their birth. The two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod were for the remembrance of the sons of Israel. Aaron was to wear the twelve names on his two shoulders for remembrance before the LORD.

**The Breastpiece:** Aaron wore was a breastpiece of judgment, set in the breastpiece was four rows of stones.

**The first row:** had a sardius, a topaz and a carbuncle stone.

**The second row:** had an emerald, a sapphire and a diamond stone.

**The third row:** had a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst stone.

**The fourth row:** had a beryl, an onyx and jasper stone.

Aaron was to wear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart, when he went into the Holy Place, to bring Israel to remembrance before the LORD.

**The Urim, Thummim:** it is important to note, the Urim and Thummim were not the jewelled breastplate of judgment, but something that was placed into it as the following verse shows:

- And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the LORD. Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before the LORD regularly. (Exodus 28:30).

**The meaning of Urim and Thummim:** since it is not known exactly what the Urim and Thummim were, it has been suggested Urim and Thummim carry the following ideas:

**How the Urim and Thummim functioned:** following are the two most common ways various commentators suspect the Urim and Thummim may have been used:

1. They were placed in the breastplate, so that whenever the high priests entered the presence of the LORD they would be over his heart. In this way the high priest would always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD."
2. The high priest carried in his breastplate the Urim and Thummim perhaps two sticks or two stones, one white and the other black. When Israel was preparing for battle, and desired to know God's will, they would shake or toss the sticks or stones, if they turned up black, they would not go to battle, and if they turned up white, they would proceed into battle with the knowledge that they were in the will of God.

However, the following verse:

- And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. (1 Sam. 1 28:6).

Makes clear a definite answer was not always obtainable, so it may not have been as simple as tossing two stones on ground, and Moses never used them, which would indicate that they were given for a certain time in Israel's history for the high priest to aid those who could not find God's will and guidance any other way.

**The Urim and Thummim faded from use:** The Old Testament indicates that the Urim and Thummim faded from use during the early days of Israel's monarchy, this may be due to the following fact: During the monarchy God installed prophets to communicate God's messages to the courts in Jerusalem and Samaria. It seems that prophets who revealed God's word to the king replaced the Urim and Thummim, by which God previously revealed His mind to the priest. The only mention of the Urim

and Thummin after the Babylonian exile is the following verse showing that Ezra was still using the Urim and Thummin to determine the ancestry of the priests who returned from the exile:

- The governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food, until there should be a priest to consult Urim and Thummim. (Ezra 2:63).

After this the Bible never mentions the Urim and Thummin again, they were a gift from God to assist His people during a certain time in their history.

**The robe that Aaron wore:** underneath the ephod was all blue with an opening for the head in the middle of it. On the robes hem were bells of gold so that when Aaron ministers the sound of the bells would be heard when he goes into the Most Holy Place before the LORD, and when he comes out.

**Aaron's turban:** a plate of pure gold with the words, "Holy to the LORD" engraved on it was fastened to the front of a turban by a cord of blue, it was worn on Aaron's forehead because he was to bear any guilt from the holy gifts the people consecrated as their holy gifts. It was to be regularly on his forehead that Israel would be accepted before the LORD.

**Coats, sashes and caps:** were made for Aaron's sons for glory and beauty.

**The priests under garments:** Aaron his brother and Aaron's sons wore linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh, they reached from the hips to the thighs and were to be worn when they go into the tent of meeting or when they come near the altar to minister in the Holy Place lest they bear guilt and die. This was to be a statute forever for Aaron and his offspring after him. Moses was to anoint Aaron his brother and Aaron's sons and ordain them and consecrate them to serve the LORD as priests.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*