

# Exodus Chapter 28

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Preacher: Peter Robinson

[ 0 : 00 ] Can I encourage you just to turn now to Hebrews in chapter 1? And what we're going to do is we're going to read the first nine verses of Hebrews chapter 1 to prepare us.

As you know, Hebrews is, in one sense, a window that opens up to us the Old Testament, and particularly how it speaks to us of Jesus.

And Jesus is going to be, as he always should be, our theme as we come to worship. But Hebrews in chapter 1, the first nine verses, we're going to read it together, make a couple of comments together.

Then we're going to sing a hymn of praise to our Lord Jesus. And then what I'd like to do, we haven't done for a little while, is I'd like us to spend the time in open prayer. In other words, not just myself, but others, those who feel able to lead us in prayer, particularly in praise and thanksgiving, particularly in seeking the Lord's face, preparing our hearts to worship and to hear his word. So just listen with me as I read Hebrews 1 to 9. In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

[ 1 : 09 ] But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my Son, today I have become your Father? Or again, I will be his Father and he will be my Son.

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, Let all God's angels worship him. And speaking of the angels, he says, He makes his angels spirits and his servants flames of fire. But about the Son, he says, Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever. A scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

[ 2 : 16 ] Therefore, God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest of the great.

The best of the best. The most glorious of the glorious. He is superior in every single way. There is nothing that comes close to him.

And even angels, in all of their power, their glory, their majesty, as they behold the face of God day and night, even they are just very much beneath him.

For he is the Son of God. And we have there verse 4. The name he has inherited is superior. Our first hymn is, Join all the glorious names of wisdom, love and power that mortals ever knew, that angels ever spoke.

All are too mean to sing his praise. All mean to set my Saviour forth. In other words, the name of Jesus. What glorious name. What wonderful name. Let's stand and sing to his praise.

[ 3 : 23 ] And let our hearts be warmed in worship of him, that we might come and continue to worship him in prayer together, after we've sung. 1-6-5. Let us stand. Let's continue in our praise and prayer.

I'll lead briefly, and others lead us too, before that throne of grace. Oh Lord, our God, we bless you and thank you for Jesus, your Son, most precious, most glorious, most wonderful.

Beyond words, the one who is my Saviour and my Lord, my Conqueror and my King, the one who is our High Priest, the one who is our Captain, the one who is our Saviour, the one who is our Prophet, the one who is everything to us all.

Help us now, we pray, oh Lord our God, to give glory and praise to you and to your Son. Help us, Lord, and grant us praising and worshipful hearts and minds, that we may give you the glories.

We may join with the angels in heaven, who see you face to face, day and night, and worship and prostrate themselves before you. So may we too be given a glimpse of your glory, and may our hearts be lifted up into your presence to worship you.

[ 4 : 38 ] Help us, Holy Spirit, in this we pray, that we may worship in spirit and in truth. For we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Exodus and chapter 28.

Exodus 28 is a long chapter, but I'm not going to read all of it. We're going to sort of read bits. So just follow with me. It's on page 85. It starts at the very bottom of page 85, in the right-hand corner. Exodus 28. And then we're going to read bits, and then I'll skip some of the larger sections, which are repetitions, and then come to the beginning of chapter 29.

We've been thinking about the tabernacle, God's instructions for the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altars we looked at last week, and the candlesticks, and the table, and all sorts of things like that, and so that they are pointing us ever clearly, ever more clearly towards the Lord Jesus.

So chapter 28, we'll read from verse 1. God speaking, of course, to Moses. Let Aaron, your brother, be brought to you from among the Israelites, with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eliezer and Ithamar, so that they may serve me as priests.

[ 6 : 03 ] Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honor. 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 that he may serve me as priest.

These are the garments you are to make, a breastpiece, an ephod, a row, 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.

Make them use gold and blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen. Make the ephod of gold and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen the work of skilled hands.

