

# WEEK 45 — OUTLINE

## **The Breastplate—the Central and Ultimate Point of the Priesthood**

Scripture Reading: Exo. 28:15-30

### « DAY 1 »

#### **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:**

- 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.
- 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 (v. 21; cf. Psa. 73:2-3, 16-17, 22-28).
- 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 (Exo. 28:29).

### « DAY 2 »

#### **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 (vv. 17-21):**

- A. The twelve precious stones set in gold (vv. 17-20) 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 Cor. 3:10-12a; Eph. 1:22-23).
- B. As components of the church, the believers, who were created from dust (Gen. 2:7), must be transformed in their human nature by and with the divine nature through the working of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:3, 18) to become precious stones for God's eternal building (Matt. 16:18; John 1:42; 1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 21:18-21); the Christian life is a life of transformation—daily God is seeking to transform us (Rom. 12:2-3; 2 Cor. 4:16).

- 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 (cf. Rev. 21:12-13).
- 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 (Exo. 28:20) signifies that the transformed and mingled believers are built in the divine nature of Christ into one entity (2 Pet. 1:4).
- F. In God's eternal plan and according to His eternal view, the church, borne on Christ's heart (Exo. 28:29) and held in the span of His loving care (v. 16b; cf. John 10:28), is such a mingling of the Triune God with redeemed humanity.

### « DAY 3 »

### **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 (2 Cor. 3:3):**

- A. Christ is inscribed into the believers through their experience of Him and by the inscribing of the New Testament ministry (vv. 2-6).
- B. The letters engraved on the twelve stones typify Christ as the letters in the heavenly alphabet (cf. Rev. 22:13a).
- 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.

### « DAY 4 »

### **IV. After the Urim and the Thummim were put into the breastplate, it became not only a memorial but also a breastplate of judgment (Exo. 28:30):**

- A. Urim means "lights," "illuminators" (v. 30):
  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 (David Baron).

3. The Urim typifies Christ as lights, illuminators (John 8:12; Luke 1:78-79), shining through the Spirit (the oil) and the cross (the fire from the altar).
- B. Thummim means “perfecters,” “completers” (Exo. 28:30):
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 (David Baron).
  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 (Heb. 12:2); thus, He is the spiritual alphabet for both inscribing and completing (cf. Rev. 22:13a).
  4. Together, the Urim and the Thummim typify Christ as God’s witness, God’s testimony (3:14), as the means for God to speak to His people (Heb. 1:2).
  5. In the New Testament, the reality of the Urim and the Thummim is the mingled spirit—the unveiling Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, indwelling our receiving spirit, our regenerated human spirit (Rom. 8:4, 14, 16; Rev. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10).
- 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” (Lev. 8:8; Num. 27:21; Deut. 33:8; Josh. 7:16-21; 1 Sam. 23:6, 9-12; 28:6; Ezra 2:63; Neh. 7:65).
- 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.

## « DAY 5 »

### **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 (Rev. 2–3) 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 (cf. 1:9).
  - 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 (cf. Eph. 5:8-9).
  - 5. By reading the negative situations in this way, we come to know God's leading, His judgment; then in our locality we shall know what God wants us to do, and we should then follow His leading.

## « DAY 6 »

- 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 Cor. 3:3, 18; cf. 1 Chron. 28:19).
  - 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 (Heb. 8:10).

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 (Rev. 22:1; 21:11; Psa. 119:130; Isa. 2:5; Eph. 5:8-9; Psa. 89:15; 1 John 1:7).
  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 (cf. Heb. 6:1; Phil. 3:10, 13-14).
- 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 breastplate according to the picture in Exodus 28.

## << WEEK 45 — DAY 1 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Exo. 28:15 “...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...”

21 “...According to the names of the sons of Israel, twelve, according to their names; they shall be like the engravings of a signet,...for the twelve tribes.”

The breastplate in Exodus 28:15-16 is a very fine, even the finest, revelation concerning the church. The ephod refers to Christ, and the breastplate refers to the church. This means that the ephod with the breastplate gives us a picture of Christ with the church.

According to Exodus 28, the central item of the priestly garments is the breastplate, not the ephod. Of course, this central item belongs to the ephod. In the description of the priestly garments, the first thing mentioned is the breastplate. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1381-1382)

### Today's Reading

What was the function of the breastplate? According to Exodus 28:15, the breastplate was called the breastplate of judgment....The judgment here is not mainly to determine what is right or wrong, what is just or unjust. Instead, this judgment is so that God's people could know His leading....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.

