

REF. MATERIAL

Priests Garments

According to tradition, prior to Aaron's anointing, the High Priest position had always gone to the first-born. Beginning with Aaron (and Aaron's sons thereafter), a priest, from the tribe of Levi, who is "*anointed*" with the holy anointing oil becomes the High Priest [[Lev.4:5](#), [Lev.1:10](#), [Num.35:25](#)].

In Exodus 28:4, we find 6 garments of the High Priest listed: The ephod, the breastplate, a robe, a brodered (embroidered) coat, a miter (crown), and a girdle.

THE BREASTPLATE, EXO.28:29

The breastplate was actually a piece of elaborately finished cloth of the same material as the ephod. It was a strip twice as long as it was wide, but folded back on itself so as to form a square bag into which the Urim and Thummim were placed. The breastplate was held in place by golden chains attached to the onyx shoulder clasps and also by blue lace ribbons, which attached the breastplate to the ephod. Evidently, there was a small golden ring attached to each corner of the breastplate to which in turn the golden chains and ribbons were connected.

The breastplate's engraved precious stones, set in gold in 4 rows, 3 in a row, represented the 12 tribes of Israel, and they were borne before the Lord continually as a memorial.

The Urim and Thummim, EXO.28:30

It is not known for certain exactly what the Urim and Thummim really were, but it is thought they may have been 2 precious stones, possibly gems, which were identical in shape. One or the other could be drawn from the pouch in order to provide a "Yes" or "No" answer in seeking the Lord for guidance. These stones were to be carried "*upon Aaron's heart*"; therefore, they would have been placed in the pouch, behind the breastplate) which was created when the High Priest folded the breastplate and put it on.

THE EPHOD, EXO.28:5-7

The ephod was made up of 2 parts: One covered the back and the other the front of the High Priest's breast and upper part of his body. These 2 parts were clasped together on the shoulder with 2 large onyx stones, each being engraved with 6 of the names of the 12 tribes of Israel.

NOTE

According to Josephus (Jewish historian), the engraved onyx stones on the shoulders were designed so that the names of the 6 eldest sons were engraved on the stone on the right shoulder, and those of the 6 youngest sons on the stone on the left shoulder.

**A ROBE (ROBE OF THE EPHOD), EXO.28:31-35,
39:22-26**

The robe of the ephod was of different material than the ephod. It was without seams or sleeves, and itself being all of blue implies its being only of woven work. The skirt of this robe had a trimming of pomegranates (colored blue, red, and crimson) with a bell of gold between each pomegranate; 72 of each in alternate order (24 of each color). The sound of the bells could be heard when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies, and the listening people would know that he had not been struck dead in God's presence, but that his offering on their behalf had been accepted by God. Jewish tradition tells us that before the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place, a rope was tied around his ankle and was used to pull him out if he was struck dead; only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place, anyone else would be immediately struck dead.

EMBROIDERED LINEN COAT

The embroidered coat was a tunic or long skirt of linen with a tessellated or diaper pattern, like the setting of stone.

GIRDLE, EXO.28:8

The girdle, also of linen, was wound round the body several times from the breast downward, and the ends hung down to the ankles.

Scripture reads: “*curious girdle*”; better translation¹ would be “*woven band of handiwork*”.

28:8	וְחֹשֶׁב	אֶפְדֹּתוֹ	אֲשֶׁר	עָלָיו	כְּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ	מִמֶּנּוּ	יְהִי
	u·chshb	aphdth·u	ashr	oli·u	k·mosh·eu	mm·nu	ieie
	and·designed·band·of	vestment·of·him	which	on·him	as·handiwork	of·him	from·him he·shall·be ^{bc}
	זָהָב	תְּכֵלֶת	וְאַרְגָּמָן	וְחוֹלֶעֶת	שְׁנִי	וְשֵׁשׁ	מְשֻׁר :
	zeb	thklth	u·argmn	u·thuloth	shni	u·shsh	mshzr :
	gold	amethyst	and·purple	and·crimson·of	double·dipped	and·cambric·sheen	being· ^c corded

BREECHES (UNDERGARMENTS)

The breeches of linen covered the loins and thighs.

THE MITER (CROWN), EXO.28:36-38, 39:30-31

On his head the High Priest wore a turban (miter) made of fine linen which was bound around the head in coils in a turban or tiara form. On the front of the miter on Aaron's forehead, attached by a blue lace ribbon, there was the golden plate engraved with the words, “*Holiness to the Lord*”.

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¹ Hebrew/Greek Interlinear Bible software located on Scripture 4 All website (www.scripture4all.org).