It is to have two shoulder pieces attached to two of its corners, so that it can be fastened. Its skillfully woven waistband is to be like it, of one piece with the ephod and made with gold and with blue, purple and scarlet yarn, finely twisted linen.

Take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel in the order of their birth. Six names on one stone and the remaining six on the other. Engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones the way a gem cutter engraves a seal.

[ 7 : 17 ] Then mount the stones in gold filigree settings and fast them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the Lord.

Make gold filigree settings, two braided chains of pure gold like a rope and attach the chains to the settings. Fashion a breast piece for making decisions. The work of a skilled hands.

Make it like the ephod of gold and of blue, purple, scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen. It's to be a square, a span long and a span wide, folded double. Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. The first row shall be carnelian, chrysolite and beryl. The second row shall be turquoise, lapis, luzili and emerald. The third row shall be jacinth, agate and amethyst.

The fourth row shall be topaz, onyx and jasper. Mount them in gold filigree settings. There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.

[ 8 : 27 ] Go down to verse 29. Go down to verse 29. Whenever Aaron enters the holy place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the Lord.

Also put the urim and the thumin in the breastpiece so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the Lord. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the Lord.

Make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue cloth with an opening for the head at its center. It shall be a woven edge like a collar around this opening so that it will not tear.

Many big pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet yarn around the hem of the robe with gold bells between them. Gold bells on the pomegranates are to alternate around the hem of the robe.

Aaron must wear it when he ministers the sound of the bells will be heard when he enters the holy place before the Lord and when he comes out so that he will not die. Make a plate of pure gold and engrave it engrave on it as on a seal holy to the Lord.

[ 9 : 36 ] Fasten a blue cord to it and attach it to the turban. It is to be on the front of the turban. It will be on Aaron's forehead and he will bear the guilt involved in the sacred gifts the Israelites consecrate whatever their gifts may be.

It will be on Aaron's forehead continually so that they will be acceptable to the Lord. And we'll stop there for now. Well, we're going to be popping back and forth as it were between Exodus chapter 28 and Hebrews as well so if you particularly have Exodus 28 to hand that will be helpful.

I'm not sure when the last time was the state opening of Parliament I know it happens a couple of three times a year if you've ever watched it on the television it's usually a great parade it's usually on the news and snippets and highlights are shown but when you watch it you'll see men and women dressed in all sorts of sumptuous costumes and outfits.

of course there's the Queen herself she'll wear her royal attire and she wears her crown there's Prince Philip with his ceremonial uniform and a sword to his side there's others there's the lords and ladies in that sense there's somebody called Black Rod who has to wear a special uniform coachman and pages all dressed up in these special vestments as it were these special uniforms why do they wear all these strange things well of course it's a lot to do with tradition and so on and so forth but really it's to show that this is a very special event and those who are there have a very special part to play in that event the clothes mark them out they're not the everyday people like ourselves they are people who have important roles and they are doing something which is special something which is important in itself wearing these clothes in one sense is a way of saying here is an event that demands our attention here's something that we should sit up and take notice about it's not unimportant so when we come to God's instructions here in

Exodus 28 we find Moses being told about clothing the high priest and the other priests as well and we're meant to think something similar look at what God says to Moses in verse 2 of Exodus 28 make sacred garments for your brother Aaron to give him dignity and honour and as we go through the chapter as we read there these garments are meant to portray something they're meant to display certain things particularly when he goes into the presence of God particularly when he comes on the day of atonement and so on God is not saying dress them up in this fancy way because I want them to be vain or I want to make some sort of an empty show as sometimes people have by the way they dress but God wants his people to know and those men are involved in this to know that they're engaged in something very very special that when they're engaged in the service of the Lord when they're engaged in the worship of God then they are engaged in something which is marvellously to be taken notice of for us to sit up and pay attention to it's not just ordinary that's why as we've looked already as I said before at the tabernacle particularly the furniture the ark of the covenant and the table and so on and so forth we notice that these things were all commanded by God they weren't just traditions that were set up by Moses and others these were

