

Title: **“THE INIQUITY OF THE
HOLY THINGS”**

Text: Exodus 28:36-38

Subject: *Personal Iniquity and Perfect Holiness*

Reading: *Exodus 28:1-43*

(Exodus 28:1-43) “And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. (2) And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. (3) And thou shalt speak unto all *that are* wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments **to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.** (4) And these *are* the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.” — **In verses 5-28 Moses is given instructions telling him exactly what**

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

materials were to be used in making the holy garments to be worn by Aaron and his sons and exactly how each garment s to be made and worn. Let’s pick up our reading in verse 29.

(Exodus 28:29-43) “And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the LORD continually. (30) And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

(31) And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all *of* blue. (32) And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent. (33) And *beneath* upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* scarlet, round about the hem

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: (34) A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. (35) And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy *place* before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not.

(36) And thou shalt make a plate *of* pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. (37) And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. (38) And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.

(39) And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre *of* fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle *of* needlework. (40) And for Aaron’s sons thou shalt make coats,

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. (41) And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office. (42) And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: (43) And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy *place*; that they bear not iniquity, and die: *it shall be* a statute forever unto him and his seed after him.”

INTRODUCTION

I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

[‘Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
And He, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair.]

I hoped that in some favoured hour,
At once He’d answer my request;
And, by His love’s constraining power,
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more, with His own hand He seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe;
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds, and laid me low.

“Lord, why is this?” I trembling cried;
“Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death?”
“‘Tis in this way,” the Lord replied,
“I answer prayer for grace and faith.”

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

“These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free;
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayst seek thy all in Me.”

— *John Newton*

How we lament the sin that is in us, the sin with which we serve our God! **Our hearts mourn the fact that evil is mixed with everything we do.** Our souls are heavy with the burden of felt iniquity when we read, or pray, or sing, when we hear, or preach, or try to worship! We are compelled to lament, with John Newton...

“Sin is mixed with all I do!”

It is that sad fact that I want to talk to you about in this message. Turn with me to Exodus 28:36-38. The title of my message is **“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS.”**

Proposition: Here the Spirit of God shows us a portion of Aaron’s priestly garments that stood as a

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

constant representation of every covenant worshipper’s condition before the Lord God, as the worshipper stood before the holy Lord God in the person of God’s appointed priest and mediator. —

This part of Aaron’s dress displayed both personal iniquity and perfect holiness of all who were represented by Aaron.

(Exodus 28:36-38) “And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. (37) And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. (38) And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”

Here comes an ancient Israelite to worship the Lord God at the tabernacle. His heart is full of gratitude and praise. **He understands the meaning of what was done for him on that great and glorious high**

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

day in Israel, the Day of Atonement. He understands, appreciates and rejoices in...

- The Slain Passover Lamb — “*Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us!*”
- The Scapegoat — Christ has “*by himself purged our sins!*”
- The Aaronic Blessing (Ephesians 1:3-7).

He is coming now with a gift of praise, a thank offering, something he wants to give to the Lord God his Savior, just for his glory, just for his praise, just because he wants to. **Ceremonially, he pictures a redeemed sinner,** forgiven, accepted in the Beloved, justified and sanctified in Christ. **Still, he cannot come to God except by God’s high priest wearing this royal, priestly mitre, with this plate of pure gold upon his forehead — “HOLINESS TO THE LORD!”** Thus, **the priest of God places the gift of the forgiven sinner upon the altar of God, bearing for the redeemed sinner “the iniquity of the holy things...that they may be accepted before the LORD.”**

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

As Aaron was set apart and distinguished from the common priests by his glorious garments, how glorious, how beautiful is the Lord Jesus in the eyes of God! How glorious and beautiful is he in our eyes!

Spurgeon once said, “The unveiled sight of him will be our heaven. Our present view of him is our salvation, comfort, strength, and sanctification!”

Why was Israel’s high priest so majestically, so royally adorned?

The Holy Spirit tells us, — “*Such an high priest became us*” (Hebrews 7:26). It was becoming for us to have the Lord Jesus, this gloriously arrayed High Priest. It is becoming, God himself declares, it is becoming that we should have a High Priest decked out in “*gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.*” And he has covered us with the robe of his righteousness and made us comely with his comeliness which he has put upon us.

