

WCCC 1986

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The Pattern on the Mount (4)

Exodus 28:1 – 5 And thou shalt take thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may serve me as priest – Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for ornament. And thou shalt speak with all that are wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to hallow him that he may serve me as a priest. And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, and an ephod, and a cloak, and a checkered vest, a turban, and a girdle; and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may serve me as priest. And they shall take gold, blue and purple, scarlet and twined byssus, of artistic work.

Exodus 29:1 – 9 And this is the thing which thou shalt do to them to hallow them, that they may serve me as priests: take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, and unleavened bread, and unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil – of wheaten flour shall thou make them. And thou shalt put them into one basket, and present them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring near the entrance of the tent of meeting, and shall bathe them with water. And thou shalt take the garments, and clothe Aaron with the vest, and the cloak of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and shall gird him with the girdle of the ephod. And thou shalt put the turban upon his head, and fasten the holy diadem to the turban, and shall take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons near, and clothe them with the vests. And thou shalt gird them with the girdle – Aaron and his sons, and bind the high caps on them; and the priesthood shall be theirs for an everlasting stature; and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.

1 Peter 2:5 yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 8:5 (who serve the representation and shadow of heavenly things, according as Moses was oracularly told when about to make the tabernacle; for see, said He, that thou make all things according to the pattern which has been shown to thee in the mountain.)

God commanded Moses to make a tabernacle for Him because He wanted to dwell among His people. We know that this is God's ordained will even before the creation of the earth. God's heart desire is to dwell among men. And for this reason, God commanded Moses to build a tabernacle for Him. Because this tabernacle was God's own dwelling place, the Lord repeatedly warned Moses when Moses built this tabernacle, saying, this tabernacle and all the things in it, you have to do according to the pattern that I gave you on the mount. Even though our God does not dwell in the tabernacle built by men, yet the tabernacle built by Moses represented the eternal dwelling place of God. And because it was a representation, it had to be according to the pattern on the mount in all areas. Otherwise, it would have the wrong representation.

Dear brothers and sisters, today our Lord is also building a dwelling place on earth. Our Lord said, 'I will build my church upon this rock. And the power of hades cannot prevail against it'. The bible said He called all the people who believed in Him to be the dwelling place where He dwells through the Holy Spirit. We see that anything that relates to God should be done according to the pattern on the mount. Today, to us, it not only has the aspect of representation, but now in the New Testament we have already touched on the real thing of the representation. So whether it is in our individual, personal Christian life, or in the corporate church life, we also have to live according to the pattern on the mount. God did let us see the pattern on the mount in the New Testament and so we have to follow the pattern on the mount. There are many teachings and examples in the words of God. And all these teachings and examples are the pattern on the mount. In our personal Christian life, there are teachings and examples. And so are there teachings and examples for the corporate life. And in all these things we have to be very careful to follow the pattern on the mount. And we have already said over and over again that even though we follow the teachings and also do according to the pattern on the mount, yet inside us if we have not touched the reality of the representation, that is, if we have not touched our Lord, even everything on the outside seems right, yet before God it still is not the real thing. We can live a Christian life. Of course if you just live a superficial Christian life, you will feel pain in you. But no one knows the pain inside you. People will think you look and act like a Christian, because you live a Christian life on the outside. But if Christ is not your life, and your good Christian life is not an outflowing of the life of Christ, this is just moral conduct. Of course Christians should have moral conduct. But if it is just moral conduct we are just like the people in this world. To be a Christian, we need to have a spiritual life. Our life has to be higher than the morality of this world. We have to let

Christ's life flows out from us. This is the real Christian life. So if we have not touched Christ, or the crucified Christ, or the Christ who is the light of our life, the bread of our life, and our high priest, if we have not seen that Christ has rent the veil for us, so that we can live in God, dear brothers and sisters, this will just be the moral conduct of the world even if we can keep a lot of statues on the outside, and show a lot of good conduct on the outside. There is no spiritual content in it. So not only do we have to follow the pattern on the mount in our individual life, we have to live our life like Christ's life on earth, just like we see in Matthew 5,6 and 7. These chapters are not the laws. It is not for us to walk out according to our own nature. These are the pattern on the mount. We must allow Christ's life in us to have the authority if we truly have the pattern on the mount.