[ 13 : 33 ] God's commandments these were God's requirements about how he was to be worshipped and in what manner he should be worshipped and as we've done that we've been helpfully looking back in Hebrews because Hebrews has been pointing us to and giving us an insider information as it were about all of these things things but one of the greatest themes probably one of the most important themes in the book of Hebrews is the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ that he is our great high priest the writer goes to great lengths to convince and to show and to prove to his readers that Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of all the Old Testament priests that he is the one final great high priest that ever was ever should be that's why it is not right for Christians to elevate one man and call him a priest that title belongs only to Jesus though we're told wonderfully in the New Testament that every believer is a priest before

God we are a company of priests we are a royal priest and we all have this wonderful access into the presence of God but to call one man a priest is not right or proper Jesus is the only high priest in fact in Hebrews and this is why I say we need to keep your fingers if you can between chapter 28 of Exodus Hebrews chapter 3 verse 1 the writer there speaks of Jesus as our high priest our apostle and high priest in chapter 4 verse 4 he goes on to speak of Jesus as the great high priest before he goes on from there to take up what that means from chapter 7 all the way through 8 9 and 10 it's all the theme of the high priestly ministry ministry and work of Jesus that's that's a quarter of the book taken up with this theme so important so vital that the writer the

Hebrews feel about this he uses the word priest 40 times in his book what's he doing he's showing us the excellence of Jesus above all the earthly priests of the Old Testament he's showing us how

better fit Jesus is to minister as our priest on our behalf to secure for us the blessings of a better covenant with better blessings as well Hebrews in chapter 8 and verse 6 he speaks in this way the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs that's the earthly priests of Aaron and the Levites and their family the ministry of Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one since the new covenant is established on better promises now as you know we've read chapter 28 of Exodus and it's all about the high priests and their clothes and we'll come back a little bit to think about their clothes but I want us to think particularly about Jesus the high priest because he is the one that is more fitting for us more encouraging for us in his ministry and this phrase here that we have in chapter 8 verse 6 that his ministry is superior just as he is superior so what is it that makes

Jesus the great high priest what makes him the last priest the final priest the perfect priest the superior priest compared to Aaron and his sons just a few simple things to pick up which we're aware of I'm sure but they are vitally important for us because the ministry of the priest was to bring together God and man the ministry of the priest was to as it were work as a mediator between God and man to make sure that the blessings that God had promised for his people they received he was a vital key essential person in the worship of God and in the blessing of God's people so it's vitally important that we understand just what Jesus is as our high priest priest well of course the one thing that stands out obviously between Jesus and the high priests and the priests of the Old Testament is that they were human and he is divine they were men but he is God in chapter 7 verses 23 we're told now there have been many of those priests since death prevented them from continuing in office but because

Jesus lives forever he has a permanent priesthood Aaron was the very first of a long line of high priests that went all the way through to of course when we read about Jesus' death Caiaphas and the high priest there and there were others after that but each one of those only served as a high priest for their lifetime or just for several years or maybe a decade or so only until they died and that work that they were doing that ministry that they were bringing had to stop they weren't able to be the high priest any further because somebody else took over and took their place but we know that Jesus as we're told there lives forever how does he live forever because of course he is the very son of God we read that didn't we at the very start of Hebrews in chapter one where from the outset the writer is making it plain and clear Jesus is the son of God not just an angel not just a great prophet or a great king or a great priest but he is God himself who's come amongst us in fact the writer of Hebrews makes an amazing turn in one sense because he turns away from the priesthood of

[19:24] Aaron and he turns to another priesthood the priesthood of a man called Melchizedek Melchizedek appears in Genesis only once and in that situation he meets with we're told he's a priest of the Lord and he meets with Abraham and he blesses Abraham the father of the faith and so the writer of Hebrews says Jesus hasn't received his position as a priest because he's descended in the line of Aaron we know that Jesus physically and humanly speaking was descendant of the line of David the line of Judah the line of the kings but he says that Jesus is uniquely a priest in the order of Melchizedek another type of priest a priest who was uniquely both king and priest and so he is a type of Jesus himself they were human Jesus is divine the fact that

