

Contemporary Mystic Christianity
Bible Self-Study Supplement

The Ministry of The Lord's Anointed

The Breastplate of the High Priest

And tholt shalt make holy, garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

— Exodus 28:2,3

Whether it be a minister of civil law or of divine, the invisible robe of authority with which a public servant is invested is symbolized by material garments appropriate to the office. The office itself is honorable and holy; this the distinguishing dress worn by its occupants proclaims to all who seek their guidance.

The high priest of the human being is his indwelling spirit. It administers divine law in the shimm, raiment of the Soul. It answers the requirements that it be holy and that it have both glory and beauty.

This garment Of the Soul is made of thoughts, words and deeds that are "filled with the spirit of wisdom." It must be remembered that spiritual science distinguishes between the terms soul and spirit. They represent distinct entities. The spirit is a differentiated spark from the flame of God. It is the eternal, indestructible self. The soul is the spiritual garment of that spark, and is the result of experiences gathered by the spirit in its threefold, composite body. It is, therefore, a mediating principle between the immortal spirit and its transient personality. It is only relatively immortal. At the end of the Spirit's

aeonic evolution, the soul's forces will be transferred to and absorbed by the spirit, the latter's lustre and power being enhanced thereby.

The spirit is one with God and is therefore, uncreated. It always was, is, and ever will be. The soul is a created thing. The spirit that is man is author of the soul, that comes into existence, not by chance but, like all other manifested things, according to laws and principles operating in nature. The elements that go to make up this garment of spiritual ministry and the means and methods by which it is fabricated are described with considerable detail in verses following those quoted at the head of this chapter.

Exodus 28:4-10

And these are the garments which they shall make: a breast plate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall take holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet and fine linen.

And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet and fine twined linen, with cunning work.

It shall have two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together.

And the curious girdle of the ephod, which was upon it shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet and fine twined linen.

And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel:

Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth.

The vestments of the high priest were several in number. Like all the other priests, his dress was of white linen. The coat reached to the

ankles and was without seam. Additional accoutrements included a breastplate, an ephod, an embroidered robe, and a mitre. (Exodus 28:4)

The dress of white bespeaks purity, a first requisite for fulfilling the high office before the Altar of the Lord. It was, moreover, of linen, product of the desireless plant kingdom. It was also without flaw or imperfection, being seamless. The lambskin apron of Masonry has a similar significance.

The ephod, or shoulder dress, was of blue, purple and scarlet, interwoven with gold thread. It, too, was of linen. The significance of these colors has already been touched upon since they are the same as those used predominantly in hangings of the Tabernacle. The gold, a color absent in the sanctuary curtains, is present — though as yet but slightly — in the garments of the high priest. It appears now in threads, giving promise of a time to come when the whole fabric will be golden with the luminous light of the Christ, the Sun Spirit.

Two shoulder pieces were placed on the ephod, each bearing an onyx stone, symbol of power and wisdom, on which were engraved the names of the tribes of Israel, six on one and six on the other. The jewels were set in sockets of gold. These two stones, like the two tables of the law, symbolize the two primeval principles of Fire and Water in a state of equilibrium by one who attains to high priesthood. The onyx is semi-transparent with variously colored veins and belts running through it, thus aptly symbolizing the synthesized powers of the six tribes (zodiacal forces) whose names it bore. The one stone carried the positive forces of Fire and the other the negative forces of Water.

The robe was blue, as is the invisible robe (aura) of one who lives truth and breathes devotion. According to Plato, the priests of Atlantis wore "the most beautiful azure robes." Among the Mavas, lineal descendants of the Atlanteans, blue, being the color of the vault of

heaven, was symbolical of holiness, sanctity and chastity. Druid priests wore blue robes, and the inner circle of the imposing druidical ruin at Stonehenge in England is known as the circle of blue stones. The altar stone is also blue.

This robe of blue was richly embroidered. It was, therefore, not merely a covering but an adornment. Experiences from a long succession of earth lives were woven into it; not only major lessons that had been learned but minute matters that had been mastered. While perfection is no little matter, countless trifles enter into its attainment. To the awakened seeker after goodness and beauty and truth there are no little things; all are significant because they tend to make or mar the perfect ideal.

Exodus 28:33,35

And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about thereof; and bells of gold between them round about:

And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not.

That the one who wore the priestly robe of blue came to his high office after garnering rich fruitage from experience in many lives is further symbolized by the pomegranate, fruit of special fecundity. The bells which sounded when the high priest (Ego) went into the holy place (heaven world) are representative of consciousness rising to the plane of tone, the archetypal region where the Word that is uttered later becomes manifest. It is to this high heaven that church bells call worshipers; on their wings of sound the soul is touched to higher issues. The mysteries of sound have been but partially explored; their depths are far from plumbed by either academic or occult science.

The note sounded by the bells of the high priest are also indicative of the keynote of the Ego. Each spirit-spark sounds an individual note. Peter's keynote was the key that opened to him the gates of heaven and hell. As spiritual forces unfold, the note rises in pitch and power.

Just as an Ego emanates a tone which is its keynote, so, too, does each of the spiritual centers of its body. Because of this fact incantations used in sacred rituals are of the highest significance, as is music. More and more will the latter be used, and with increasing esoteric knowledge, in all religious services and in the higher degrees of discipleship in Schools of the Mysteries. By the Word worlds came into being; by the Word Christ called the dead back to life; by the Word a regenerated humanity will become an actuality.

— ***Corinne Heline***