And so is the same for the corporate life. We can follow the teachings and examples of the bible to gather. We can have the truths in the bible. We can be seen like walking the way of the church. We can build the church according to the bible. We can have elders and deacons. We can have the breaking of the bread according to the bible. But if we have all the things according to the pattern on the mount, and if it is not Christ, then these are all vanities. Today if the church cannot touch Christ, then this is just society and not a church. Today we see that we cannot touch Christ in a lot of meetings in Christian church. You can go to a so called church but where is Christ? If we cannot touch Christ, then this is society and not a church. So you see that in a corporate life, even though it is according to the pattern on the mount, yet if there are just the outward things, it is not enough. We need to see that it is the manifestation of the life of Christ in us. What is the church? The church is the corporate manifestations of Christ. It is the manifestations of Christ in the life of all of His people. This is what we have somewhat shared for the last few days.

This morning we want to share on another thing. We will share on service according to the pattern on the mount. Today we serve God. And the service has to be according to the pattern on the mount. We know that when God called Moses up the mountain, He not only told Moses about the tabernacle and all its furnishings, but in chapter 28 of Exodus, He also revealed to Moses the office of the priests. Thus the contents in chapters 28 and 29 are also the pattern on the mount. God spoke all these on the mountain. And He told Moses the pattern on the mount. When you serve, you have to serve in this way and that way. Only when you serve in a certain way will it count as serving God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we all know that when we are saved to be the children of God, we enjoyed all the grace of God. You know children do have their rights. Many times, these children have rights from you as parents. Sometimes we cannot understand it, because it seems like the children have many rights. They have not done well, yet because they are born of you, they have rights from you. They have rights to food, clothing and place to live. Sometimes the parents got angry. Why would the children have all these rights?

They have not done anything. But the parents gave birth to them, and thus they have these rights. You know as children of God, we are the same. We have not done anything, but God birth us, and because of this we have rights as His children. This is in John 1:12 – but as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to be children of God, to those that believe on His name. Brothers and sister, we thank God that we are His children. We can enjoy all the rights. We can pray to our God, we can ask of bread of our heavenly father, we can ask Him to forgive our debt as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. These are all our rights. We can receive all these from God. And God as our father gives us all these. It is a glorious thing to be the children of God. Our God has lots of grace and we as children have the right to enjoy all the grace. But we should not forget this. On one hand we are saved to be God's children, but on the other hand we are also priests. We are priests to serve our God. So in Revelation 1: 5 and 6, it said we are cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, so that we will be kings and priests. Today not only are our sins forgiven and we become the children of God. But at the same time, His salvation also calls us as priests to serve Him. So there is another aspect as a Christian. Apart from the aspect as children, we also have the other aspect as priests. A priest is to serve God. His whole life is to serve God. Once we are saved, we immediately became the child of God. Once we are saved, we also immediately became priest. On one hand, we can immediately start to enjoy the grace of God, but on the other hand we need to start serving God. When the Israelites were in Egypt, God saved them out of Egypt. God sent Moses to Egypt and he said to Pharaoh, 'God said, let My people go so they can serve me'. Brothers and sisters do not think that the Israelites lived a pitiful life as slaves in Egypt and now God's grace came upon them, and they were liberated from the bondage of slavery. And from then on they had freedom and they could live freely and do whatever they want. In the past what they wanted to do, they could not do. What they did not want to do, they had to do.

In the past you were a slave of sin, today the Lord saved you. Now you are free and you can do whatever you want. You can like whatever you like. Wherever you want to go, you can go. Now you are a free man. Brothers and sisters, it is not like this. 'Let My people go so they can serve Me.' In the past, you served Pharaoh. Now I have liberated you. You are a free man. Now you can serve Me, this God. One who is bonded cannot serve God. Only a free person can serve God. God created us so we can serve Him. We are created not to live for ourselves. We are created to live for God. So after the Israelites came out of Egypt, God led them to Mount Sinai. In Exodus 19, God revealed His heart desire to His people. God told them why He saved them out of Egypt. God said I have borne you on eagles' wings and brought you out to myself. And now, if you will hearken to My voice indeed and keep my covenant, then shall you be My own possession out of all the peoples. You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. Dear brothers and sisters, God said I saved you to be a nation of priests. What is a nation of priests? A nation of priests means every citizen in the nation is a priest. No matter whether you are young or grown up, male or

female, every person who is saved is one who serves God. Every Israelite who was saved was to serve God. Dear brothers and sisters, this is such a glorious thing. Think about it. Our God is such a glorious God. How lowly we are, but our God wants us to serve Him. Serving God is not to give face to God. Serving God is God giving us face. Just like a brother once said, we have to crawl to serve God. We need to thank God because He wants us to serve Him. This is a great privilege. This is a privilege that each of God's children has.