Jesus is immortal and because he is immortal as his in his ministry as our high priest means that we have great encouragement we read there in chapter 7 therefore he is able to save completely or I think it's the AV says to the uttermost to the nth degree we might say he's able to save those who come to God through him because he always lives to intercede for them the work of Jesus as our priest is an ongoing work I mean that's something perhaps we haven't thought about perhaps when we think about Jesus as the priest we think about oh yes and we'll come to him offering the sacrifice for our sin that was his priestly ministry but actually the work of the priest that is our save the Lord Jesus is a work which goes on and on and on he intercedes for us he mediates for us he is always the one who is the go between us and God and that never changes throughout eternity for as long as he lives we have peace with God as long as he lives we have access into the presence of God it all depends it all rests upon it all relies upon the work of Jesus not our work or the work of a human priest or the work of anybody else but upon him and so our encouragement is this that Jesus is still the one through whom we come to God he is the one and we have peace with God therefore having justified by faith we through our Lord Jesus Christ we have peace with God nothing to fear nothing to worry about nothing to be concerned about because Jesus is our divine

ever living never ending high priest the second thing of course that makes Jesus superior to those human priests like Aaron is of course that they were sinners and he is sinless in chapter 7 verse 27 we realize that those other high priests had to make sacrifices not only for the sins of the people but they had to make sacrifice for their own sins as well that they might enter into God's presence Hebrews 7 27 unlike the other high priests he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people these were priests they were set apart by God they wore that that holy that special that honored garments but they were still sinful in heart they still had to make atonement for their own sins as well as for the sins of the people this is something that the writer the Hebrews picks up earlier on verse 3 of chapter 5 this is why he the high priest has to offer sacrifices for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people that honored position that they had that exalted position that God gave them made them unique made them special set them apart they're still sinful in other words they were faulty they were they were corrupt they were broken they were damaged goods they were they were men in no matter how well they sought to do what God had commanded they would always do it poorly imperfectly but our Lord

Jesus Christ is superior to them because he is and always has been and always will be perfectly sinless perfectly sinless such a high priest Hebrews 7 26 truly meets our need one who is holy blameless pure set apart from sinners exalted above the heavens how can a holy God accept sinful men through a sinful priest of course not through sinful sacrifices of course not the only way that the holy God can accept sinful men is through a perfect and holy mediator our Lord Jesus Christ the work that he does as our representative the work that he has carried out to make us have peace with God and to deal with our sins is an unpolluted work it's a pure work it's a perfect work it's an absolutely indisputably and corrupt work why is that important why is it important that the one who is our priest is holy and sinless because his work is to cleanse us of our sins his work in fact is to make his people holy there again in

Hebrews 7 verse 28 for the law appoints us high priest men in all their weakness but but the oath that's the promise of God which came after the law appointed the son who is who has been made perfect forever his work is to make us perfect chapter 10 and verse 20 at verse 14 for by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy priests couldn't do that the priest could only temporarily as it were turn aside God's wrath against the sin of the people the priests weren't able to to make those people holy before God they were holy in the sense they were set apart but holy in the sense of being accepted to God loved by God brought into a living relationship with Him that could only be done through the sacrifice of Jesus this perfect Savior supplies a perfect salvation forgiveness for all and every one of your sins and mine a reconciliation with God that is not limited in some way do you remember the Old Testament people they could they could stand at the base of the mountain but they couldn't go up they could stand as it were outside in the courtyard of the temple but they couldn't go into the holy of the holies but this Savior has taken away all the limits all the barriers all the restrictions so that we can enter into the very holy of holies there we have it in verse 19 of chapter 10 brothers and sisters since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus Jesus gone before us and made the way the blessings that he give us are not just for a time or for a moment the blessings he gives are not simply a land that we might live in but a heavenly home that we might dwell with him forever but don't think because our Lord Jesus