“Jesus, in Thee our eyes behold
A thousand glories more
Than the rich gems, and polished gold,
The sons of Aaron wore.”

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

As Israel of old had need of one to bear the iniquity of their holy things, so you and I, as we come to our God with our gifts and sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, as we bring to him the calves of our lips and the services of our lives, must have one who is able to bear the iniquity of our holy things.

We need of one who is “*able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*” Blessed be his name, Christ Jesus our Lord is such an High Priest over the house of God! **By the merit and efficacy of his perpetual intercession, by the perpetual merit and efficacy of his blood and righteousness, our Lord Jesus Christ makes both us and our worship and service, us and our sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise “accepted before the LORD.”**

How I thank God that he who is the unceasing, everlasting Representative of this sinful wretch, he by whom alone I come to God, by whom alone I offer myself and my sacrifices to the holy Lord God, is the One who wears upon his head the mitre of God’s

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

priest and upon his forehead the pure plate of golden
“*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*”

Divisions: I have just two things to talk about in this message.

1. I must remind you and remind myself of the iniquity of our holy things.
2. Then, I want, by the grace and power of God the Holy Spirit to show you the holiness in and by which we are accepted before the Lord, accepted with everything we bring him.

INIQUITY

1st — **I have to point out the iniquity of our holy things.** This is a subject we all prefer not to think about, let alone discuss. Oh, none of us minds a little, pretentious self-deprecation. We take great pride in out-doing one another in that. But none of us wants to think about, let alone discuss — “*The iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their gifts.*”

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

All that we do for God, and for Christ, and for our fellows, is deformed and tainted by our polluted hearts and dirty hands, both by human infirmity and sin. **Even a casual scrutiny of our most saintly deeds discovers the leprosy of iniquity popping out in this body of flesh!** This we must acknowledge and confess (1 John 1:8-1).

(1 John 1:5-10) “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: (7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (8) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

Our apparent loveliness is horribly unlovely! Our greatest sanctity is evil. We have need....

- to pray over our prayers,
- to weep over our tears,
- to repent of our repentances,
- and to confess our confessions!

When our most fervent prayer has been groaned, and our most self-denying act has been performed, and our most liberal offering has been given, and our most powerful sermon has been preached, and our sweetest anthem has poured forth its music, all must be bathed in the precious blood of Christ, the blood that “*cleanseth us from all sin!*”

HOLY STILL

Now, be sure you do not miss this. ——— **Our “holy things” are still “holy things” in God’s sight, though they are holy things accompanied with our iniquity!**

Our prayers, our praises, our service of God, these are holy things, though iniquity always accompanies

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

to them. They are holy because they are **God’s ordinances**, things he has ordained for his own glory. He tells us to serve him. He calls for us to come to him in prayer. He has said, “*Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.*” **And when we do what God tells us to do, the act is holy, because it is done in obedience to the him, as the ordinance of God.**

Such deeds are holy because they are **designed to show forth for God’s glory**. Those sacrifices the Israelites brought were meant to set forth Christ and his glorious work. That made them holy. They were “*hallowed*” (sanctified) by the children to the Lord. So our sacrifices (whatever they may be) are meant to be tokens of our gratitude, love, dedication and homage. Their design makes them “*hallowed,*” sanctified, holy things.

Our heavenly Father teaches us much precious truth by every institution of the tabernacle, and the temple, and the gospel church, and that makes obedience to his ordinance is holy.

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

These things called “*holy things*” in our text, were deeds that were **holy in the intent of the worshipper**. When he brought his turtle doves, or his lamb, or his bullock, he intended to exercise real reverence, true allegiance, and sincere gratitude to God; and this intent was holy. **Our God is so gracious that he calls our love, and faith, and labor, and patience, “*holy things*,” because he sees that we truly desire to honor him by these things. He knows what is holy, and what is not holy; and though there be a defilement about our “*holy things*,” yet holy things they are. I know they are “*holy things*” because God himself here calls them “*holy things*!”**

INIQUITY UPON THEM

They are “*holy things*,” yet there is iniquity upon our “*holy things*.” **You need no proof of the fact that there is much that must be called “*iniquity*” in regard to our “*holy things*.”** The slightest honesty of examination into our own hearts and lives will silence every objection.