God wants the Israelites to be a nation of priests. But in the revelation on the mountain, after God revealed the tabernacle and all the furnishings in it, He continued to tell Moses to go fetch Aaron and his sons and to have them given the office of the priest. Did God not say He wanted the whole nation of Israel to be priests? Then why on the mountain He said go fetch Aaron and his sons. He wanted them to be in the office of the priest. Was there conflict in God's words? In Exodus 19 God already said He wanted the whole nation to be priests. However, in Exodus 28 God told Moses to take Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel so that they could minister unto the office of the priest. Brothers and sisters, there is no conflict here. God wanted to let the Israelites see that all citizens of Israel need to be priests but on which order should they be priests? They were to be priests according to the order of Aaron. So the revelation was a representation and not a substitution. But sadly the people down in the valley worshipped the golden calf. And because they worshipped idol, they were not worthy to serve God. It was not that God did not want them to serve Him. But they disqualified themselves. It seemed like they forsook their qualifications. And thus God let Aaron and his descendants to substitute them in serving God. Supposedly, Aaron and his sons were only to represent the Israelites. They were to lead the whole nation as representatives to serve God. But now, the order of Aaron became a substitution rather than a representation. The Israelites could not serve God. Only Aaron and his sons substituted them to serve God. To God this was a great loss. Originally there was one to two million people to serve God. But now there was only one small family to serve Him. God's will was greatly set back.

But thank and praise God. When our Lord Jesus came to this earth, He brought us back to the original heart desire of God due to His perfect salvation on the cross. What does the bible say? 1 Peter 2: 5 tells us we come in the presence of our Lord and 'as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' Our Lord is the living stone. When we come before Him, we received His life and we become living stones. Just like our Lord Jesus telling Peter, 'you are Peter, you are a stone, and I am going to build my church upon this rock'. Peter is a stone; every one of us is a small stone. I remember a person who called himself a small stone. This is very biblical. When we come before God, each of us becomes a small stone. And even though we are a small stone, yet we are a living stone. Each of us is a stone like Peter. We and Peter are all being built up together; built upon the body of Christ because Christ is the rock. If the church

is built upon Peter, the foundation will not stand even before the building begins. We see in Matthew 16 after Peter acknowledged Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God, Christ said I will build my church upon this rock. Then our Lord said I will go to Jerusalem and will be crucified and died on the cross and then will be resurrected. And Peter held onto our Lord and said, Lord this can never be. Do not go to the cross. And what was our Lord's reply? The Lord turned and said, depart from me, Satan. If Peter was the foundation of the church, even before the church was built, the foundation already moved. Thank and praise God that the foundation of the church is Christ and not Peter and not you or me. If it is me, even before the start of building, the foundation will be shaken. The foundation is Christ. We are small, living stones. We are all being built up together to be a spiritual house, a spiritual temple. We are the tabernacle of God. But on the other hand, we are at the same time holy priests. We are the holy priesthood. The tabernacle is built and all the furnishings have been placed in order. But if there is no priest to serve there will be no one there to offer the sacrifice. The laver basin is filled with water, but no priests there to use it to wash their feet and hands. The lampstand is there, but no priests will be there to light the candlesticks. The showbread and the table are ready but there are no priests to put the showbread on the table. The golden altar is also there but there are no priests to burn the incense. The mercy seat is set up, but there is no high priest going in to offer sin offerings. Brothers and sisters, everything in the tabernacle was set up, but there was no sound or any action and no work there. When the priests enter into the tabernacle, then there will be action in the tabernacle and the tabernacle becomes a life one. There will be burnt offerings on the altar, and people washing their feet and hands in the laver basin; the candlesticks on the lampstand shine brightly, the showbread put on the table, and incense being offered up. The blood is being brought into the holy of holies to be sprinkled on the altar. You see that everything is alive. And all the functions are revealed. You see that the tabernacle and priest cannot be separated. When there is a tabernacle, there have to be priests to serve in there. When there are priests there has to be a tabernacle. The priest cannot be detached from the tabernacle. If the priests serve in other places than the tabernacle, then they are serving idols. Therefore these two things cannot be separated. God's church and God's priests are united as one. Today we are the royal priesthood. We are all in God's house to serve our God. These two things cannot be separated.