The breastplate functions as a heavenly, divine, and spiritual typewriter. Of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, eighteen were contained in the names of the twelve tribes inscribed in the stones set on the breastplate. The remaining four letters were contained in the Thummim attached to the breastplate. Therefore, with the breastplate there were all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet....The Lord's leading could be obtained through the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim much like a word, or a sentence, is composed one letter at a time by using a typewriter.

After the death of Moses, the high priest obtained [God's] leading through the breastplate. He would put on the priestly garments with the breastplate and go into the tabernacle. In this way, the children of Israel could act according to God's leading made known through the breastplate.

In Romans 8:14 Paul says that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. In Romans 8 we find the reality of the breastplate.

The breastplate [also] typifies the church....If we do not know the church, we do not know what the Lord's leading is. Actually God's leading and the church are one.

The breastplate typifies the church, and the ephod typifies Christ. Thus, the breastplate on the ephod signifies that the church is borne by Christ upon His breast. Furthermore, the fact that God's leading was made known by means of the breastplate indicates that today 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.

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. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1382-1385, 1389-1390)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 123

## « WEEK 45 — DAY 2 »

### Morning Nourishment

Exo. 28:17 “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.”

The breastplate on the ephod signifies the church as the building together of God’s redeemed people upon Christ. The twelve precious stones set in gold (Exo. 28:17-20) 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 Cor. 3:10-12a; Eph. 1:22-23). Therefore, the breastplate is a miniature of the building up of God’s people...indicating that the believers in Christ are distinct individuals but are not divided (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27). The entire ephod with its shoulder pieces and the breastplate are a marvelous portrait of Christ with the church. (Exo. 28:15, footnote 1)

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. Precious stones are not created but are formed by the transforming of created things. This signifies that the church is produced by transformation, from something natural into something divine. As components of the church, the believers, who were created of dust (Gen. 2:7), must be transformed in their human nature by and with the divine nature through the working of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18) to become precious stones for God’s eternal building. (Exo. 28:17, footnote 1)

### Today’s Reading

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...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. The setting of the stones in gold (Exo. 28:20) signifies that the transformed and mingled believers are built in the divine nature of Christ into one entity. These people, being of the number twelve, complete the eternal purpose of God and become the administration of the divine government in the universe. In God’s eternal plan and according to His eternal view, the church, borne on Christ’s heart (v. 29) and held in the span of His loving care (v. 16b), is such a mingling of the Triune God with redeemed humanity. (Exo. 28:17, footnote 2)

The ephod...portrays Christ expressed in His divinity and humanity with His attributes and virtues...Then upon the ephod, upon the expression of Christ, there is the church. Both the shoulder plates and the breastplate symbolize the church. First, the church is symbolized as a testimony of the Lord Jesus. This is the function of the two shoulder-pieces, for two signifies a testimony. Thus, the two plates on the shoulders of the ephod signify the church as the testimony of Christ. The breastplate composed of twelve stones set in gold symbolizes the saints as transformed precious stones built together in the divine nature of Christ to become one entity. This is the built-up church. Therefore, the ephod with all that it bears, the three plates, is actually a picture of Christ and the church. This is a matter of great importance.

[In Exodus 28:30] 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.” (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1397, 1403)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msgs. 124-125

## « WEEK 45 — DAY 3 »

### Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 3:3 “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.”

Rev. 22:13 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

Exo. 28:30 “And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim...”

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 (see 2 Cor. 3:3 and footnotes). Christ is inscribed into the believers through their experience of Him. The letters engraved on the twelve stones typify Christ as the letters in the heavenly alphabet (cf. Rev. 22:13a). (Exo. 28:21, footnote 1)

### Today's Reading

The Urim had twelve illuminators to enlighten all twelve of the transparent precious stones. But suppose no letters had been inscribed on these stones....Nothing would be shown, for there would have been no letters on the stones to be illuminated. Even if the stones had been enlightened by the illuminators and thereby shone with light, there would not have been any content. The content depends on the letters inscribed on the stones.

The principle is the same with the living letters of Christ in 2 Corinthians 3. Only when Christ has been inscribed into our being do we become His living letters. 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. Yes, the Lord does speak through His redeemed people. However, He actually speaks through the Christ who has been inscribed into them. This means that we need the content of Christ inscribed as letters into our being. Otherwise, God will have no way to speak through us, for there will not be any letters inscribed into us.

Few [Christians today] have truly been inscribed with Christ. Even with these few, the amount of Christ inscribed may not be very great. Moreover, many Christians are not transparent....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.

Another basic matter related to the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim is that the twelve stones on the breastplate were not divided but were built up together as one entity. This signifies the building together of God's redeemed people into one entity, the church. However, today's Christians are scattered, separated, and divided. Furthermore, there is no building up.