[ 27 : 35 ] Christ is divine and because our high priest is sinless don't think that that doesn't mean he can't sympathize with our weaknesses don't think that it follows that he cannot appreciate the struggle of what it is to live for God or to face temptation we know that he has that's one of the great comforts we have in our Lord Jesus Christ being both human and divine Hebrews 4 15 therefore since we have a great high priest who is ascended into heaven Jesus the son of God let us hold firmly to the faith we profess for we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are yet he did not sin perfect sinless high priest but of course our Lord Jesus Christ is much superior to the Old Testament priests not only because he is divine and they were human not only because he is sinless and they were sinful but because the offering that he gave the sacrifice that he brought before

God was not the blood of animals but his own precious blood chapter 9 and verse 12 of Hebrews he did not enter that's the very presence of God the holy of holies 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 so

obtaining eternal redemption when you read through the Old Testament books particularly those the books of numbers and Leviticus and Deuteronomy and even Exodus as well and as you go through you're presented with this picture of carnage aren't you there are rivers as it were of blood this slaughter of an unprecedented number of animals sheep and goats and and bulls and birds thousands upon thousands upon thousands sacrificed every year there's no end to the bloodshed there's no end to the sacrifices why because they could not do what was necessary they could not atone for the sin of God's people they could not cleanse them or remove God's wrath from them Hebrews 10 verse 4 it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins why because sins have been committed by human beings and human beings are the ones upon whom the punishment of sin has fallen so it must be a human being who is sacrificed human blood must be shed

God doesn't want more and more sacrifices God only wanted one better sacrifice one final sacrifice the sacrifice of the great high priest the Lord Jesus Christ when he offered up himself not the blood of an animal not even the blood if I can put this way of a man only but the very blood of the Son of God himself the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is the perfect atoning sacrifice for sin because it is the blood not only of the Son of God therefore has infinite value infinite worth but also because it is sinless blood pure and holy blood blood that does not have to pay for its own sin but pays and gives itself as the substitute for the sins of others to purchase redemption for all God's people for all those who put their faith and trust in him so Christ was sacrificed we're told in chapter 9 verse 28 wants to take away the sins of many many a countless number all whom God had purposed and chosen to save all who will be standing in in the in the place of worship before God in heaven every one of them will be there and if you are a

Christian this evening and Christ is your Savior and your high priest and you shall be there should be there because the price has been paid the sacrifice has been given and it's been accepted by God and it's only that blood of Jesus it's only that atoning sacrifice that he gave as our perfect high priest it's only that that can cleanse us from guilt certainly that can give us that peace to know that we are forgiven and accepted by God chapter 9 verse 14 the blood of goats and bulls and ashes of heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so they are outwardly clean how much more then will the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death so that we may serve the living God there is power in the blood cleansing in the blood not just outwardly not just to change us on the outside but to change our hearts not only that we might be free from sin and its curse and its guilt and its shame but we might be free to live with hearts set upon serving God one more thing here the priests were human they were sinful their sacrifices for those of animals and also their sacrifices were repeated again and again and again but Jesus the superior the divine the sinless the one who offered the perfect sacrifice of himself gave one sacrifice for all in other words he finished his work you sit down when you finish something when you've completed you sit down when you've completed it you sit down phew it's done the garden or whatever it may be our Lord Jesus sat down at the Father's right hand because he had carried out that at once for all sacrifice to be a sacrifice for all times for all

Sacrifice. To be a priest of God in the temple or in the tabernacle must have been an incredibly demanding thing. Sacrifices were going on all through the day and even into the evening.

[ 34 : 48 ] And people kept coming and coming and coming. There was a never-ending cycle of sacrifice and blood and sacrifice. It went on for thousands of years within the tabernacle and then in the temple itself.