Thus in the New Testament times, each of us is a living stone. We are all being built together to be the dwelling place of God. Just to be a living stone is not enough; these living stones have to be built up together. You being just an individual Christian are not enough. Are you as a Christian being built up in life with other Christians? That is very important. Another point is that you are not only being built up into a spiritual temple, you are also a priest in a nation of priests. So what is the New Testament pattern on the mount with regards to service? The New Testament pattern on the mount is that each one of God's children is a priest and each of us has to serve.

During the reformation, Martin Luther and other reformists not only gave us an open bible, they emphasized justification by faith. Martin Luther at that time also taught that all saints are priests – the universal priesthood of believers. It was not that there were only handfuls who were priests but all saints were priests. Martin Luther in the 16th century was already teaching that doctrine. Sadly the reformation did not accept this pattern. So you see that the reformation returned back to Judaism. They did not see that all the children of God are priests and all the children of God should serve. So the first thing that I hope brothers and sisters will remember is that you are a child of God and you are also God's priest. Although no one calls you priest, yet before God you are truly a priest. You should know your position. You know the position of being a child of God, so you should know that you are also in the position of a priest. So you should stand up and serve God. If a priest does not serve, then he loses his position. So if a child of God does not serve God, he loses his position as a priest.

In the Old Testament, the service of the priest was according to the order of Aaron and the order of Aaron in the Old Testament was statues. However, today our order is according to the unlimited almighty power. Although these two orders are different, yet we can still learn from the service of Aaron some principles because the spiritual principles do not change. They can be used for the things of the world; they can also be used on the limitless almighty life. So this morning we will use some of the contents in chapters 28 and 29 to share on service. I also want to add another point. We know in Exodus 25 – 27, it is the revelation of the tabernacle and its furnishings. In chapter 30 we see that it is again the revelation of the furnishings in the tabernacle. And in between there are chapters 28 and 29. These two chapters are about the service of the priest. God's word is very meaningful. Chapters 25 – 27 are the revelation of the tabernacle. And the revelation in those chapters is that of the path from God to man. So the revelation started from the ark and the mercy seat to the bronze altar. It is God coming from inside out to man. But in chapter 30, you see that there were two furnishings added in the tabernacle. One was the incense golden altar. The other was the brazen laver. Why were these two things placed into chapter 30? It is because these two things represented that man has to enter inside to go to God. For man to come into the presence of God, he has to wash the hands and feet. For man to enter into the presence of God, he has to burn incense and to worship. Thus chapters 25 – 27's revelation is God coming to man. Revelation in chapter 30 is man entering into the presence of God. Man has to pass first the bronze altar before he can come before God. Then he has to pass the brazen laver, then the holy place, and then burn incense. So this is man coming before God.

And in between are chapters 28 and 29. These chapters are about the priests. So what are priests? Hebrews 5: 1 tells us priests are ordained by God to do the things of God. They are ordained to do things of God for man. So priests are the media between God and man. We do the things of God (godly things) for

man. So these two chapters are placed in between. God comes among men. How can men go before God? We must have the service of the priests. That way, men can come before God. Dear brothers and sisters, today there are no priests between you and God because you are that priest. Today we can come before God; we can serve and worship Him. Exodus 28: 1 tells us that priests are not volunteers. Priests are called by God. So you see here Aaron did not say I want to be a priest. No, it is God who told Moses that he had to call Aaron and his sons to come before God and to carry out the duty of a priest. So brothers and sisters, today we serve not because we volunteer to do so. We are called. Each of us is called by God to be priest. When He calls you then you become a priest. Even if you are not willing, you are still a priest. You can say you are forced to do so. Today we are all called by God to be priests. And this calling is very glorious.

Brothers and sisters, I want to emphasize this. How can people like us serve this incomparable glorious God? But He called us. He said you come; I want you to serve me. How glorious this is. But can we serve right after we are called? No. Even though we are called into the office of a priest, yet we must have to go through two things. The first thing is in chapter 28. And the second thing is in chapter 29. That is to say, even though you are called to be a priest, yet you have to be equipped to be a priest. If you are not equipped, then you have no way to perform the duty of a priest. Dear brothers and sisters, today in the church there are two difficulties. The first difficulty is that God has already called us to be priests, but we do not know. We do not know we are priests called by God. We think that priests are the handful of people who serve God; the so called clergies. We as layman, how can we serve God? This is a wrong perception. Each one of us is a priest. We all should serve God. We also have the second mistake. We already know we are priests. We know we should serve God. So we get very busy serving God. We use our own ideas and think of many ways to serve God. We said we are priests, so we serve. So we use our hands, feet, mouth and everything to serve God. The whole flesh also comes in to serve God. We serve before we have been equipped.

