

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 28

This chapter informs us of the servants God would have to minister to him in the house, or tabernacle, he had ordered to be made, even Aaron and his sons, (^{<EX01>}Exodus 28:1) of the garments they were to wear in their service, (^{<EX02>}Exodus 28:2-5) and first of the garments of the high priest, and particularly of the ephod, with the girdle, on the shoulder pieces of which were to be two onyx stones, with the names of the children of Israel engraved on them, (^{<EX06>}Exodus 28:6-14), and that of the breastplate of judgment, with the Urim and Thummim in it, (^{<EX05>}Exodus 28:15-30) and of the robe of the ephod, (^{<EX03>}Exodus 28:31-35), and of the mitre, (^{<EX04>}Exodus 28:36-39) and then of the garments of the common priests, (^{<EX04>}Exodus 28:40-43).

Ver. 1. *And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him,* etc.] Moses is bid to fetch or send for Aaron and his sons to him: or “cause” them to “draw near” ^{f807} to him, and stand before him, that he might in the name of the Lord, and by his authority, distinguish and separate them

from among the children of Israel: and before them all invest them with the office of priesthood, as it follows:

that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office, before this time every master of a family was a priest, and might and did offer sacrifice, and all the Israelites were a kingdom of priests; and Moses, as Aben Ezra calls him, was “a priest of priests”; but now it being enough for him to be the political ruler of the people, and the prophet of the Lord, the priestly office is bestowed on Aaron and his sons; nor might any afterwards officiate in it but such as were of his family; and a great honour this was that was conferred on him, and to which he was called of God, as in (^{<HE04>}Hebrews 5:4) and it is greatly in the favour of Moses, and which shows him to be an upright and undesigning man, that sought not to aggrandize himself and his family; that though he had so much honour and power himself, he sought not to entail any upon his posterity. It is hinted in the latter part of the

preceding chapter, that Aaron and his sons should minister in the sanctuary, and look after the candlestick, and its lamps; and here the design of God concerning them is more fully opened, which was, that they should be his peculiar ministers and servants in his house, to do all the business appertaining to it:

even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons: who were all the sons that Aaron had that we read of; though Aben Ezra thinks it probable that he might have other sons, and therefore the names of those are particularly mentioned, who were to be taken into the priest's office with him; the two first of these died very quickly after this, in a very awful manner, as the sacred story relates; and from the other two sprung all the priests that were in all successive generations.

Ver. 2. *And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother,* etc.] Called so, because in these he was to minister in the holy place, and perform holy service; and because typical of the holy human nature of Christ our great High Priest, and of his spotless righteousness, and of the garments of sanctification, both outward and inward, that all believers in him, who are made priests unto God, are arrayed with: Aaron and his sons being appointed priests, their garments are first described before their work and even before their consecration to their office; and there were some peculiar to Aaron, or the high priest, and different from those of his sons, or the common priests; and which are first treated of, as the breastplate, the robe of ephod, and the plate of gold; besides these, there were four more, common to all the priests, as the coat, the breeches, the girdle, and bonnet. Now whereas some of the Heathen priests performed their office, and offered their sacrifices, naked, which was very shameful and abominable, as Braunius^{f808} from various authors has shown, though this was not done by them all: in opposition to such a filthy practice, and to show his detestation of it, the Lord orders his priests to be clothed, and that in a very splendid manner, with garments

for glory and beauty; that is, with glorious and beautiful ones, and which would make his priests look so: and this was done, partly to point out the dignity of their office to themselves, that they might take care to behave suitable to it, and keep up the honour and credit of it; and partly to make them respectable unto men, and be honoured by them, none being clothed as they were, as Aben Ezra observes; but chiefly because they were typical of the glory and beauty of Christ's human nature, which was as a garment

put on, and put off, and on again, and in which he officiated as a priest, and still does; and which is now very glorious, and in which he is fairer than any of the children of men; and of the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, in which all his people, his priests, appear exceeding glorious and beautiful, even in a perfection of beauty.

Ver. 3. *And thou shall speak unto all that are wise hearted*, etc.] That have knowledge and understanding in mechanic arts, particularly in making garments; and it required men of more than ordinary skill to be employed in making these, because they were uncommon ones, and required a good deal of thought and judgment, and care and application, to make them exactly as they should be:

whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom; for besides a common understanding of things, these required a peculiar gift from God, which some men, as Bezaleel and Aholiab had:

that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him to put upon him at the time of his consecration; and indeed this was one way, by which, as well as by sacrifices, that he was consecrated, (see ^{<120>}Exodus 29:1,5, 6),

that he may minister unto me in the priest's office for the priests, without having these garments on, might not minister in their office; for when these garments were off, as they were when they were out of their service, they were as other men, as laymen, ((see Gill on "^{<3524>}Ezekiel 42:14"))).

Ver. 4. *And these are the garments which they shall make*, etc.] Some for Aaron and some for his sons, some peculiar to the high priest, and others in common to him and other priests:

a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle; of each of which, with others, there is a more particular account in this chapter, and will be observed in their order:

and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons: as those before mentioned, with some others not mentioned; some for Aaron only, and others that were to be worn by his sons also:

that he may minister unto me in the priest's office; these were absolutely necessary to the execution of the priestly office, and an essential qualification for it, and without which it was not lawful to serve in it.

Ver. 5. *And they shall take*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds, out of their substance; that is, those that were wise hearted, and had knowledge and skill in making such garments; these were to take, not out of their own personal substance, but they were to take or receive from Moses what the people freely offered for such service, (~~Ex~~ Exodus 36:3),

gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen; pieces of gold, which they beat into thin plates, and drew into wires, and which they worked into stuffs, woollen or linen, or both, of the colours here mentioned; all which were made use of in the ephod, girdle, breastplate, etc. (see ~~Ex~~ Exodus 39:3) and had a mystical significance in them.