The only time that these sacrifices were stopped, when the temple was destroyed by the Babylonian invasion. For 70 years the people were taken into exile.

But when they came back, the temple was rebuilt and the sacrifices started again. When Christ came to offer the best sacrifice, the perfect sacrifice of himself, it was just a one-off event.

He didn't have to do it again and again, never to be repeated. It has the power to completely take away our sin just by that one occasion, that one sacrifice. So we're told in verse 18 of chapter 10, there are no longer any sacrifices for sin.

That's why for you and I, dear friends, we can enjoy the forgiveness we have with God because it's accomplished, it's done, it's finished.

[ 35 : 56 ] There's nothing we need to add to it. People talk about doing something to solve their conscience or doing something for penance, as it were, to make themselves feel better about

themselves because of some bad thing they did.

Or acting out of a guilty conscience. Dear friend, the Christian has been set free from all of that. Whatever we do for God, we do for him out of love. Not to sacrifice. Not to purchase our forgiveness.

Jesus promised, prophesied even, that after his death, the temple in Jerusalem would ultimately be destroyed.

Not a stone will be left upon a stone, he said. In one sense, God was setting his seal upon the finished work of Jesus by making it impossible for any more sacrifices to be made for sin.

When the Romans destroyed it and that temple has never been rebuilt and never shall be. Not to bring a sacrifice pleasing to God, anyway.

[ 37 : 10 ] Full, complete, perfect, unchanging, eternal salvation. The best priest of all.

Let's look at these clothes for a minute. Let's look at three of them together. First of all, the ephod. Turn back then to Exodus 28. The ephod. Verses 6 to 14 of Exodus 28.

The ephod of gold. There's a single garment hanging down from the shoulders like a long vest or a night dress. We might put it this way. But what of particular attention are these two onyx stones that were mounted in gold on the shoulders.

If you're old enough to remember the 1980s and dynasty. Do you remember those big shoulders that they used to wear, the women, in dynasty in Dallas? They had these great big shoulder pads. Well, the priests had shoulder pads.

But they were made of these precious stones. And what made them precious was this. On each one of them were engraved the names of the six, names of the twelve sons of Israel.

[ 38 : 20 ] Six on one and six on the other. Why did God do that? Well, he tells us. He tells us later on.

Aaron is to bear the names on his shoulders as a memorial before the Lord. He is coming into the presence of God.

And on his shoulders, in one sense, he's carrying the people of God. He's their representative. He's bearing their sin, if we can put it that way.

He's bearing their responsibility. He's acting as their substitute in their place. As he's coming into the presence of God. It's not just Aaron who's there. But all the people of God, in one sense, are included in him.

Isn't that the case with our Lord Jesus Christ? When he went into the very presence of God. When he made that sacrifice for sin. He was carrying upon his shoulders. Your sin and mine.

[ 39 : 20 ] He was carrying the responsibility to purchase our salvation. He was carrying us into the presence of God. So that we come.

We come to God not in our own strength. We come to God not in our own right. We come to God not in our own merits or works. We come carried on the shoulders of our great high priest.

We are brought in with Jesus. And then there's the breastplate. Something very similar. But it has an even more precious, I believe, meaning.

Remember the breastplate again we're told there. It was again something which was made of linen. Verses 15 and following. But braided into that linen, as it were, that breast piece.

Were 12 stones this time. Four rows of three. Were those almost impronounceable names. Like Lapis Luzuli.

[ 40 : 25 ] And Carnelian. And Chrysalite. And so on. But these rows. And on each one of the stones. Not just in a group of six on each shoulder. But on each single stone. Was again the name of the people of God.

Not. Why does God do that? Why does he tell him to wear this breastplate with the tribes engraved on each single stone?

Because we read later on. Verse 29. Whenever Aaron enters the holy place. That's the holy of holies. To bring that sacrifice to God for the people.

He will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart. Over his heart. When Jesus went to the cross for us.