We see we are priests. But to serve we must first be equipped. Do you remember what Ephesians 4: 12 said? It said 'for the perfecting of the saints' perfecting in some versions is translated as equipped; thus equipping of the saints. The saints need to be equipped. The saints must be matured. In the bible, perfecting means mature. We need to be mature. We need to be equipped. And only then can we enter into the ministry of the body. The ministry of the body is the members of the body doing their part. And who is to minister to my body? It is the members in my body who minister to it. My mouth eats, my throat swallows the food, my stomach digests it, my bowels absorb some of its nutrients, and some is excreted out. Thus it is the different members of my body doing their part. And when the members serve, the body grows. The church is the body of Christ. How can this church grow up? It is when each saint fulfills their function. Each member is a priest. Each of us has to serve. But to serve

we have to grow up. When I was first born, I did not know anything. Others told me my eyes cannot see. As I started to grow, I started to see. When I was first born, I have hands. But I cannot use my hands correctly. I put things into the wrong place. I must first grow before I can correctly use my hands. We must first be equipped. We have to mature. Only then we can perform our priestly duty.

Brothers and sisters, we see in Exodus 28 that for a priest to fulfill his ministry he had to pass through two things. First he had to put on the holy garment. When he put that on then he could fulfill the priestly duty. If a priest did not put on the priestly garment, then he could not perform the ministry as a priest. And in Exodus 29, a priest had to go through a ritual offering before he started to serve. Only then could he perform the duty as a priest.

So now let us look at these two aspects. Yesterday, I already said a Christian has to wear a number of layers of robes. When we come before God, our original clothes are tattered. In the bible, clothes point to conduct because they are worn on the outside. So whenever the bible mentions clothes, it refers to the outward conduct. Our own conducts are like rags. They cannot cover our own shame. So when we come before God, the Lord took away our rags. And He put on us the best robe which is Christ. Christ becomes our righteousness. And thus we can stand before God because what God sees is Christ and not us. And this is what is called 'we are considered righteous'. But yesterday I already said, we as children of God have to put on the best robe so we can sit down and feast with Him. Think about it, if the sumptuous feast is before us, and if we were all wearing rags sitting there, it indeed is not proper. So today, as children of God, we put on Christ, and then we enjoy God's abundance. This is the first robe.

We already talked about the second robe. Today we are the body of Christ. And when this body grows into maturity, our Lord will come back and take us as His bride. But to be His bride we need to wear the wedding gown. Thus in Revelation 19 it said, the bride has been adorned and made ready. And through grace she wears a shiny, white linen gown. And this fine linen gown is the righteousness of all the saints. Christ is our good robe. He covers us and makes us righteous before God. But Christ has to be formed in us. And then we can grow up. And this is the gift of the wedding. A brother once said, on the wedding day, the groom was standing there and waiting for the bride to come in. Then he saw someone came in carrying a baby. He wondered where the bride was. Was this small baby the bride? They know that was impossible. One must grow up and mature. Thus Christians are the same. We have to grow up into adult. And what does this mean? We have to be full of the stature of Christ. That is Christ inside us is matured. Christ is fully formed in us. And this is the wedding gift.

This morning we have to add on another robe. And this robe is the priestly robe. If we want to be priests, we need to put on the holy robe. Only then can we fulfill the office of the priest. We see that for Aaron and his sons, most of the

holy robes were on Aaron. But this was only a representation. Aaron and his sons were united as one. Just like Christ and us – Christ is our high priest, and He has the immeasurable almighty power and He lives into eternity, interceding for us. He saved us to the utmost. Our high priest is Christ. He has on the holy garment. His holy garment is not added on. His holy garment is intrinsic. It is from the inside to the outside because originally by nature He is that. But for us, it is something that we have to put on. God gave us these things. And this is the only difference. However, our Lord wears the holy garment that is intrinsic. We likewise need to put on the holy garments, even though our holy garments are added on. That is to say, Christ is grace and for us, it is grace coming upon us. And however Christ is we are that way too. He put on the holy garment; we also put on the holy garment. We are united together. That way we can then perform the ministry of a priest.