Ver. 6. *And they shall make the ephod*, etc.] This was the outermost garment of, all, and was put over the robe; it was a short garment, reaching to the loins, as Kimchi ^{f809}; or to the buttocks, as Abarbinel ^{f810}; and not to the heels or feet, as Jarchi ^{f811}, and Maimonides ^{f812}; for Josephus ^{f813} says it was but a cubit long, which was little more than half a yard; he means that part of it which was distinct from the shoulder pieces, and came down from thence: the hinder part of it covered the back, and reached to the middle of the buttocks; and the forepart covered the breast and belly, and with shoulder pieces under the arm holes was buttoned with onyx stones upon the top of the shoulders, and was girt about the breast with a curious girdle: it had no sleeves, though Josephus ^{f814} says it had, as appears from the make of it; it was different from the linen ephod worn by the common priests and others, and was a symbol of the human nature of Christ, our great High Priest: it was made of

gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work; the stuff of which it was made was interwoven with threads of gold, and threads of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and threads of linen, wrought with divers figures in a curious manner, which looked very beautiful; and was a fit emblem of the glory, excellency, and purity of Christ's human nature; of the various graces of the Spirit in it; of his heavenly original; of his blood, sufferings, and death, and glorious exaltation; and of its being a curious piece of workmanship wrought by the Lord himself, (~~Heb~~ Hebrews 10:5).

Ver. 7. *It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof*, etc.] Which were two pieces that joined to the ephod, reaching from the arm holes to the shoulders both on the right and left, coming from before and behind; and

meeting on the shoulders, were buttoned with two onyx stones, and covering the shoulders are called by this name:

joined at the two edges thereof; the two edges of the ephod; not sewed thereunto with a needle, as Maimonides^{f815} and other Jewish writers think, but were woven along with it, and in the weaving was of the same with it:

and so it shall be joined together; that is, the hinder and fore parts of the ephod in the shoulder pieces of it, shall be joined together by the two onyx stones upon them, hereafter mentioned, with which they were buttoned.

Ver. 8. *And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it*, etc.] Which was worn along with it, and went out from it like two thongs, as Jarchi says, which girt the ephod close to the back and breast:

shall be of the same; of the same matter as the ephod, and woven in the same manner, and together with it:

according to the work thereof; wrought with the same coloured, curious, and cunning work:

even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; and from the gold in it, it was called a golden girdle, to distinguish it from others, and with it the priest was girt under the arm holes about the paps, to which the allusion is, (~~Gen~~ Revelation 1:13) and is an emblem of the close union of the human nature of Christ to his divine which is the effect of his love to his people; which, as it is seen in his incarnation, so more especially in his sufferings and death; and it may denote his strength to do his work as a priest, his readiness to perform it, and his faithfulness and integrity in it; righteousness being the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Ver. 9. *And thou shall take two onyx stones*, etc.] called from the colour of a man's nail, which they to resemble: the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call them stones of beryl, and so the Syriac version; the Septuagint, stones of emerald, and the Arabic version, crystal stones: but, according to Josephus^{f816}, they were sardonyx stones, and in which Brannius^{f817} thinks he was right:

and grave on them the names of the children of Israel; the names of the twelve sons of Jacob, six on one stone and six on the other, as often mentioned, for which onyx stones are very fit; and they must be very large

to have so many letters graved upon them; for there is no reason to believe the initial letters of their names only were engraved, but their whole names at length. In the Museum at Dresden is an oriental onyx which cost 48,000 dollars; it is of an oval figure, and its longest diameter is almost six inches, and in such an one might easily be engraved so many names: and Wagenseil makes mention of one in the possession of the bishop of Bamberg, in which were represented Christ sitting, and teaching his twelve apostles standing round him, of which he has given the figure^{f818}: the onyx stone being of the colour observed, was a fit emblem of Christ in his human nature, and if the sardonyx, of him in both his natures; and as the twelve tribes of Israel were a figure of the church, their names being on two stones may denote both the Jewish and Gentile churches; these being precious stones on which they were engraven, may signify how valuable the church and its members are to Christ; and being alike there, their being equally loved of God, chosen in Christ, redeemed by his blood, interested in all the blessings of his grace, and shall enjoy the same glory; and their names being there, the distinct knowledge had of them by name, and being in ouches of gold, their dignity and safety, as afterwards declared.

Ver. 10. *Six of their names on one stone*, etc.] The names of the six eldest on the stone upon the right shoulder:

and the other six names of the rest on the other stone: the names of the six youngest on the stone upon the left shoulder; for these stones, as afterwards said, were put on the shoulders of the priests,

according to their birth; the order of it; so that upon the first stone were engraven the names of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, and Naphtali; and on the second stone the names of Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin; and so they are disposed by Jarchi, with whom Josephus agrees^{f819}; though some Jewish writers, and particularly Maimonides^{f820}, place them otherwise; but this seems most agreeable to the letter and sense of the text.

Ver. 11. *With the work of an engraver in stone*, etc.] Not in common but precious stones: Moses was not to do this himself, as it could not be supposed he should, but he was to employ an engraver, whose business it was, and one that was capable of doing it in a professional manner:

[like] the engravings of a signet shall thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: as in signets or seals, by which impressions

are made on wax, the letters or figures are cut deep, that they might on the wax stand out; so it seems the letters of the names of the children of Israel were cut in these stones: this shows that engraving on precious stones is very old, and the ancients indeed are said to excel in this art:

thou shalt make them to be set in ouches of gold; in bezils or sockets, such as precious stones in rings are set in; these with the stones in them served as buttons to fasten together the hinder and fore part of the ephod on the shoulder pieces of it.

Ver. 12. *And thou shall put the stones upon the shoulders of the ephod*, etc.] That is, the shoulder pieces of it; these stones were put there, the names of the twelve sons of Israel being engraven on them, and they, set in rims or sockets of gold, and serving for buttons to the shoulder pieces: but chiefly the design of them was

for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: not to put the Israelites in mind of the merits of their ancestors, as the Targum of Jonathan; for none of their works were meritorious, and some were not good, and not worthy of remembrance; but rather to put Aaron or the high priest in mind to pray and make intercession for the twelve tribes, whose names were on the stones; or rather to put God himself in remembrance of his promises made unto them, and that they were his dear, special, and peculiar people; just as the rainbow was to be a memorial to the Lord of the covenant he made with all flesh, and which is to be understood after the manner of men:

and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial; signifying his presentation of them to the Lord when he appeared before him on the mercy seat; his intercession for them, and his patient bearing all their infirmities and weaknesses; in which he was a type of Christ, who presents all his people to his divine Father, makes intercession for them, and bears all their burdens, the care and government of them being upon his shoulders, (²⁰⁰⁶Isaiah 9:6 ²⁰¹⁵Luke 15:5).