- Our Wandering Thoughts in Worship

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

- Our Deadness in Prayer
- Our Meaningless Bible Reading
- Our Overmuch Love of Self
- Our Overmuch Love of The World
- Our Insignificant Love for Christ
- Our Little Love for One Another
- The Hypocrisy that Defiles Us
- Our Little Faith
- Our Enormous Pride
- Our Severity in Judgment of Others
- Our Proud Contempt of Others

I am talking now about our “holy things.” How horribly evil our other things must be! There is a terrible, terrible, indescribably horrible iniquity about all our “*holy things*,” a personal iniquity that makes all our righteousnesses filthy rags! The fact is, in is mixed with all we do!

HOLINESS

2nd — Thank God, our text says something else. In the very same sentence in which the Lord God speaks

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

of “*the iniquity*” that is ours, the iniquity by which we pollute everything, he speaks of “*holiness*,” perfect holiness, “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*” — How instructive and impressive the type!

(Exodus 28:36-38) “And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. (37) And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. (38) And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”

Thus, has Christ, our true Aaron, made a full Atonement for the “*iniquity of our holy things*,” and the mitre is always upon his head, making both us and our offerings accepted before the triune Jehovah!

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*”

Let me show you how this is declared in the Book of God.

JEREMIAH 2:3

In Jeremiah 2:3 the Lord God declares that Israel was “*holiness unto the Lord.*”

(Jeremiah 2:1-3) “Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, (2) Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was not sown.* (3) **Israel was holiness unto the LORD,** *and* the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.”

The word “*holiness*” means “sanctified” or “consecrated.” **That is what the Lord God declares us to be in and by Christ — “HOLINESS TO THE LORD!”** Being **“HOLINESS TO THE LORD,”** we **have free access to him always!**

(Jude 1:1) “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called.”

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

(Hebrews 10:10-14) “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

Christ is our Holiness (Hebrews 12:14). He perpetually makes us accepted before the Lord. He who is our Wisdom, Righteousness, and Redemption is our Sanctification too (1 Corinthians 1:30).

- Imputed Righteousness in Justification
- Imparted Holiness in Sanctification

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

ZECHARIAH 14:20

In Zechariah 14:20 the prophet of God declares that in this gospel day, even the horses shall have bells on their bridles that proclaim — “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*”

(Zechariah 14:20) “In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, **HOLINESS UNTO**

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.”

Horses are animals used for work, for labor, to pull a plow or a wagon. Zechariah is telling us that in Christ all our works, all our gifts, all our labors for the glory of God are accepted of God, just as we are, just as Christ is, as — *“HOLINESS TO THE LORD!”* Is that nowhat Godhe Holy Ghost tells us in 1 Peter 2:5?

(1 Peter 2:5) “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

ZECHARIAH 14:21

But there is more, still. **In Zechariah 14:21 we are told that every pot in Jerusalem, that is every utensil used by God’s people in this world, every part of your life and mine, the totality of our lives, are like the pots and bowls at God’s altar in the temple, — “HOLINESS TO THE LORD!”**

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

(Zechariah 14:20-21) “In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. (21) Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.”

(Romans 12:1-2) “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

(Ecclesiastes 9:7-10) “Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. (8) Let thy

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. (9) Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. (10) Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

Now, remember, this plate of pure gold is upon the forehead of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. If it is on his forehead it is on mine, for I am in him and one with him!

(Exodus 28:36-38) “And thou shalt make a plate *of* pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. (37) And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. (38) And it shall be upon Aaron’s forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.”

Though altogether sinful, every being sinner, redeemed by the blood of Christ and born again by the Spirit of God is a new creature in Christ, altogether holy before God, truly holy in union with the Son of God!

**Imagine, that my brother! Imagine that, my sister!
In Christ...**

- You are “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*”
- Your gifts are “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*”
- Your entire life is “*HOLINESS TO THE LORD!*”

Imagine that! You and I are a people God calls holy, a people whose gifts he calls holy, a people whose lives he calls holy, because Christ bears the iniquity of our holy things always before the Lord. — He bears the blood of our atonement always before the Lord, wearing the golden insignia of perfect holiness in his forehead as our High Priest, our Mediator and our Surety!

“THE INIQUITY OF THE HOLY THINGS”

Amen.

¹ San Diego Grace Fellowship, San Diego, CA — (WED – 01/24/2018)
Rescue Baptist Church, Rescue, CA — (SAT – 01/27/2018)