



Sowing the Word

שמעון למוי ויהודה יששכר
ישראל ראובן יוסם
ובנימן נפתלי גד ואשר

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.

-Exodus 28:29

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So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

(Nehemiah 8:8)

Table of Contents

Outline.....	3
Daily Reading.....	4-10
With the Word Commentary.....	11-16
Devotion.....	17

Helpful Study Resource:

Explore the Book by J. Sidlow Baxter

Commentary:

The commentary used with permission throughout
this booklet is:

With the Word Bible Commentary

by Warren W. Wiersbe.

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Outline

Theme: God saves His people that they might be His and know His presence with them

I. Salvation: The Lord Delivers His People—1–18

"I am the Lord; I will bring you out ... I will rescue you ... I will redeem you." (Ex 6:6)

1. Israel's Bondage (1)
2. The Lord calls a leader (2-4)
3. The Lord's confronts Pharaoh (5-7)
4. The Lord Plagues Egypt [9 plagues] (7-10)
5. The Lord's Passover deliverance (11-12)
6. The Lord's Red Sea rescue (13-15)
7. The Lord Provides for His people (16-18).

II. Covenant: The Lord Claims His People—19–24

"I will take you as My people" (Ex 6:7)

1. Preparation for Revelation (19)
2. The Ten Commandments (20)
3. Laws governing living (21-23)
4. The Covenant Ratified – blood & God's glory (24)

III. Worship: The Lord Dwells with His People—25–40

"I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God." (Ex 6:7)

1. Instructions about the Tabernacle—(25-27)
2. The Priesthood (28-29)
3. More instructions for the Tabernacle (30-31)
4. The Golden Calf idolatry (32)
5. Moses intercession and intervention (33-34)
6. Construction of the tabernacle (35–39)
7. God's glory enters the tabernacle (40)

DIVINE DIRECTION

A Topical Study of
EXODUS 28:30
Jon Courson

Sometimes it seems to me that the children of Israel had it made in the shade because when they had questions or needed direction, they could go to the high priest who, after consulting the Urim and the Thummim, would give them the answer they sought. How did this work? Evidently, the Lord would make known the answer in some wonderful, miraculous, mysterious way through lights that would shine through the stones on the breastplate of the high priest. But, although this initially sounds like a perfect solution to our questions, there were two problems associated with this particular method of receiving direction. The first was proximity, the second priority.

The high priest would only be able to be in one place at any time. Therefore, if you were in Galilee, one hundred miles from the temple in Jerusalem, and had a question, you couldn't fax the high priest. You couldn't call him on your cell phone. You couldn't even get in a car and drive to Jerusalem. To get direction, it was necessary to leave family, livestock, and crops in order to make a long and difficult journey. But an even greater problem was priority, for the Urim and the Thummim could be consulted only concerning matters of grave consequence. Consequently, people would be very reluctant to bring their questions to the high priest.

Fifteen hundred years later, when Jesus came on the scene, it was a grand and glorious declaration He made when He said, "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12). And "I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).

And concerning the issue of priority, Peter doesn't say, "Don't bother God with the small stuff." No, he says, "Cast all your cares on Him for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Anytime, any place we need direction, all we have to do is ask.

How does this work out practically? I believe God directs us in three ways...

Impressions of the Heart

In the Old Testament, where were the stones that would give direction? Over the heart of the high priest. Now, however, the Lord gives direction not by a breastplate worn over the heart but by the branding He does upon our hearts.

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:33

This is fantastic. Here, God declares we'll know what we ought to do not by some external stone but by impressions and desires within our hearts. That is why David could say, "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). What are we to do to find God's will? Augustine nailed it when he said, "Love God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength—and do whatever you want."

Why do I live in Oregon? Because I want to. Why do I teach the Bible? Because I enjoy it. You see, I am simple enough to believe God's promise that if I delight in Him, He will put desires in my heart which conform to His perfect plan for me. If you're not delighting in the Lord, don't follow the desires of your heart because they will lead you on a dangerous path. But if you say, "Although I know I have problems and flaws, but I do love the Lord and I want to delight in Him." He'll give you light and direction, the Urim and the Thummim in your heart.

Interaction with the Church

Because my heart can, at times, be a little hard and things can get a bit fuzzy, I need to understand that, just as God made His will known through the gems which represented the Twelve Tribes, He continues to make His will known through the living stones of His church (1 Peter 2:5). You may have an impression on your heart, a desire stirring within. That's great, for that's the way the Lord works in giving direction. Now get it confirmed through the gems, the living stones, the children of God's family.

It was as they were worshiping and praising the Lord that He said to the church in Antioch, "Separate Paul and Barnabas for the ministry" (Acts 13). Why would the Lord choose to work through the church? Because He's into this thing called family.

We have a tendency to think, I don't need my sisters and brothers. I get irritated with them. I see all kinds of flaws in them. I'll just figure out my

own life—just me and God. But that’s not the heart of the Father, for He said, “Whenever two or three meet together in My name, I will be in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20). He wants His children to come together. Why? Any parent knows why. There’s nothing more delightful than seeing the family discussing issues, working out problems, wrestling through dilemmas together. There’s nothing better than seeing your kids talking and sharing, interacting and caring. It’s as if our Father says, “You’re going to be together for a billion years. Therefore, I want you to get to know each other and appreciate one another this side of eternity.”

“Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as is the manner of some,” the author of the Book of Hebrews warns (Hebrews 10:25). Don’t miss the opportunity to dialogue and to learn from your brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Instruction from the Word

People sometimes say to me, “I don’t know what to do.”