Ver. 13. *And thou shalt make ouches of gold*.] Or sockets of gold, to put the two onyx stones in, (²⁰²⁰Exodus 28:11) for of other ouches we read not, excepting the enclosings, in which the twelve stones of the breastplate were set, (²⁰²⁰Exodus 28:20) and these are again mentioned because of the chains to be fastened to them, of which in the following verse.

Ver. 14. *And two chains of pure gold at the ends*, etc.] The use of which was to hang the breast plate on, after described; one end of them was

fastened to rings on the ouches in the shoulder pieces, and the other end to rings on the breastplate, and thus it hung:

of wreathen work shall thou make them; these chains were not made after the manner of circles or ringlets coupled together, as chains usually are, but of golden wires twisted together as a rope is twisted

and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches; to the ouches on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, in which the onyx stones were set, very probably to rings that were in these ouches.

Ver. 15. *And thou shall make the breastplate of judgment*, etc.] Called a “breastplate”, because worn upon the breast of the high priest; and a breastplate “of judgment”, because it was to put him in mind that he should do justice and judgment in the execution of his office, and that he should have at heart the judgment of the people of Israel; and in difficult cases should ask it of God, and faithfully declare it to them: it was, with the twelve stones in it, an emblem of the church and people of God, borne upon the heart of Christ our great High Priest, who are made righteous by him, yea, the righteousness of God in him, and are called by his name, the Lord our righteousness; the judgment or government of whom is committed to him, and which he exercises, by appointing laws and ordinances for them, by constituting and qualifying persons to act under him, to explain those laws, and see them put in execution, by vindicating and protecting them, and by the open justification of them at the last day:

with cunning work, after the work of the ephod thou shall make it; wrought with divers figures in a very curious manner:

of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it; a piece of stuff interwoven with threads of gold, or golden wires, and with threads of yarn, of blue, purple, and scarlet colours, and with threads of fine twined linen six times doubled; all which may signify the beautiful array of the saints, with the several graces of the Spirit; and especially their being clothed with fine linen, called the righteousness of the saints; that raiment of needlework, and clothing of wrought gold, the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his obedience, sufferings, and death, fitly expressed by these various colours.

Ver. 16. *Four square it shall be, [being] doubled*, etc.] That is, when it was doubled; for the length of it, according to Maimonides^{f821}, was a cubit,

which is two spans, and so, when it was doubled, was but one, and its length and breadth being alike, as follows:

a span [shall be] the length thereof, and a span [shall be] the breadth thereof; a square, which is the measure, the form of the new Jerusalem, the church of Christ, (^{f6216}Revelation 21:16) and may denote the perfection, firmness, and immovableness of it, (^{f950b}Psalm 125:1). Some have thought that this breastplate was doubled, in order to have something enclosed in it: some imagine, that within this fold were put the Urim and Thummim, which they suppose to be two words engraved on a stone, and different from the twelve stones in it; others, that the name of Jehovah was written and put there, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi on (^{f0280}Exodus 28:30) and other Jewish writers, and others, fancy some little images were put within these folds, the name with the teraphim, and supposed to be the Urim and Thummim; but if these were hid in the folds, they could not be seen when consulted; it is most probable there is nothing put within the double, which was not done for any such use; but most likely that it might be strong to bear the weight of the precious stones, put in ouches of gold upon it.

Ver. 17. *And thou shalt set in it settings of stones*, etc.] Or “fill in it fillings of stones” ^{f822}; which shows that there were in it ouches, or sockets of gold, the hollows of which were to be filled up with precious stones:

even four rows of stones; making a four square, and so filling up the measure of the breastplate:

the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle; about these stones, and those that follow, there is a great variety of interpretations of them, both among Jews and Christians; and they seem to be little known: our translators upon the whole seem to be as right as any in giving the names of them; the first of these, the “sardius”, is a red stone of a blood colour, as the “cornelian” or “ruby”, and which some have thought is here meant, and has its name either from the place where it has been found, Sardis or Sardinia; or rather from its red colour; for “sered” signifies red in (^{f2813}Ezekiel 28:13) as Braunius ^{f823} has observed from Kimchi; and so Odem, which is the word here used, signifies, and undoubtedly intends a stone of such a colour; and it is highly probable that this is the Demium of Pliny ^{f824}, which is one of the three kinds of sardius in India; and the red is so called from its redness, as the same Braunius observes. The second stone, the “topaz”, had its name, according to Pliny ^{f825}, from an island in

Arabia, in the Red sea, called Topazos; and the best topaz is the topaz of Cush or Arabia, as in (~~Job~~ Job 28:19). The topaz of the ancients was of a green colour; and so the three Targums call this stone Jarken or Jarketha, which signifies green; hence some have taken this to be the emerald, which is of a fine green colour: the third stone is the “carbuncle”, as we render it; whatever stone is meant, it must be a bright and glittering one, like lightning, as the word signifies; wherefore some have taken it to be the emerald, so the Septuagint and Braunius^{f826}; it being a very radiant and glittering stone, of a grass green, and very refreshing to the sight; but Danaeus^{f827} says, that the carbuncle is that species of the ruby, which of all is most beautiful and excellent, and darts out light like lightning to those that look at it at a distance, and shines in the middle of the night and darkness, so that it enlightens places near it, as if it were a sun:

[this shall be] the first row; now upon these three stones were engraven the names of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem agree.