This holy garment had seven parts. The first was the ephod. The ephod was the priest's most important part. How was the ephod made? It was made of golden twine, of blue, purple and scarlet and sewed by hand. The fabric and color of the priestly garment are the same as the material and color of the tabernacle. Whatever material used for the tabernacle was used for the priestly garment. Whatever the color of the tabernacle, the same colors were found in the priestly garment. So you see God's house and the priests are one. Fine linen represents purity. It represents the purity of the life of the Lord in this world. It is just like the fine twine linen. Today we also have to put on this fine twine linen ephod. The purity that Christ had during His life on earth should become our character. Blue means of heaven. Purple means royalty. Scarlet represents glory. The Holy Spirit takes the character of Christ when He was on earth and forms it in us. Our Lord was so pure when He was on this earth, so heavenly, so royal and so glorious. Brothers and sisters, as we read the gospel, we are not just reading some stories. We are not there just to know about the life of Christ. When we read the gospel, God lets us see the character of Christ when He was on this earth. And this is the real image. And this is the image that God wants us to conform to. And through the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, a new character is formed in us. What is character? Character is not born with. Character is cultivated. Is it not true? Where does character comes from? Character grows from nature. Each of us as Christian has a new life. Is it not true? This new life is Christ. This new life brings in the new nature. This new nature is pure, heavenly, royal and glorious. If we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us, and we live according to this new nature, slowly a new character will be formed in us. As Christ lived a pure life on earth, we also put on a pure new character. Even though Christ was on earth as a man, yet He was heavenly. As the Lord is heavenly on this earth, if we follow our new nature, we will also be heavenly even though we are on earth. And so you see the ephod is made in this manner. That is to say, today we are to serve God, and we cannot use our natural nature to serve God. We cannot base it on our old habits to serve God. We need to base it on the new character that the Holy Spirit incorporated in us. Do not think that serving God is purely about gifts. Serving God involves our character.

If you have tremendous gifts, but your character is not right, your work can only destroy and not edify. And the greater the gift, the greater is the destruction. Today all the problems in serving God comes from gifts. It is because we have gifts but not the correct character. Because we do not have the character, we are not right. So even though we have tremendous gifts, the things we do not only lead to mere destruction but great destruction. And this is the most painful thing today in God's service. Dear brothers and sisters, if we are to serve God, we have to put on the ephod. You cannot base on yourself to serve God. We cannot serve God according to our past habits. You cannot use your natural talents to serve God. And even when you use your spiritual gifts to serve God, you have to follow the new character to serve Him. Service is the outflowing of life. Service is to impart the life to others. Thus if Christ's life is not built up in us, we do not have a way to truly serve God. Our service cannot go beyond our ephod. We cannot serve if we do not put on the ephod. Our service is based on the character incorporated in us. Thus you see that the priest has to put on the ephod. I cannot go into details; else I will be speaking on those till tomorrow.

But I can say, after the ephod was put on, there were two shoulder pieces joined on the ephod. On the two shoulder pieces, there were two precious stones. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were carved onto the stones. They were placed in order of their birth dates. Shoulder represents strength. And the shoulder had to carry these twelve tribes. The order of the twelve tribes was according to the birth dates. And they were engraved on two onyx stones; showing that there was no difference between them. Even though there are twelve tribes, yet there is no difference. And they were placed in the order of their birth dates. And they were engraved on the onyx stone. And they were put on the shoulder. That is to say, he was to carry the twelve tribes. Our Lord put all of us on His shoulder. And His strength upholds us. And it is the same to all of us. It is not that He gives a little more provision to one and a little less to another. You can see that He upholds all the children on His almighty shoulder. If we are to serve today, we must also put all of God's children on our shoulder. We cannot choose which ones we want, we are to put all of God's children on our shoulders. Each of us has to look after all the children of God.

The second thing on the ephod is the breastplate. It is the breastplate of judgment. And the breastplate was carried on the breast of the high priest. And this breastplate is closely linked together with the ephod. And there were four rows on this breastplate. Each row had three precious stones. Each precious stone was different. And on each stone was engraved the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. It was not placed in the order according to the birth dates but based on the will of God. And behind the breastplate there was a pocket. And in there was placed two things – Urim and Thummin. We do not know exactly what were the Urim and Thummin. We just know the meaning of the Urim and Thummin in the original language. It is light and perfection. So the high priest had this breastplate. And he entered before God. And he sought the will of God for the Israelites. And this breastplate of judgment with the Urim and

