

Exodus 28:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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 for ever unto him and his seed after him.

Analysis

The garments must be worn whenever priests minister in the tabernacle or approach the altar, 'that they bear not iniquity, and die.' Proper clothing isn't optional but essential for survival in God's presence. Nakedness or improper dress results in death—sin cannot stand before holiness. This underscores Christ's righteousness as non-negotiable for approaching God. We must be clothed in Him or perish. The garments are 'a statute for ever'—the need for righteous covering is permanent, fulfilled eternally in Christ (Isaiah 61:10).

Historical Context

This sobering statement established that priestly service required complete obedience to God's clothing commands. Nadab and Abihu's later death (Leviticus 10) demonstrated that approaching God casually or improperly resulted in judgment. The garments protected as much as they beautified.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's seriousness about proper clothing illustrate the absolute necessity of Christ's righteousness?
2. What does 'a statute for ever' teach about the permanent need for righteous covering before God?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיוּ H1961	עַל H5921	אֶהָרֹא H175	וְעַל H5921	בְּנֵי יוֹ H1121	בָּבֹא מֵן H935
		And they shall be upon Aaron		and upon his sons	when they come
אֶל H413	אֶל הָאֹהֶל H168	מִמּוֹעֵד H4150	אִם H176	בִּגְשָׁתָם H5066	אֶל H413
	in unto the tabernacle	of the congregation		or when they come near	
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ H4196	לְשֵׁרֵת H8334	בְּקֹדֶשׁ H6944	וְלֹא H3808	יִשָּׂא וּ H5375	עוֹן H5771
וְיָמָתוּ H4191	חֹק תִּהְיֶה H2708	עוֹלָם H5769	לִּי H0	וְלִזְרֹעִי H2233	אַחֲרָיו H310
and die	it shall be a statute	for ever		unto him and his seed	after

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 27:21 (Temple): In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to

morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.

Exodus 20:26 (Sacrifice): Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

Leviticus 5:17 (Sin): And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.

Leviticus 5:1 (Sin): And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.

Leviticus 22:9 (Sin): They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.

Leviticus 17:7 (Sacrifice): And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

Numbers 18:22 (Sin): Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.