Ver. 18. *And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.*] The first of these stones is by both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan rendered an “emerald”, as by us; and which is described by Pliny^{f828} as of a green colour, exceeding delightful and pleasant, and to which he gives the third place among precious stones; though by many the stone here called Nophec is thought to be the carbuncle, and is so rendered by the Septuagint; the carbuncle of the ancients is no other than what we call the, “ruby”; and which Braunius^{f829} thinks is here meant, and so Abarbinel, which is just making an exchange of the last stone of the first row for this; and De Dieu observes, that if any chooses to render the preceding stone an emerald, as Braunius does, he must render this a carbuncle or ruby; and if he renders that a carbuncle, then he must this for an emerald. The next stone is “the sapphire”, of which one would think there could be no doubt, it is the very Hebrew word itself that is here used; which Ruæus^{f830} says is of a sky colour, and sparkles with golden spots or specks, with which agrees (~~Job~~ Job 28:6). The third stone of this row is the “diamond” or adamant; and that this stone is meant seems clear from its name Jahalom, which comes from a word which signifies to break; and from hence a hammer has its name, because this stone pierces, cuts, and breaks other stones, but cannot be broken itself. On these three stones were engraved, according to the Jerusalem Targum, the names of the three tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun; but more truly, according to the Targum of

Jonathan, the names of the tribes of Judah, Dan and Naphtali, and so Jarchi; for the names here, as on the onyx stones, were according to the order of their birth.

Ver. 19. *And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.*] The first of these stones, the ligure or lyncurius, is said to be so called from the congealed urine of the lynx^{f831}, but rather from the spots of that creature; for, according to Danaeus^{f832}, it is the same stone with that called “stellina”, from having many specks like stars spread about in it. Braunius^{f833} takes the “jacinth” stone to be here meant, and so does Ainsworth; (see ~~Rev.~~ Revelation 21:20), the second stone, the agate, is well known; and though now of little account, was formerly in great esteem, as Pliny^{f834} asserts, and therefore may well be thought to have a place among these stones. Pyrrhus king of Epirus had a very famous one, in which, not by art, but by nature, were seen the nine Muses, and Apollo holding an harp; the word for it here is “shebo”, which comes from a word which signifies to captivate; because, as De Dieu observes, this stone is easily captivated under the hand of the artificer; there being no stone which so easily admits of engravings as this. The last of this row is the “amethyst”; which stone has its name either from its being of the colour of wine; or, as others, from its being a preservative from drunkenness: the Hebrew word “achlamah” seems to come from a word which signifies to dream; and this stone is supposed to cause persons to dream, as Aben Ezra, from one of their wise men, relates. On these three stones, according to the Jerusalem Targum, were written the names of the tribes of Dan, Naphtali, and Gad; but, according to the Targum of Jonathan, Gad, Asher, and Issachar, which is much better, for a reason before given.

Ver. 20. *And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper, etc.*] Whatever stone is meant by the first in this row, it must be of a sea green colour; for “tarshish”, the word used, signifies the sea; and so the beryl, as Pliny^{f835} says, imitates the greenness of the pure sea. Braunius^{f836} takes it to be the chrysolite that is meant; and so does Ainsworth; and it is so rendered by the Septuagint; and this, according to Ruæus^{f837}, is of a colour like the greenness of the sea: the “onyx” has its name from its being of the colour of a man’s nail, as observed before; but here “shoham” is thought by Braunius^{f838} to be the “sardonyx”, following Josephus, Jerom, and the Vulgate Latin version, which is a compound of the sardian and onyx stones: the last is undoubtedly rightly rendered the jasper, for the Hebrew word is “jaspeh”: this stone is sometimes variegated with spots

like a panther, and therefore is called by Onkelos “pantere”; the most valuable is the green spotted with red or purple:

they shall be set in gold in their enclosings; or be set and enclosed in ouches or sockets of gold, as the two onyx stones upon the shoulder pieces of the ephod: there were twelve of these ouches or sockets, which might be made out of one piece of gold, into which the twelve above stones were put. These stones were, no doubt, brought out of Egypt by the children of Israel, and were the gifts of their princes.

Ver. 21. *And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names*, etc.] And just so many are reckoned up in the preceding verses, each of which had one or other of the names of the children of Israel engraved on them, according to the order of their names in their birth. Some have thought that Levi’s name was omitted, but their reason for it seems not sufficient; for why might not he bear the name of his own tribe, and represent that as well as the rest, since the whole Israel of God is represented by his antitype?

[like] the engravings of a net, everyone with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes; not like the impression of a seal on wax, then the letters indeed would have been protuberant, as some have thought; but these were like the engravings of a seal, in which the letters or figures are cut within it: these twelve stones, with the names on them, represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and they the whole spiritual Israel of God; and being precious stones, show the excellency of the people of God, of what value, and in what esteem they are with God and Christ, being their jewels and peculiar treasure; and their names being in them, denote the special and particular knowledge God has of them, their names being written in heaven in the book of life; and they are called by name by the Lord; and being engraved as a signet, is an emblem of their being set as a seal on the arm and heart of Christ, and of their being as dear and precious to him as a signet on a man’s right hand; and being set in ouches and enclosures of gold, express both the dignity and excellency, and the careful preservation of them: these were set in rows, as members of churches are, everyone in his order, rank, and station, (~~4328~~ 1 Corinthians 12:18,28).

Ver. 22. *And thou shall make upon the breastplate chains at the ends*, etc.] One end of them to be put to the breastplate, and the other end to the ouches on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, by which the breastplate hung from thence: the Targum of Jonathan renders it, chains of a certain

determined size, of length and thickness exactly alike; or terminable ones, as it may be rendered, not circular like a locket, or chain of gold worn about the neck, but that had ends to it: some interpret it chains, made like ropes, in the same manner as cables are, twisted together; and such it is certain they were, by what follows:

of wreathen work of pure gold; not of circles and ringlets of gold coupled together, but of golden wires twisted together, as ropes are.

Ver. 23. *And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold*, etc.].

On the upper part of it, above, toward the two shoulder pieces of the ephod; these were to put one end of the chains into before mentioned:

and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate; the two upper ends or corners of it, the right and left.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt put two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings*, etc.] This expresses both how many chains were to be made, which is not before said, and the use of them, or where they were to be put, as well as the use of the rings:

[which are] on the ends of the breastplate; the two uppermost ends or corners of it.

Ver. 25. *And the other two ends of the two wreathen chains thou shalt fasten in the two ouches*, etc.] In which the two onyx stones were set on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, and were as buttons to them; probably there were rings to those ouches, into which these ends of the wreathen chains of gold, reaching from the breastplate, were put; or however, by some means or other they were fastened to these ouches or sockets;

and put them in the shoulder pieces of the ephod before it; that is, on the ouches upon them, as before observed: into that part or side of the ouches which was to be the fore part of the ephod; so that the breastplate hung by these chains from the shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the fore part of it, upon the breast of the high priest.