Thummin was to let the high priest know the will of God. And so this is called the breastplate of judgment. And we do not know how this was carried out. Some people said it might be one of these stones was white and the other one was black. And when the high priest came before God, he would shake or touched these two stones, and if he took out the white one that meant yes, and if it was the black one, it was no. And this was how he determined the will of God. Others explained it this way. When the high priest came before God, the Urim would light up, and the Urim and Thummin started to work, and the two started to shine onto the twelve names. And the twelve names would spell out words and tell them the will of God. I do not know how it works. The Urim and Thummin no longer existed in the days of Nehemiah. So today no one knows what the Urim and Thummin are. But we know the breast represents love. We come before God in love. And we seek the will of God for the people of God. We praise our Lord. Today our breastplate is inside our heart and not on the outside. Our Urim and Thummin are not two pieces of stones. Today our Urim and Thummin is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is inside each of us. Thus 1 John 2:27 said you have the anointing in you and you do not need people to teach you. The anointing in you will teach you. He will teach you in all things. And just as the anointing has taught you, you abide in Christ. Dear brothers and sisters, we thank and praise the Lord today. Men can come before God, not only can we seek the will of God for ourselves but also for the church. We love all brothers and sisters. We love God's church; we put God's church in our heart. We come before God for the church and the Holy Spirit in us will teach us. He will point out His feelings for the church, His hopes for the church, His calling to the church, and His work for the church. We can come before God's presence and we can know all of these things.

The third thing is the robe. The priest had to put on a long robe. And this robe was made of fine blue linen. It was totally blue. I think you all know that it means it is of heaven. It tells us that our service to God is of heaven. We cannot have any of earth in it. Today we see that the services in the church have so much earthly impurities in it. The true service is of heaven. The beginning should be of heaven, the process has to be of heaven, and the end also has to be of heaven. All these are given back to God. At the bottom of this robe there were two things. One was a blue pomegranate. On the side was a golden bell. It was a pomegranate and a bell, a pomegranate and a bell. So when the priest walked, the bells sounded. And this prevented Him from dying before God. When we open up a pomegranate, it is all full of red juice. This represents the fruitfulness of the spirit. In Galatians 5, it talks of the fruit of the Holy Spirit – love, joy, peace, long sufferings, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness and self-control. This golden bell was there sounding. Today in God's service we serve God according to heaven. We bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit. We rely on the power of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is of earth. Nothing is of man. All is of heaven. Everything is from God. Only this kind of service can satisfy God's heart.

There were the inner garments and the girdle. And if you put on the girdle it means you serve as a slave. Then there was the turbine. The Chinese called it the crown. But it was actually a turbine and it means that you have to cover your head. Before the presence of God, we have to stand on the ground of covering our heads. And there was a golden plate with the words Holiness to the Lord. Holiness and all are unto God. Nothing is for us. Nothing is relying on us. Nothing comes from us. All things are from Him; relied on Him; unto Him and glory unto Him into eternity. Brothers and sisters, we put on these holy garments and then we can enter into the tabernacle to serve God. Our God is a holy and glorious God. These garments are made for glory and holiness. Glory is God Himself. This is His inward nature. All God manifest is glory. Beauty points to the outward conduct. All outward conduct is beautiful. Brothers and sisters, today we have to put on Christ. In service we need to put on Christ. Not only as children of God, we need to put on Christ; not only as a bride we have to put on Christ; but also as priests of God we have to put on Christ. But remember, this putting on is not just on the outside. This garment is incorporated together by the Holy Spirit inside us. It is God's grace added onto us. Brothers and sisters, this is the pattern on the mount. Some people said since this is the pattern on the mount, then let us follow it. Thus we have to put on the priest's garment for glory and for beauty when we speak at the podium. This is a shame. We put on appearance on the outside. But inside we do not have the reality. Brothers and sisters, this is hypocrisy. God detests hypocrisy. Today if we want to serve God, it is not something we put on the outside. But it has to come from the inside of us. Only this way can we serve our God.

Now we go on to chapter 29. Not only did the priest have to put on the holy garment, he also had to go through a consecration ceremony. It seemed like a complicated process. But I would like to simplify it for you. First, Aaron and his sons came to the gate of the tabernacle. They needed to wash themselves with water. Then they put on the holy garments. And then the anointing oil was poured over Aaron's head. And then they started to offer the sacrifices. The most important was the lamb of consecration. There were sacrifices of bullocks and rams. Among these sacrifices were two rams. One of the ram was for burnt offering. The other ram was for the sacrifice of consecration. So let us look at this ram. This ram signifies it is completely for God. And after this ram was killed, Moses was to take some blood, and put it on the right ear lobe, the right thumb and the right toe of Aaron. What does this mean? The right ear, the right thumb and the right toe represents the whole body. Today when we serve God, we serve with the whole body. A lot of times we think the hands are most important in service, or the foot. Or some may say the most important thing is the mouth. So everyone wants to be the mouth. But the most important thing in service is the ear. The most important part in the servant is the ear. If a servant does not listen to the master, but do according to his own will, do you want such a servant? He is serving himself and not you. So in service the most important part is the ear. The blood is put on the ear, then put on the hand and then on the foot. What does that mean? That is to say, they have to go through

