

I . According to Exodus 28:15-30, the breastplate of judgment is the central item of the priestly garments and the central and ultimate point of the priesthood:

Exodus28:15 And you shall make a breastplate of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of the ephod you shall make it; of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet strands, and of fine twined linen you shall make it.**17** And you shall enclose in it enclosures of stones, four rows of stones: the first row shall be a row of a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald;**21** And the stones shall be according to the names of the sons of Israel, twelve, according to their names; they shall be like the engravings of a signet, each according to its name, for the twelve tribes.

A. The main purpose of the breastplate of judgment was for God's leading; God's people act according to God's leading obtained through the reality of the breastplate.

Why, then, does verse 15 use the word judgment with respect to the breastplate? The answer is that if we would know God's leading, we must have a great deal of judgment. We must judge whatever is of the flesh, the self, the old man, and the world. We must judge the things of the flesh and the mind set on the flesh. This judgment clears the way for us to know God's leading.

B. The breastplate typifies the church, and if we do not know the church, we do not know what God's leading is; actually, God's leading and the church are one.

C. God reveals what we should do through the church, by the church, and with the church; the church is God's leading, for the church bears the divine alphabet by which God makes known His leading

D. The breastplate being borne upon Aaron's heart for a memorial before Jehovah signifies the entire church as one built-up entity being borne upon Christ's loving heart for a memorial, a pleasing remembrance, before God

The Lord bears us in a corporate way, even in an incorporated way. The Lord Jesus has built us together; He has incorporated us into one entity. The breastplate was one entity composed of twelve separate, individual stones. This indicates that the believers are distinct individuals, but they are not divided. There were twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Each tribe was represented by a stone on the breastplate. But all these stones were built together into one entity. Therefore, the breastplate was actually a building of precious stones set in gold.

II . The twelve precious stones on the breastplate, on which the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved, signify all the redeemed and transformed people of God built together to become one entity

Exodus28:17 And you shall enclose in it enclosures of stones, four rows of stones: the first row shall be a row of a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald;20 And the fourth row, a chrysolite, and an onyx, and a jasper; they shall be set in gold in their enclosures.

A. The twelve precious stones set in gold symbolize the saints as transformed precious stones built together in the divine nature of Christ to become one entity, the church as Christ's Body

1 Corinthians3:10 According to the grace of God given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid a foundation, and another builds upon it. But let each man take heed how he builds upon it.11 For another foundation no one is able to lay besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

B. As components of the church, the believers, who were created from dust , must be transformed in their human nature by and with the divine nature through the working of the Spirit to become precious stones for God's eternal building ; the Christian life is a life of transformation—daily God is seeking to transform us **2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit**

C. The number twelve, composed of four (the creatures) times three (the Triune God in resurrection), signifies the mingling of the Triune God with His creature, man, for the complete and perfect carrying out of God's administration eternally

D. That the stones were arranged in four rows with three stones in each row indicates that the believers are not only transformed but also mingled with the Triune God.

E. The setting of the stones in gold signifies that the transformed and mingled believers are built in the divine nature of Christ into one entity

F. In God's eternal plan and according to His eternal view, the church, borne on Christ's heart and held in the span of His loving care , is such a mingling of the Triune God with redeemed humanity.

III. The engraving of the names of the twelve tribes on the precious stones corresponds to the inscribing of Christ into the believers' hearts, making them living letters of Christ, with Christ as the content

A. Christ is inscribed into the believers through their experience of Him and by the inscribing of the New Testament ministry

2 Corinthians 3:2 You are our letter, inscribed in our hearts, known and read by all men,3 Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.4 And such confidence we have through Christ toward God,5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God,6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Revelation 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End

B. The letters engraved on the twelve stones typify Christ as the letters in the heavenly alphabet

C. If we are not transformed and transparent and if we have not been inscribed with the Spirit of the living God along with Christ as the content but are merely opaque stones without any letters inscribed into us, it will be impossible for God to speak through us.