Ver. 26. *And thou shall make two rings of gold*, etc.]] Two other rings besides those before mentioned:

and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate; on the other two ends or corners of it:

in the border thereof which is in the side of the ephod inward: these were at the two lower ends of the breastplate, towards the ephod on the inside.

Ver. 27. *And two other rings of gold thou shalt make*, etc.] This is the third pair of rings ordered to be made, the two other pair were for the four ends or corners of the breastplate, but this pair was for the ephod:

and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod; one on the right and the other on the left:

underneath, towards the fore part thereof; underneath the ephod, yet towards the fore part of it; or rather on the fore part of it, though so as the rings could not be seen:

over against the other coupling thereof; either so as to answer to the other coupling of the breastplate to the shoulder pieces of the ephod above; or to the rings at the ends of the breastplate below, with which these were to be coupled with a lace of blue; and so the word “other” here supplied may be left out:

above the curious girdle of the ephod; just above that these rings in the ephod were, to answer to the rings in the lower ends of the breastplate.

Ver. 28. *And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof*, etc.] By the rings at the lower ends of it, as it was by the rings at the upper ends of it to the shoulder pieces of the ephod; or “lift it up”, so some interpret it ^{f839} as if it was said, they shall lift up the breastplate to join it with the ephod that is above it:

unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue; this blue lace was put both into the rings of the breastplate and into the rings of the ephod, and so being tied in a knot, fastened them together, as the shoulder pieces of the ephod and the breastplate were coupled above, with wreathen chains of gold put into rings: now this was done,

that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod: that the breastplate might be above it, or else the lace of blue:

and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod: but be kept tight and close to it by the wreathen chains above, and by the knots of blue lace below; which may denote the conjunction of the prophetic and priestly offices in Christ; the former being signified by the breastplate of judgment, in which the Urim and Thummim were, and the latter by the ephod; or else

the union of the saints to Christ, the bond of which is everlasting love, from which there can be no separation; this union can never be dissolved, his people can never be loosed from him, they are members of his body, and one spirit with him.

Ver. 29. *And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart*, etc.] Their names being engraven on the stones, and the stones put into the breastplate of judgment, and this breastplate hanging down upon the breast and heart of Aaron, he was a representative of the twelve tribes of Israel, as Christ his antitype is the representative of the whole Israel of God; and who lie near the heart of Christ, are set as a seal upon it, are engraven on the palms of his hands, and carried in his bosom, and whom he always presents to his divine Father, and are accepted in him: he represented them in eternity, and in time; in his sufferings and death, in his burial and resurrection from the dead, when they were crucified, buried, and raised with him; and he represents them now in heaven, where they sit together in heavenly places in him, as it here follows in the type:

when he goeth in unto the holy place; to trim the lamps and offer incense, and especially when he went into the most holy place once a year:

for a memorial before the Lord continually; for a memorial to himself, to pray for them when he appeared before the Lord, to put the Lord in remembrance of his covenant with them, and promises to them, ((see Gill on “^{<1282>}Exodus 28:12”)) ((see Gill on “^{<2495>}Isaiah 43:26”)), the Targum of Jonathan is, “for a good memorial”: not a memorial for evil, but for good.

Ver. 30. *And thou shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim*, etc.] What these interpreters are at a loss about, both Jewish and Christian; some have confessed their ignorance of them, have conjectured they were only these two words and put in the duplicature of the breastplate; that the name of Jehovah, with other divine were put there and so called; and some have that they were little images, the same with the teraphim, the high priest carried in the folds of breastplate, by which consultation was made; others have thought them to be a work purely divine, of Jehovah’s putting there; for my own part I am to follow Josephus ^{f840}, who takes them to be the same with the twelve stones; and it is observable that where the stones are mentioned nothing is said of the Urim and Thummim, and where the Urim and Thummim are observed, no notice is taken of the stones, (see ^{<1290>}Exodus 39:10 ^{<1808>}Leviticus 8:8) the

use of these was to have the names of the children of Israel engraven upon them, and so be borne on the heart of Aaron when he went into the holy place, as is here said of the Urim and Thummim; and that consultation might be made by them in matters of moment and difficulty, as appears from various other passages of the Scripture, (^{<0271>}Numbers 27:21 ^{<0270>}1 Samuel 23:9 28:6) and but in what manner this was done, and in what way the answer was given and understood, are not easily accounted for: some say, by the brightness or protuberance of the letters on the stones; others, by the shining and splendour of the stones, which is more probable; others, by an inward impression on the mind of the priest; and others, by an articulate voice, which seems best of all: the Septuagint render these two words “manifestation and truth”; and Aelianus^{f841} reports, that the chief and oldest among the Egyptian priests and judges wore an image of a sapphire stone about his neck, which they called “truth”: and, according to Diodorus Siculus^{f842}, this image was of more precious stones than one; for he says, the

president in the Egyptian courts of judicature had on his neck, hanging on a golden chain, an image of precious stones, which they called truth: but there is no reason to believe that this custom was as ancient as the times of the Israelites in Egypt, or that they borrowed this from them; but rather, that the Egyptians did this in imitation of what the high priest among the Jews wore, which they might learn from the Jews in Solomon’s time, or in later ages; the words Urim and Thummim signify “lights and perfections”, agreeably to which is the paraphrase of Jonathan;

“Urim, which enlighten their words, and manifest the hidden things of the house of Israel, and Thummim, which perfect their works, by the high priest, who seeks instruction from the Lord by them:”

they were typical of Christ, in whom all lights and perfections are; all light is in him; the light of nature and reason is from him, as the Creator, and is given to every man that comes into the world; the light of grace is with him, and communicated to all his people at conversion, and in all the after degrees and supplies of it; all light and knowledge in divine things is from him, the knowledge of God, of himself, and of the Gospel, and the truths of it; and the light of glory will be from him: all the perfections of deity, the whole fulness of the Godhead, all human perfections, which make him as man in all things like unto us, but far exceeding us; as Mediator, all the blessings and promises of the covenant are in him; all the gifts of the Spirit,

and a fulness of all grace; there are in him perfect righteousness, perfect holiness, all light, life, strength, wisdom, joy, and comfort ^{f843}: and these stones, or Urim and Thummim, may be an emblem also of the saints, being made light and perfect righteousness in Christ, from whom they have both:

and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; either into the holy or into the most holy place, just as the names of the children of Israel on the stones are said to be, ((see Gill on "[⌕]Exodus 28:29")),

and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually; not only bear their names and remember their cases, make intercession for them, and represent their persons, in all which he was a type of Christ, but bear their judgment, have that at heart, and administer it unto them; and in all doubtful and difficult cases inquire of God what was fit and right to do for them, or for them to do: so Christ has the government of his people both at heart and in his hands; all judgment is committed to him, and he is the righteousness of his people now, and will be their Judge hereafter.