Weren't our names engraved on his heart? Didn't he know us by name? Individually? Not just as a big group, if I can put it that way. Not in some sense that we were just, well it's the church.

[ 41 : 38 ] And that's just a lump in one sense. But no. Individual names. Didn't we read that wonderful hymn? And sing in that hymn. My name is graven in his hands. My name is written on his

heart.

Are those just fanciful fairy tale poetry words? No they're not. They express to us the reality of what we know. That Christ died for you and I by name, dear Christian.

Whatever our understanding of the power of the atonement. The power of the cross. We cannot get away from the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ died for us by name.

Because he chose us by name before the world was made. So he knew who he was suffering for. That's what makes the cross.

That's what makes it so very precious to us, isn't it? Oh for me. My sin. My iniquity. The very love that filled the heart of Jesus took him to his death.

[ 42 : 39 ] Because on his heart he bore my name. His passion for us. That he was willing to pass through that veil between life and death.

Pass into the very holy of holies and make himself an offering. For the sin of all his people. My name written on his heart.

And then there's the turban. And particularly this plate that was on the turban. Verse 36. Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as a seal.

Holy to the Lord. On Aaron's head. On his forehead. As it were. There was these words of consecration.

These words of being committed to. The Lord. His God. We see that there. Because later on we read. In verse 38.

[ 43 : 43 ] It will be on Aaron's forehead. And he will bear the guilt involved in the sacred gifts. The Israelites consecrate. Whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron's forehead continually.

So they will be acceptable to the Lord. It's in one sense a promise, isn't it? It's not just. It's a promise. It's a promise. As well as a vow.

An oath. We are holy to the Lord. We are consecrating ourselves. Not just the priest. But the priest who represents the people. We belong to God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the very personification of holiness to the Lord.

He was set apart from before the world was made. To come and to be set apart as holy to the Lord. To serve the Lord his God. His heavenly Father. To serve us his people.

To commit himself and consecrate himself. To press in for our salvation. He was totally devoted, wasn't he? To doing his Father's will. To do what was necessary.

[ 44 : 44 ] For our salvation. Didn't he say to his disciples, my food and drink is to do the will of my Father. Wasn't that always his declaration? I've come. He who sent me.

I've come to do the will of him who sent me. But in going into the Holy of Holies, he's going again in our place. On our behalf, he's consecrating us to God.

Here are the children that you've given me. Bringing them into you. They are yours.

They are holy unto the Lord. Shouldn't that spark us? Shouldn't that move us? Shouldn't that grip us? In one sense, shouldn't it be that the very vow and promise of our hearts? Lord, every time, every day.

Lord, I want to be holy to the Lord. I want to be consecrated unto you. I want to be living my life for you. Who lived your life for me. He is our great high priest.

[ 45 : 43 ] He is the superior high priest. He is the one who is the security for our salvation. He is the one that we can trust. He is the one who can say to us, no matter what your sin, I have paid for them at the cross.

No matter how far away you may be from God, I am the one who can bring you near and reconcile you to God. No matter how much you've wandered and lost your way. I am the one in whom you can trust, who is able to bring you back.

What's your hope, dear friends? What's your confidence that you can come to God in prayer?

What's your confidence that your sins are forgiven and won't be held against you on the day of judgment? What's your hope that somehow God will bring you into his holy of holies, his eternal heavenly presence?

Is it that you've lived a good life? Is it that you've been a good person? Is it that you've tried your best? Is it that you've believed certain things? Or is it because Jesus is your high priest and you have, as it were, had your name engraved upon his shoulders and upon his heart?

[ 46 : 52 ] Because you'll never be let down. You'll never be disappointed. This priest will never abuse his position.

But he will forever live to make intercession for you. And so save us to the uttermost. And so we need to be reminded of these words of the writer of the Hebrews in chapter 3, verse 1. Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. Since then you've been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. [ 48 : 12 ] Amen.