Exodus 28:30 And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before Jehovah, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel on his heart before Jehovah continually.

If the stones placed in the breastplate had been opaque, the illuminators of the Urim may have enlightened them, but they would not have been able to shine through such opaque stones.

Likewise, because so many Christians are opaque, Christ does not have a way to shine through them. We need to be transformed, and we need to be transparent, and we need to have Christ inscribed into us. Then when the light shines through us, others will be able to read the letters, the content of Christ, inscribed into us. But if we are not transformed and transparent and if we have not been inscribed with Christ, but are merely opaque stones without any letters inscribed into us, it will not be possible for God to speak through us.

IV. After the Urim and the Thummim were put into the breastplate, it became not only a memorial but also a breastplate of judgment

Exodus 28:29 So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastplate of judgment on his heart when he goes into the sanctuary, for a memorial before Jehovah continually.**30** And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before Jehovah, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel on his heart before Jehovah continually.

- A. Urim means "lights," "illuminators": **1.** The Urim was an illuminator inserted into the breastplate under the twelve stones; it had the capacity to contain oil for burning, and the fire used to burn the oil came from the altar. **2.** The Urim had twelve illuminators, one to illuminate each of the twelve transparent precious stones on the breastplate so that they could shine with light. **3.** The Urim typifies Christ as lights, illuminators, shining through the Spirit (the oil) and the cross (the fire from the altar)
- B. Thummim means "perfecters," "completers" **1.** The names on the twelve stones of the breastplate contained only eighteen of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; the remaining four letters were put on the Thummim, making it the perfecter and completer. **2.** By the shining of the Urim on the individual precious stones and by the darkening of the stones, the full alphabet of twenty-two letters could be used to spell out words and sentences. **3.** The Thummim typifies Christ as the perfecter and completer; thus, He is the spiritual alphabet for both inscribing and completing. **4.** Together, the Urim and the Thummim typify Christ as God's witness, God's testimony, as the means for God to speak to His people.
- C. In Exodus 28:30 and in Deuteronomy 33:8 and 10, God's judgments, referring to God's law with its verdicts and judgments, are related to the Urim and the Thummim.
- D. The word judgment in Exodus 28:29-30 indicates that God has a regulation concerning everything among His people; the judgment leads to certain decisions, and as a result, we have God's leading.
- E. According to the Old Testament, the Urim and the Thummim added to the breastplate were a means for God to speak to His people to indicate to them His leading; thus, we may say that the breastplate of judgment is a "breastplate of leading"
- F. God's leading through the breastplate always involved a judgment; God's law includes His judgments, and these judgments become God's leading.
- G. In spiritual experience, in order to know God's leading we must judge whatever is of the flesh, the self, the old man, and the world.
- H. In Romans 8:14 the leading of the Spirit, as the reality of God's leading through the breastplate, issues from, and is the totality of, all the judgments in verses 1 through 13 of that chapter.
- I. The fact that God's speaking as His leading was through the breastplate signifies that God makes His leading known to His people through the church

V . The breastplate of judgment for God's leading was like a heavenly, divine, and spiritual typewriter, and His way of speaking through the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim is the opposite of what we would expect:

- A. God speaks not through the stones that are shining but through stones that become dark; this means that God speaks through negative situations; because the Lord's speaking by the breastplate of judgment is through negative situations, that speaking is a judgment.
- B. Normally the twelve stones in the breastplate were under the shining of the Urim; suddenly a piece inscribed with a certain name would become dark; this darkening of a particular stone was God's instant speaking:
1. Paul's Epistles and the seven epistles of the Lord Jesus to the seven churches in Asia were all written according to this principle; they were written according to the negative situation of the churches, not according to the positive things found in the churches.
 2. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians according to his reading of the negative situation at Corinth, but although his writing was based on the negative things, in this Epistle he ministered positive things—the riches of Christ—to the church
 3. The saints in Corinth became the letters used by Paul in the spiritual typesetting of his Epistle; in the same way, in a local church the leading ones need to seek the Lord's guidance by reading the actual situation and condition of the saints.
 4. The problem among Christians today is that because there is so much darkness, there is no way for God to expose darkness; in order for the darkness to be made known, there must first be the shining of the light; God speaks through things that become negative in the midst of the shining of the light

Numbers27:21 And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, and he shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before Jehovah. At his word shall they go out and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even the whole assembly.