Ver. 31. *And thou shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue.*] This was a different garment from the ephod, was longer than that, and was under it, and of different materials: that was made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen; this only of linen, and wholly of a blue colour, without any curious figures upon it, as were on that: in ([⌕]Exodus 39:22), it is said to be of woven work; it was woven from top to bottom, and had no seam in it: so Josephus says ^{f844},

“the coat did not consist of two parts, nor was it sewed upon the shoulder, nor on the side, but was one long piece of woven work;”

and such was the seamless coat our Lord Jesus Christ wore, literally understood, ([⌕]John 19:23) and both were an emblem of his perfect righteousness, which has nothing of the works of men joined to it, to justify them before God, and make them acceptable to him: for this robe signifies the robe of Christ's righteousness, the best robe; it has its name from a word which signifies prevarication or sin, because it covers the sins of God's people; the matter of it was linen, and so fitly points at the fine linen, that is the righteousness of the saints, and being blue or sky coloured may denote heaven and happiness, which that entitles to, (see [⌕]Matthew 5:20), the Septuagint version calls it a garment down to the feet, using the

same word as in (~~4013~~ Revelation 1:13) and fitly agrees with that righteousness with which all Christ's members are covered and justified, (~~2364~~ Isaiah 45:24,25 ~~4122~~ Romans 3:22,23).

Ver. 32. *And there shall be a hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof,* etc.] At the neck of it, for the high priest to put his head through when he put it on:

it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it; a large hem or selvage, perhaps of the same kind of woven stuff the robe itself was made of, and this was done to strengthen it:

as it were the hole of an habergeon; a corslet or coat of mail;

that it be not rent; when the high priest put it on; or through the weight of the ephod and the ouches of gold on the shoulder pieces of it, and the breastplate hanging down from thence; this may denote the strength and duration of Christ's righteousness, which is an everlasting one.

Ver. 33. *And beneath upon the hem of it,* etc.] Or the skirts of it, at the bottom of the robe:

thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; these were figures made of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, in the form of pomegranates: Jarchi says they were round and hollow, and made like hens' eggs, about the size of them, and of an oval form:

and bells of gold between them round about; according to some, the bells were put into the pomegranates, which is supposed to be the meaning of the phrase "between them", or, "in the midst of them"; and so Aben Ezra observes, that some say the bells did not appear, they were only in the midst of the pomegranates, and there they caused their sound to be heard: but according to our version and others, the bells were placed between the pomegranates, between every pomegranate and pomegranate there was a golden bell; and this seems to be plainly the sense of the following verse.

Ver. 34. *A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate,* etc.] First a golden bell and then a pomegranate, then a bell and then a pomegranate again, and so on:

upon the hem of the robe round about; all round the hem or skirts of the robe were they placed in this manner: the Targum of Jonathan says, the

sum or number of them were seventy one; but Maimonides ^{f845} says there were seventy two, thirty six in each skirt; and so says R. Levi Ben Gersom; but Clemens of Alexandria ^{f846} has increased the number to three hundred and sixty six, according to the days of the year, and thinks they signified the acceptable year of the Lord proclaiming and resounding the great appearance of the Saviour: “golden bells” may denote either the intercession of Christ in heaven, which if not vocal, as on earth, has a speech or sound in it, which is understood: his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, call aloud for peace and pardon, and it is a sound that is always heard with delight; the matter of them being gold may denote the preciousness and excellency of Christ’s intercession, and the duration of it; and being on the hem of the robe shows that Christ’s righteousness is that on which his intercession depends, and from whence it has its efficacy: or else these bells may be an emblem of the Gospel, as preached by Christ himself, and by his apostles and ministers, compared to “bells” for sound; the sound of the Gospel being a sound of love, grace, mercy, peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; a joyful sound, like that of the jubilee, an even and certain one, different from that of the law, and exceeding musical and delightful; and to “golden” bells for the preciousness of it, and its truths, and for its duration; and being on the hem of the robe may signify that in the Gospel the righteousness of Christ is revealed and pointed at, and that faith in this righteousness comes hereby; “the pomegranates” on Aaron might be an emblem of his priesthood, and of the ceremonial law, and of the good things they were shadows and types of; and of Christ himself, and of the virtue, odour, and fragrantcy of his sufferings, sacrifice, and intercession; and also of the church, called an orchard of pomegranates, (²¹¹¹³ Song of Solomon 4:13) consisting of various members, as the pomegranate of various grains; the juice of which the blood of Christ may resemble, in which those members swim and are washed; and who are of a grateful odour to God, and are surrounded by his power and love; and their hanging upon the hem of the robe may signify the acceptableness of them through the righteousness, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, and the fruits of good works, which both the righteousness of Christ and the Gospel produce; and particularly the bells and pomegranates may signify that sound doctrine and a savoury life and conversation should go together in the priests of the Lord, in the ministers of his word.