We must remember that the twelve stones on the breastplate were arranged in three rows of four, signifying humanity mingled with divinity to form a complete unit for the full expression of God and His eternal government. This is the significance of the number twelve, and it also is a basic condition for having the Urim and the Thummim....If we do not have [the] basic items [concerning the breastplate], there is no way to have the Lord's leading.

Exodus 28:30 clearly indicates that the Urim and the Thummim were added to something which had previously been made ready....The speaking of the Lord results from the readiness or the preparation of the breastplate. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1409-1412)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 126



## « WEEK 45 — DAY 4 »

### Morning Nourishment

Exo. 28:29-30 “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. 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.”

After the Urim and the Thummim were put into it, the breastplate became not only a memorial but also a breastplate of judgment. (Exo. 28:30, footnote 1)

[Urim means] lights, illuminators. 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. 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 (David Baron). The Urim typifies Christ as lights, illuminators (John 8:12; Eph. 5:14), shining through the Spirit (the oil) and the cross (the fire from the altar). (Exo. 28:30, footnote 2)

The Urim contained oil that was burned with fire from the altar. That fire came from God. Hence, it was a divine fire, a heavenly fire, that burned the oil in the Urim to give light....The oil typifies the Spirit, and the fire comes from the altar, which typifies the cross....In our experience...as Christ shines within us, the life-giving Spirit is burning and the cross is working. In our experience of Christ as the illuminator, the shining One, we have the cross, the Spirit, and Christ Himself. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1421-1422)

### Today’s Reading

The names on the twelve stones on 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 (David Baron). By the shining of the Urim on the individual precious stones, the full alphabet of twenty-two letters could be used to spell out words and sentences. The Thummim typifies Christ as the perfecter and completer (Heb. 12:2). Christ is the spiritual alphabet for both inscribing (see footnote 1 on Exo. 28:21) and completing. Together, the Urim and the Thummim typify Christ as God’s witness, God’s testimony (Rev. 3:14), as the means for God to speak to His people (Heb. 1:2). In the New Testament, the reality of the Urim and the Thummim is the mingled spirit—the unveiling Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, indwelling our receiving spirit, our regenerated human spirit (Rom. 8:4, 14). (Exo. 28:30, footnote 3)

In Exodus 28:30 and in Deuteronomy 33:8 and 10, God’s judgments, referring to God’s law with its verdicts and judgments (see footnote 4 on Luke 1:6), are related to the Urim and the Thummim. 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. (Exo. 28:30, footnote 1)

The word judgment in [Exodus 28:29-30 and Deuteronomy 33:10] indicates that God has a regulation concerning everything among His people. All the regulations will issue in judgments, and these judgments become God’s leading. Thus, the leading of God comes from His judgments, which are based on His regulations.

First God gave the Ten Commandments. Then He issued many regulations and ordinances as supplements to these commandments. The Ten Commandments are the principles of God’s regulations, but the supplements in Exodus 21 through 23 provide the details of these regulations. In these detailed regulations we have God’s judgment. This judgment leads us to certain decisions.

If we would receive the Lord’s leading, many things about us need to be judged by God. Our flesh, our wrongdoings, and our natural life must all be judged by Him. God’s regulations require that all these things be set aside. What remains afterward is truly of God. In this way we come to know God’s leading. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 1413)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 127

## << WEEK 45 — DAY 5 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Num. 27:21 “And he [Joshua] 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.”

2 Cor. 11:29 “Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I myself do not burn?”

God’s way of speaking through the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim is the opposite of what we would expect. God speaks not through the stones that are shining, but through stones that become dark. This means that God speaks through negative situations. 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. Our natural concept would be that God’s speaking through the breastplate came from the stones that were shining. Actually, He spoke through the stones that suddenly became dark.

Paul’s Epistles and also 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....[For example, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians] according to his reading of the negative situation at Corinth. By considering that situation, he knew what to write. But although his writing was based on the negative things, in this Epistle he ministered positive things—the riches of Christ—to the church. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 1431)

### Today’s Reading

The problem among Christians today is that because there is so much darkness, there is no way for God to expose darkness. When everything is in darkness, it is difficult to point out a particular matter that is in darkness. Suppose in a room there are many rows of lights on the ceiling. If all the lights are shining, it will be easy to find one that becomes dark. This illustrates how God spoke through the breastplate. The darkening of a particular stone was God’s instant speaking.