If in a certain church things that are wrong are easily found out, that church is normal. But if in a particular church it is not possible to find out what is wrong, this is an indication that the church there is in darkness. When darkness prevails, it is not possible for negative matters to be exposed. For this, light is necessary. What is exposed under the shining of the light is God's speaking. God speaks through things becoming negative. This kind of negative situation is an indicator of the shortage of Christ. By reading the negative situations in this way, we come to know God's leading. Then in our locality we shall know what God wants us to do, and we should then follow His leading. 5 • 金

- C. If we as the church would be the breastplate of judgment, we must fulfill certain requirements:
1. We need to be transformed and transparent; then Christ as the spiritual alphabet must be inscribed into us clearly and definitely **2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.**
 2. Just as God could not speak through the breastplate unless the stones had been inscribed with letters, so God cannot speak through His redeemed people unless they have been inscribed with Christ. **Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will impart My laws into their mind, and on their hearts I will inscribe them; and I will be God to them, and they will be a people to Me.**
 3. Because there is a shortage of transformation, transparency, inscribing, and enlightening, we need to pray that we may become transparent, have more of Christ inscribed into us, and experience more enlightening **Revelation 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.**
 To some extent, we may be able to teach the Bible, for we may have been reading and studying it for years. But when it comes to ministering Christ, we have a shortage. We do not have that much of Christ inscribed into our being. Perhaps we have only part of a letter inscribed into us.
 4. The fact that Christ is the spiritual alphabet for both inscription and completion indicates that He is inexhaustible; although we may enjoy His inscription, there is still something more of Him that we need for completion
- D. The breastplate is the building up of the Body life and the means for us to know God's will concerning His people; then we will receive the Lord's judgment of what we have to do or what we must not do; we will know the Lord's way, and the whole church will go on according to the judgment given by the Lord. E. We need to pray that every local church would become a
- E. We need to pray that every local church would become a breastplate according to the picture in Exodus 28.

Experience (The model of working Life and family life)

① ***We see that the breastplate was borne upon Aaron's heart before the Lord. This signifies that the entire church as one entity built together is borne upon Christ's loving heart before God. What a great comfort this is to us! Many among us have hardships and difficulties. We may have problems at work or at home. Human life is not easy. However, if we consider the picture of the breastplate on Aaron's heart, we shall realize that we are not in our hardships, difficulties, or problems---we are on Christ's heart before God. When the enemy comes to trouble us, we should declare, "Satan, right now I am borne on Christ's heart before God."***

Human life is not easy, it is in fact a war. Christian life is also the same. In the life of spiritual warfare, Satan will often appeal to you. For example, "Do you think you can get along in the company, if you go to the church meeting but take no part in the drinking party or putting in no overtime?", "Since you are tired today, why not think of your health by taking a rest from the morning revival and the church meeting?", "Why not letting the children stay home and study for their tests and take a rest from the church meeting?", you will be weakened if you respond and consider such appeals from Satan. Concerning the affairs at work, the most important thing is to concentrate on doing them and improve your performance. In addition, you need to pay attention to your health, and in order to be healed, you need first to revive your spirit every morning and participate in the church meeting. Including the children, the first thing that is necessary for you to have is the absoluteness and the faint in God. The next thing is to keep your balance. You need to declare in the following manner against Satan's appeals. "Satan, back away! First, I will pursue God's righteousness and God's kingdom.", "Satan, back away! I am a member of God's family that is nestled in the Christ's heart of love."