Ver. 35. *And it shall be upon Aaron to minister*, etc.] That is, the robe before described shall be put upon him, that he might minister in the priest's office, for without this, as well as the other garments, he might not:

and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out; by means of which the priests would have notice that they might depart, and he be alone in his ministrations; or rather, that the people might know his going out and coming in, and so give themselves up to prayer, while he was offering incense, (see ~~<2009>~~ Luke 1:9,10) though the instance of Zacharias is not of an high priest, but of a common priest:

that he die not the Targum of Jonathan adds, with flaming fire. This is added, to make him, and all succeeding priests, careful that this robe, nor any other of the priestly garments, were wanting, when they ministered before the Lord; should any be wanting, it would be highly resented by the Lord: and such an one would be in danger of being cut off by death from the immediate hand of God, as Nadab and Abihu were for offering strange fire to the Lord; for, according to the Jewish writers ^{f847}, a priest not rightly attired, either with more or fewer garments than he should have, his service was illegal, and he was as a stranger, and his service strange service, unacceptable to God, yea, provoking to him; and so Jarchi on the text says, if he wanted one of these garments, he was guilty of death by the hand of heaven, the immediate hand of God.

Ver. 36. *And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold*, etc.] It was, as Jarchi says, two fingers broad, and reached from ear to ear, and so Maimonides ^{f848}; it is sometimes called the holy crown, and the plate of the holy crown, (~~<0296>~~ Exodus 29:6 39:30 ~~<0809>~~ Leviticus 8:9), this was a priestly crown, for priests were very honourable and dignified persons, especially the high priest among the Jews; and even among the Gentiles it was common for their kings to be priests: and though this crown may denote the kingly power of Christ, yet as residing in him who is a priest, for he is a priest on his throne, (~~<0813>~~ Zechariah 6:13), and so may signify the conjunction of the kingly and priestly offices in Christ, who has a crown of pure gold given him by his Father, and put upon him, and by his people, (~~<0204>~~ Psalm 21:4 ~~<0811>~~ Song of Solomon 3:11) and being of pure gold, holy, and on the forehead, as this plate was, may signify the purity and holiness of Christ's kingdom and office, the glory, visibility, and perpetuity of it:

and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD; which words were written either in two lines, or in one. If in two, Maimonides^{f849} says, the word “holiness” was above, and to “the Lord” below: but it might be written in one line, and that seems most likely: he also says the letters were protuberant, or stood out; but then they would not be graven like the engravings of a signet, in which the letters or figures are engraved within, but like the impressions of a signet made on wax, or other things: in this the high priest was a type of Christ, who is holy in himself, in his person, in both his natures, divine and human, in his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and he is holiness itself, the most holy, essentially, infinitely, and perfectly so, as angels and men are not, and the source and spring of holiness to others: and he is holiness to the Lord for his people; he is so representatively; as their covenant head he has all grace in his hands for them, and they have it in him; this is sanctification in Christ, and is by virtue of union to him, and is complete and perfect, and the cause of holiness in his people; and he is so by imputation. The holiness of his human nature was not a mere qualification for his office, or only exemplary to us, but is with his obedience and sufferings imputed to us for justification. Moreover, Christ has by his blood sanctified his people, or made atonement for them, and procured the cleansing of them from their sins, or the expiation of them; and he is also the efficient cause of their internal holiness by his Spirit, without which there is no seeing God, (~~Exod~~ 1 Corinthians 6:11).

Ver. 37. *And thou shalt put it on a blue lace*, etc.] The plate of gold:

that it may be upon the mitre; either the plate or the lace; the lace is the nearest antecedent, but it seems by what follows it should be the plate:

upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be; the plate of gold; the mitre was of linen, a wrap of linen about the head, and was like a turban on it, in the top of it; it did not come down low upon the forehead, but left that bare for this plate of gold to be put upon it. Jarchi seems to understand all this of the lace, by comparing it with the following verse, and (~~Exod~~ Exodus 39:31) as if the plate was represented as in the lace, and the lace upon the plate and upon the mitre above; all which he thinks is to be reconciled by observing, that the plate had three holes, and in every hole was a blue lace, and each lace was divided into two parts, so that there were six in all, two laces at each end of the plate, and two in the middle, by which they were fastened upon the top of the mitre, by which it was kept from falling off;

and of this middle lace, he thinks, the text is to be understood. The Targum of Jonathan observes, that this plate was put on a blue lace, to make atonement for the impudent.

Ver. 38. *And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead*, etc.] That is, the plate of gold, with the inscription on it, holiness to the Lord, and so was very visible and legible. The Targum of Jonathan adds, from temple to temple, that is, from the furthest end of the one, to the furthest end of the other, the same as from ear to ear, ((see Gill on "¹²⁸⁵Exodus 28:36")) the use of it follows:

that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; this supposes that the sacrifices of the children of Israel, which they brought to the priests to offer for them, or the gifts they devoted to sacred use, might be attended with sin and blame, either in the matter of their offerings and gifts, or in the manner in which they brought them; and which through the high priest having this plate of gold, with the above inscription on it, were expiated; they were bore away from them, and were not placed to their account, but they were cleared and discharged of them: and so it is that there is sin in the best performances of the saints; there is not a just man that does good, but he sins in doing that good; the best righteousness of men is imperfect, and attended with sin; and this cannot be borne, or taken away by themselves; if God should mark such sins as these, they could not stand before him; now Christ, their High Priest, bears and takes away these, along with all others, which are laid upon him, and borne by him:

and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord; not that he had always this plate of gold on his forehead, only in time of service; but then it was continually for the acceptance of them, though it was not upon his forehead, as Jarchi observes; at Maimonides¹⁸⁵⁰ says, there was great necessity that the high priest should be always in the sanctuary, as it is said, "it shall be always upon his forehead", and therefore must be always there, for he might not wear it outside of it. This with respect to the antitype may signify, that the persons and services of the people of God are accepted with him through the holiness and righteousness of Christ, who is always in the presence of the Lord, ever appears in heaven for them, and is the Lamb of God, to whose person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, they are directed to look for the removal of their sins of every sort.