In order for the darkness to be made known, there must first be the shining of light....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. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1431-1432)

[Paul] had the churches of God and His children upon his shoulders and breast. He came to God with a fearful heart, and the Father of light shined on him and revealed the needs of the churches which he was shouldering and embracing....Paul wrote his letters to the churches according to the same principle as the high priest who sought God’s light with the breastplate of judgment....We have to understand the principle of bringing the Lord’s saints into the presence of God. Paul brought the children of God with him as he looked to the Lord for many days. When he saw something in God’s light, he wrote a letter based on that light....To understand God’s will and way for His people and for the church, there must be some who will shoulder God’s children and embrace them, bring them into God’s presence, read their condition in God’s light, and then write down what they have received before the Lord. This is the way God reveals Himself to His children in the church. (CWWN, vol. 38, pp. 424-425)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 129; CWWN, vol. 38, ch. 56

## << WEEK 45 — DAY 6 >>

### Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 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.”

Rev. 21:11 “Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.”

The leading obtained through the breastplate always involves a judgment. This means that the Lord’s speaking through the breastplate is through negative situations. If this speaking were only through positive situations, there would be no need of judgment, for everything would be positive and justified.

The apostle Paul was one who was truly shining. Under the shining of Paul, the darkness was exposed. Paul wrote certain of his Epistles according to the darkness, according to the negative condition, of the saints in the churches. Because Paul saw certain dark areas in the church in Corinth, areas that were letters of God’s judgment, Paul could write Corinthians as a book of judgment. But along with all the judgment contained in this Epistle, there are many positive things: the riches of Christ ministered to the believers at Corinth. This is God’s way of speaking. Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, God’s speaking is according to the negative situation, yet with the riches of Christ as the supply for His people. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1432-1433)

### Today’s Reading

If we as the church would be the breastplate of judgment, we must fulfill certain requirements. First, we need to be transformed and transparent. Then Christ as the letters of the spiritual alphabet must be inscribed into us clearly and definitely. This is to have the adequate experience of Christ.

If we do not try to minister Christ to others, we may not realize how short we are concerning the experience of Christ. When we try to speak to others about the experience of Christ, we may find that we ourselves are still very short of experience. We may have little of the real experience of Christ to minister to others. As those who would shepherd the saints, we need the experience of Christ. Otherwise we shall lack the proper spiritual vocabulary required for ministering Christ....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....Therefore, it is very difficult to know the Lord’s leading through the breastplate.

Because there is such 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. Then we shall realize that, even if we are full of Christ, we still have a shortage, for something of Christ’s riches is still lacking. This is what is indicated by the marvelous picture of the breastplate with the Urim and the Thummim.

With the breastplate and the Urim and the Thummim we see two kinds of alphabets. One kind of alphabet is for inscribing, and the other kind is for completing. If we are not yet full of Christ, what we need is the inscribing. Christ must be inscribed into us until we are full of Him. It is when we are full of Christ that we recognize the need for completion. Thus, if we are not full of Christ, we need Him as the alphabet for inscription. But when we are full of Him, we need Him as the alphabet for our completion. Believers like the apostle Paul, those who are full of Christ, realize that they still need Christ. However, those who are short of Christ may not sense the need for Christ....It is when we have Christ inscribed into us that we realize we are still short of Christ. Then we shall seek Him to be our completion.

Only through experience can we understand what it is to have Christ inscribed into us and to have Him complete us. Therefore, we all need to pray more regarding these things. I hope that every local church will become a breastplate according to the picture in Exodus 28. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1433-1434)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 128

# Lord, we meet to seek Thy face

## Prayer — In the Holiest

772

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with the lyrics '1. Lord, we meet to seek Thy face' and includes chords D, G, A7, and D. The second staff continues with 'And in one ac - cord to pray;' and includes chords G, D, and A. The third staff begins with '5 We a ho - ly priest - hood are,' and includes chords D, G, A, D, G, A7, and D. The fourth staff is labeled 'Chorus' and begins with '(C) Here to - geth - er we would pray,' and includes chords G/B, G, D7, G, Em, D, and A7. The fifth staff continues with 'Till our spir - its min - gled are' and includes chords D, G, A, Bm, G, A7, and D. The sixth staff concludes with 'And Thy Church is built and blest.' and includes chords G, A7, and D.

2. As true priests we long to be,  
With our spirit sense Thy will,  
Thus to serve before Thee here  
That Thy plan Thou may fulfill.

3. To the holiest place we come,  
Now to touch Thy throne of grace,  
By the inner sense to pray  
And Thy Spirit's flow to trace.

4. From Thy throne of grace to me  
Rivers of Thy grace proceed;  
Thus my spirit is refreshed,  
Helping me in time of need.

5. May our prayers expression give  
To Thy Spirit's mind alone;  
Praying not by our desire,  
But according to Thine own.

6. Though with temporal matters pressed,  
Which we fain would bring to Thee,  
Rather than Thy care to seek,  
We would here Thy channel be.

7. Here we seek Thy list'ning ear  
May Thy living water flow;  
When Thy grace does satisfy,  
Only then Thy work we'll know.