



High Priest on Day of Atonement



Ceremonial Bowls
carry incense, blood



Lamb



Ram



Blowing of Shofar

THE Anatomy of JEWISH HIGH PRIEST

ISRAEL, 605 BCE - 70 CE

THE EPHOD

The breastplate would sit upon an equally elaborate apron-like garment called an ephod. There is an ongoing debate about what exactly it was but *The Bible* describes it as being made of the same material as the breastplate. It had two shoulder pieces containing golden rings that would affix to the breastplate, with the ephod held together by a girdle fastened at the front.

ROBE OF THE EPHOD

The high priest would wear a robe underneath the ephod - it was sky-blue in colour in reference to heaven. As well as a woven collar, the bottom of the garment had tiny bells made of pure gold and pomegranate-shaped tassels in blue, purple and scarlet. The bells would be heard when the high priest was ministering.

BARE FEET

The entire ensemble symbolises atonement for the sin of bloodshed on the part of the children of Israel, except for the underwear, which was purely for modesty and contained no openings. A high priest's feet would be bare, however, allowing them to touch the ground of God. Claims that a rope would be tied to the high priest's ankle so that his body could be pulled out should he be killed by God in the Holy of Holies are not thought to be true.

THE GOLDEN CROWN

Placed over the high priest's fine linen mitre and extending towards both ears, the priestly crown was a pure golden head plate engraved with the words "Holiness to the Lord", held in place by two tied blue straps. By wearing it, the high priest would atone for the sin of arrogance on behalf of the children of Israel and show his intellectual devotion to God.

PRIESTLY BREASTPLATE

A rectangular breastplate containing 12 precious stones across four rows was worn across the heart. The fabric itself was made from gold, fine twisted linen and yarns dyed tekhelet, purple and scarlet. There was a fold within which the Urim and Thummim (literally translated as "lights and perfections") were placed. It's not known exactly what these two objects were but they were a way of receiving revelation from God.

IMPORTANT GEMSTONES

The stones on the breastplate were a ruby, emerald and topaz on the top row; a carbuncle, sapphire and quartz crystal on the second; a jacinth, agate and amethyst on the third; and a chrysolite, onyx and opal on the bottom. Each represented one of the 12 tribes of Israel, with their names engraved on the stones.

FINE LINEN TUNIC

The garment that would touch the high priest's body was known as the priestly tunic and was made of pure linen. The white material would reach the neck and it would be visible under the robe of the ephod as sleeves and a section at the feet. Priests would also wear the tunic but only the high priest's version would be embroidered - except on the Day of Atonement, when it would be plain.

High Priest most of year