② ***The breastplate is the building up of the Body life and the means for us to know God's will concerning His people; then we will receive the Lord's judgment (verdict) of what we have to do or what we must not do; we will know the Lord's way, and the whole church will go on according to the judgment given by the Lord.***

You should not live according to your own natural feeling and preference. There is a need for you to follow the judgment of the breastplate and open yourself to the Lord, and the brothers and sisters who guided you. Because the Lord's guidance surpasses your mind, you won't be able to hear His voice if you don't open your mind, your heart and your spirit. In addition, things belong to this world, old man, self, and flesh will all need to be judged.

290 慕い求める — 主の御前に生きることを

- 1 あさなターなに主よ、われはなれをしたう世かいあり、
なれ以がーいをしたわずに、たのしませや、ただなれを。
くるしかなしいときにも、こころはげますもの一なきときも、
なみだほほをぬらすときも、主よぬぐいて、なぐさめや。
- 2 わがゆめーはうるわしくも、ながうちにおらせたまえ、
主のほかーにたのしませず、じぶん勝手にせぬように！
しづかなよるにもとむるは、主がわれとともにいーますことぞ、
あさつとーにわれもとむは、主のささやく、ほそきこえ。
- 3 みことばーに触れるたびに、みひかりもて見せたまえ、
すくいぬーしとそのめぐみ、すべてわれにぞくするを。
たよりもなくずおるとき、いのりを聞きてめぐーみたまえや、
たとえいーのりとどかずも、ともにいませ、御かお見る。
- 4 てんのさーちをおもうたび、なれにまみゆるをしたう、
主の来たーる日、ともにある、そのよろこび、待ちのぞむ。
御まえに生くすべおしえや、あさ夕なれはわがひーとつ世かい、
なれ以がーいをしたわずに、たのしませや、ただなれを。

#290 羨慕—活在主面前

- 1 主耶穌、我羨慕活在你面前，在早晨，在晚上，只有一世间；
不让我心快乐，若我在爱慕、在感觉、或思想无你的事物。
每一刻，每一天，不论何痛苦，当世上正没有什么可鼓舞，
当叹息正不禁，眼泪流滴滴，主，擦干我眼泪，平静我叹息。
- 2 我每次如梦想人生的善美，亲爱主，我求你，必须也在内！
不让我离开你去寻求快乐，不让我凭自己去单独选择！
当每夜万籁静，孤单自处时，主耶穌，我求你，仍与我同止；
当每晨未破晓，我仍蒙昧中，求你来低声唤，将我耳开通。
- 3 当每次我虔读你圣洁话语，求你用你荣耀照亮每一句；
让我能明看见：这宝贵救主，和祂的大救恩，无一不我属。
当我正无倚靠跪到你座前，求垂听我祷告，赐够用恩典；
有时候因有错，祷告你不听，别收回你同在，使我感不宁。

389. Longings - For Living in the Lord's Presence

- 1 Lord Jesus, I long in Thy presence to live,
From morning to evening my one world Thou art;
O let not my heart be contented or rest
When loving or seeking what with Thee doth part.
Each moment, each day, throughout suffering and pain,
When nought in the world can give comfort or cheer,
When sighing and weeping encompasses me,
Lord, still all my sighing and wipe every tear.
- 2 Each time when I dream of the goodness of life,
I pray Thee, dear Lord, that Thou in it may be;
O do not allow me to choose by myself,
Nor seek any pleasure that's other than Thee.
Each night when alone in the stillness I lie,
I pray Thee, Lord Jesus, that Thou wilt be near;
Each morning ere dawn comes, while still in my sleep,
Then whispering call me and open my ear.
- 3 Each time, Lord, when reading in Thy holy Word,
I pray that Thy glory may shine on each line,
That clearly I'll see what a Savior I have
And how great salvation that Thou hast made mine.
When helpless I come, Lord, to kneel at Thy throne,
I pray Thee to hear me and grant me Thy grace;
If thru my shortcomings Thou hear not my prayer,
Withdraw not Thy presence, O hide not Thy face.



胸当ての上にある十二の宝石
(その上にイスラエルの十二部族
の名が彫られている)