“What’s the Lord been showing you in your Bible reading?” I ask.

“My what?”

“Your morning devotions.”

“Ummmm....”

The impressions of your heart might be fuzzy. Interaction with others may be flawed. But the Word of God is infallible and practical—the perfect lamp for our feet, the ideal light for our path (Psalm 119:105). We are so blessed to have this book in our hands, available night and day. More than any other way, this is how God speaks to me. Yes, He puts impressions and desires on my heart. Yes, He speaks through brothers and sisters in the family. But above all, He speaks through His Word.

When there is harmony between the impressions on my heart, interaction with the body, and instruction from the Word, I can be sure it is direction from the Lord as I cast all my cares and concerns upon Him. Are there any stipulations? Yes...

A Heart of Expectancy

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God Who gives to all men liberally,” James writes. “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for the man who doubts is like the waves of the sea and let not that man expect to receive anything” (James 1:5–7). Why does God want us to trust Him? Why is faith a prerequisite to answered prayer? Because faith is the language of eternity. Thus, this life is Language School—where we learn to speak the

language we'll be speaking for the next billion years to come, where we learn to speak the language of faith.

A Spirit of Integrity

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them" (Proverbs 11:3). The Hebrew word translated "integrity" is tummah, which comes from the word thum-mim. Like its root word, tummah, or integrity, speaks of perfection, of an absence of double-mindedness. Many times, people say, "Lord, what's Your opinion on this? What would You see as being best for me?" But they want nothing more than to take His direction into account when they make their own decision regarding whether they are to marry that girl, take this job, make that move. And theirs are the prayers God doesn't answer, for He doesn't direct people who aren't committed to obeying Him.

Why? Because He is a God of love. You see, God isn't saying, "If you don't come with integrity, I'm not talking." No, He's saying, "If you choose not to do what I tell you, the result will be disobedience. Therefore, I will remain lovingly silent, for you can't disobey what I don't tell you."

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:1, 2

Because He's in love with us, God wants the best for us. Therefore, He says, "You'll know My good and acceptable and perfect will when you sacrifice your right to make your own decisions."

And when at last we come to the place where we say, "Lord, I'm tired of calling the shots. Please tell me what to do, for I intend to obey You fully, gladly, joyfully with integrity," He says "I'll be happy to."

—Courson, J. (2005). *Jon Courson's application commentary : Volume one : Genesis-Job (328)*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

With the Word Bible Commentary

Exodus 28

The priesthood was both a privilege and a responsibility. It was wonderful to wear the glorious garments and be in the holy courts, but being a priest also brought serious obligations.

They ministered first to the Lord. Four times in this chapter, God emphasized this point (vv. 1, 3, 4, 41). God's servants must seek to please Him alone (1 Cor. 4:1–7). We must be "bondservants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5).

They ministered to the people. God's people are like jewels to Him (Mal. 3:17). Our great High Priest carries us over His heart and on His shoulders. He represents us before the throne of God so that we are "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6).

They ministered together. God supplied their needs as they served the people. There was no competition or confusion in the holy tabernacle because they served the same Lord and obeyed the same Word. God has a ministry for each of us, and He will equip us to do it.

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). With the word Bible commentary (Ex 28:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

With the Word Bible Commentary

Exodus 29

We dedicate, but God consecrates. We surrender, but He sanctifies and sets us apart for His exclusive use. As God's priesthood, His people have experienced spiritually what Aaron and his sons experienced physically.

We have been washed. The blood of Christ has cleansed us (Rev. 1:5–6), and our past is gone (1 Cor. 6:9–11). Sinful hearts are purified not by religious rites but by faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 15:9; Titus 3:5).

We have been clothed. We stand in the very righteousness of Christ (Isa. 61:10; 2 Cor. 5:21) and wear the garments of God's grace (Col. 3:1ff.).

We have been anointed. We have the Holy Spirit living within (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:27), and He enables us to minister.

We belong to God. The priests were "marked" by the blood on the ear (hear God), the hand (serve God), and the foot (walk with God). The "continual burnt offering" morning and evening was a reminder of their complete and constant devotion to God. Don't forget your daily presentation of yourself to God (Rom. 12:1–2).

—Wiersbe, W. W. (1997, c1991). *With the word Bible commentary* (Ex 26:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

“Thou shalt wash them with water.”

—Exodus 29:4

By: F B Meyer

Taken from: *Our Daily Homily*

This chapter tells of the consecration to their high office of Aaron and his sons. The entire family is constantly joined thus together as one in God's sight. Similarly, Christ and his house — which is ourselves, who believe — are one. We too must be sprinkled by the blood on ear and thumb and toe, as those who have been redeemed. We too must be consecrated and anointed; and there must be the cleanliness of which these words speak.

This is where so many have erred; they have sought consecration, anointing, and the priestly office; but have not remembered that their bodies must first be washed with pure water.

We must be clean in our habits. — If there is anything in our daily behavior which is not quite clean, it must be put away. There seems some incongruity between the anointing of the Holy Ghost and the smell of spirits or fumes of tobacco. Any excessive indulgence of the flesh, even in legitimate directions, and all indulgence in wrong ones, are inconsistent with the life of consecration.

We must be cleansed in our thoughts. — Whenever temptation is suggested, even though it is still in the far distance, we must turn from it with loathing, and ask that the blood of Jesus may go on cleansing hour by hour. “Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee.”

We must be cleansed in our intentions. — The self-life recedes as it is driven from the outworks of our nature, and goes deeper into the motives and springs of action. We discover that self is the spring of so much of our religious activity. Everywhere we need the laver, the hourly washing of John 13.