death. Our ear has to go through death, and then we can listen to God's voice. Our hands must die and then we can do God's work. Our foot must go through death and then we can walk in God's way. Otherwise, we cannot hear God's words; we can only hear men's words or our own words. We cannot do God's work. We can only do men's work or our own work. We cannot walk God's way. We walk men's way and our own way. Today what is the ceremony of consecration? We must offer ourselves up as a living sacrifice. Romans 12:1 says 'present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service'. So what is service? Service is to offer up your body as a living sacrifice. Your ear with blood put on went through death. Your hand with blood put on went through death. Your foot put on with blood put on went through death. Then your whole body is a living sacrifice. It no longer belongs to you but wholly belongs to God. You listen to His voice. Do His work. And obey His commands. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the consecration ceremony.

And after that, the fat was taken out of the ram and then added on the oiled wafer. Then these two things were put into the hands of Aaron and his sons. Their hands were then full of these things. And the right shoulder was also put into their hands. And they waved these before God and then burned all these on the altar. The original language with regards to waving these in their hands was to fill their hands. To fill their hands is consecration. So what does consecration mean? Offerings mean now I died and now I am filled with Christ. The fat represents the fullness inside. The oiled bread represents the purity of life. One represents the divinity of Christ. The other represents the purity of His life. So our hands are full of Christ. And this is consecration. Dear brothers and sisters, today what are your hands filled with? If your hands are full of Christ, then you can serve God because service is to provide Christ. You are not providing yourself but providing Christ. So you have to go through the consecration ceremony. And then you can begin to be a priest. This is the pattern on the mount.

Brothers and sisters, today when we look at the Christianity, we feel sorrow in our heart. We do not mean to criticize. I hope brothers and sisters know that I do not mean to criticize. I am not worthy to criticize. But when I see the service in Christianity, my heart really feels the pain. The people said we have to follow the pattern on the mount. So what is the pattern on the mount? If you want to serve you must be ordained, just like Aaron and his sons had to go through the consecration ceremony. And if you have not been ordained, you cannot serve. This is the tradition handed down in Christianity for a long time. And if you have not gone through the process of the laying of the hands, you cannot preach. Dear brothers and sisters, this pattern on the mount has gone so far astray. Today the servants of God should be anointed by God. The anointing oil was poured on Aaron's head. It flowed down the beard and then down to the borders of his garments. When Christ ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit filled Him. The Holy Spirit came down and anointed one hundred and twenty people on

Pentecost. They were anointed to be priests. And they rose up and served God. And this anointing oil flows through the whole body. If you are a member of the body, then the anointing oil flows onto you. And then by the power of the Holy Spirit, you rise up and serve God. It is God who sent you and not men who sent you. It is God who prepares you and not men. Dear brothers and sisters, today if our service is sent by men or established by men, then we are serving men. We are not serving God. Today we are chosen by God to serve Him. God called each one of us. It is not men who give us the qualifications. The Holy Spirit is our power. Christ is our life. We are under the head. We all serve our Lord together as priests. Dear brothers and sisters, this is service according to the pattern on the mount. And this is touching the real thing. May our God today receive the real service. Our God today did not get the real service. Many people are there serving, but how much did God receive? And many people are not serving. No wonder God's house is that impoverished? Christ is the Head. If each of us can rise up and be equipped on the outside with the power of the Holy Spirit, then how abundant will the house of God be. And how glorious will the service that God receives.

Let us pray.

Our Lord and our God, we have to prostrate before You. We ask You to enlighten us. Let us see how we have lived for ourselves in the past. We do not know what we are living for. Lord, we do not have any rights to serve ourselves. Please help us to determine to serve You. Please help each of us to answer Your call. And we look to You that we do not follow our flesh and our will to serve You. Lord, make us humble ourselves before You and receive the work of the Holy Spirit, so that Christ's life in us can grow up. And under Your anointing and Your leading, we work together to serve You. Our Lord we thank and praise You that today You are the one that we serve. The glorious God is the object of our service. Our Lord, we worship You. Please cover the words with Your blood, so that we do not receive them negatively, but receive them positively. Hear our prayer. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.