Ver. 39. *And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen*, etc.] Which was a distinct garment from the ephod, and from the robe of the ephod, and was the innermost of all; it was made of fine linen, curiously wrought in the weaving of it: according to some, it was full of a sort of eyelet holes; but as the word is that, from whence comes that for ouches, (^{<40286>}Exodus 28:6). Jarchi thinks it was full of holes, like those ouches or sockets, in which the stones were set; and so this coat was decked and adorned with gems and precious stones stuck in those holes or ouches: but rather it was figured with such little cornered holes as are in the stomach of animals that chew the cud, called the “reticulum”; being in the form of network, as Maimonides ^{f851} observes, and which is approved by Braunius ^{f852}: this was an emblem of the righteousness of Christ, comparable to fine linen richly embroidered, decked and adorned with jewels, and curiously wrought, (see ^{<6698>}Revelation 19:8 ^{<2610>}Isaiah 61:10):

and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen: which was a wrap of linen sixteen cubits long, as Maimonides ^{f853} says, both for the high priest, and for common priests, which only differed in the manner of wrapping them; that for the high priest was wrapped fold upon fold, as a roller for a plaster, and so the mitre was flat upon the head, and was like a turban, and did not rise up into a point; but those of the common priests were so wrapped, as that they arose up like a night cap, or a high crowned hat. The mitre, hat, or cap, though a token of honour, yet also of servitude; and may denote, that the people of the Jews were in a state of servitude, and point at the obscurity and darkness of that dispensation; they not clearly discerning divine mysteries, and wanting boldness and freedom to look up to God; or it may denote that the priests under the law were servants, and that Christ, our great High Priest, should appear in the form of one; and may also point at the intenseness of the mind in them and him on business, being deaf to everything else. The Targum of Jonathan says, the coat of fine linen was to atone for the shedding of innocent blood, and the mitre to atone for those who have elated thoughts, are puffed up with pride and vain conceit:

and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework; to gird about the embroidered coat, which Josephus ^{f854} says was four fingers broad; but, according to Maimonides ^{f855}, it was about three fingers broad, and thirty two cubits long, which they wound about and about; and though we translate it “needlework”, it should rather be the “work of the embroiderer”, as Ainsworth renders it: and this was not wrought by the needle, but in weaving; for, as Maimonides ^{f856} observes,

“they did not make any of the priests’ garments with needlework, but the work of the weaver, according to (⁴⁹²⁷Exodus 39:27).”

This girdle may denote the strength, readiness, faithfulness, and integrity of Christ in the performance of his priestly office; (see ²³¹⁵Isaiah 11:5).

Ver. 40. *And for Aaron’s sons thou shalt make coats*, etc.] Of fine linen, of woven work, as in (⁴⁹²⁷Exodus 39:27), these were different from the broidered coat of the high priest, and the blue robe of the ephod:

and thou shalt make for them girdles; linen ones, to gird up their linen coats, which were long, that they might the more expeditiously perform their service; and which is an instruction to all the priests of the Lord, true believers in Christ, to be ready, forward, and diligent in the work of the Lord; and especially to ministers of the word, who, as their doctrines and lives ought to be pure, signified by the priest’s linen garment, so they should be girt about with the girdle of truth, and ready upon all occasions to publish and defend it, and to do their work with cheerfulness and faithfulness:

and bonnets shall thou make for them: these were coverings for the head, and of the same kind with the mitre of the high priest, and of the same length, but differed from that in the manner of wrapping the linen, of which they were made, ((see Gill on “(⁴²⁸⁹Exodus 28:39)”)): and all these were to be made

for glory and beauty: to beautify and adorn them, to make them look like persons of some note and figure, and that they might be respectable among men, and typical, as they all were, of our great and glorious High Priest, the Son of God.

Ver. 41. *And thou shall put them on Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him*, etc.] And this putting on of their garments by Moses, under the authority of God, was a solemn investiture of them with the priestly office also; for from henceforward they had a right to exercise it, having those garments on, without which they were never to officiate:

and shall anoint them; with the anointing oil, of which afterwards a particular account is given, and how to be made, and for what use, (⁴⁹³²Exodus 30:22-30), typical of the holy graces of the Spirit of God:

and consecrate them; the consecration of them was by investing them with their garments, and by anointing them with oil; for this phrase does not intend the whole of their consecration, only another branch of it, and may be literally rendered, “fill their hand” ^{f857}; that is, with sacrifices to be offered up by them, (see ^{<129b>}Exodus 29:1,24 ^{<413b>}2 Chronicles 13:9)

and sanctify them; by all this, set them apart, and devote them to the sacred office of priesthood:

that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office; by offering sacrifices for the people, burning incense, and doing other things relative to the office.

Ver. 42. *And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness*, etc.] Or “the flesh of nakedness” ^{f858}, that part of the body which ought not to be naked and exposed to view, and which, when it is, causes shame and ridicule; what part is designed is easily gathered from the next clause; great care was taken, in the service of God’s house, to preserve decency, prevent immodesty, and to guard against laughter and levity, and the like care should be always taken, ((see Gill on “^{<129b>}Exodus 28:2”)),

from the loins even unto the thigh they shall reach; they were to reach above the navel near the heart, and to the end of the thigh, which is the knee, as Maimonides says ^{f859}; who also observes, that they had strings, but had no opening before or behind, but were drawn up round like a purse; they were a sort of drawers, and somewhat like our sailors’ trousers.

Ver. 43. *And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons*, etc.] Not the linen breeches only, but all the other garments:

when they come into the tabernacle of the congregation; even into that part of it where the people assembled, the court of the tabernacle, and where stood the altar of burnt offering, on which they offered the sacrifices of the people, but never without the priestly garments on:

or when they came near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; at the altar of incense which stood there; or when they came to trim the lamps of the candlestick, and set the shewbread on the table, and take away the old, which candlestick and shewbread table were both in the holy place,

that they bear not iniquity and die; be guilty of sin in not having their priestly garments on in time of service, and so bear the punishment of it and die for it; the Targum of Jonathan adds, with flaming fire, with fire from heaven, such as Nadab and Abihu were afterwards consumed with; an high priest that had not the eight garments on, or a common priest that had not his four garments, his service was illegal and rejected, and he was guilty of death by the hand of heaven, as Maimonides^{f860} says; that is, he was deserving of immediate death from the hand of God, and might expect it:

it shall be a statute for ever unto him, and his seed after him; as long as the Aaronic priesthood continued, until Christ should arise, made an high priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek, and should put an end to the priesthood of the former, by answering and fulfilling all the types and shadows of it; this respects all that is said in this chapter concerning the vestments of the priests, one and another.