

PREPARED FOR MINISTRY #3 “The Breastplate of Decisions”

Exodus 28:15, 21, 29-30

Exodus 28-29 are God’s lengthy instruction of preparing Aaron/sons for the priesthood. Will look at the breastplate of decisions.

Exodus 28:15-30 ¹⁵“Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions—the work of skilled hands. Make it like the ephod: of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen. ²¹There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes. ²⁹“Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD. ³⁰Also put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron’s heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD.

I. THE NEED FOR DECISION

A. The great need of leadership is decision making: **V15** *Fashion a breastpiece for making decisions...*

1. Almost all decisions involve options: It could go one way or another:

a. Decisions always involve options: It often is not clear which way is right/wrong – or which way is best

1. Often we don’t know what is right/best 2. Sometimes it involves issues we have not faced before

2. Many of the decisions that need to be made involve other people

a. A priest was ministering to God on behalf of other people

b. Sometimes we are faced with different options in people

1. Different stories 2. Different/competing agendas 3. Denials

a. Solomon faced w/2 women: She killed my son – no, she killed my son! Which one is right?

B. So a major part of any ministry/leadership is the ability to make right decisions

1. Breast plate of judgment: To make a decision/to decide between

a. Have to decide the best plan for the future b. Decide the truth in lies/differing stories

2. Purpose of was to ask God for direction – inquire of Lord

a. Urim & Thummim: “Lights & Perfections” some believed stones would glow/or fail to glow to give an answer

3. If you can’t make good/wise decisions – you will struggle in any form of leadership

II. THE FOUNDATION OF COMPASSION

A. Making decisions/deciding between people isn’t simple data/math

1. It affects people’s lives: *Marriage/children/ministry/salvation*

2. So God gives a key to being able to make decisions/hear from God: Compassion

a. V21, 29 There are to be twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes. ²⁹“Whenever Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the breastpiece of decision as a continuing memorial before the LORD.

3. Carry the people over your heart: **You have to care!**

a. If you care: You will make wisdom in decisions a priority: Seeking wisdom

b. If you care: You are more likely to be able to hear from God

1. God is more likely to speak to/help someone who loves his people

c. If you care: You chose what’s best for people – not just ego/selfishness

III. HAVING A RIGHT HEART

A. It’s not an accident the breast plate is worn over the heart

1. **The heart is the key to all right decisions/actions!**

a. Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

2. So a crucial need is to keep our heart right!

a. Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

1. When we do right we often make right decisions; When do wrong/make amazingly bad decisions

3. OT word Integrity: “Wholeness of heart towards God”

a. Integrity in English from word int/integer – “whole number” Complete/unsplintered/undivided

b. Thom (integrity) plural of that is Thummim: OT priests: Chest-piece called Urim & Thummim

1. God guides the wholehearted!

c. 1 Ki 22:34 And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.

1. At a venture... simplicity – no specific plan/no guile. Practical outflow: When we have absolute honesty w/ourselves

4. When we have integrity – God is able to speak to us/guide us