

## THE PERFECTING TRAINING ON ORGANIC SHEPHERDING

Jan 14th 2007

Message One

### Picking up a Burden to Care for People

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 5:14; 11:28-29; Exo. 28:4; 15-21, 29-30, 41; 1 Cor. 9:16-17

- I. Picking up a burden organically to care for people through much and thorough prayer—2 Cor. 5:14; 11:28-29; Phil. 1:7-8; Acts 18:5:**
- A. After we reconsecrate ourselves and deal thoroughly with the Lord, we can pick up a burden before Him, which is the Lord's burden, to care for people—Matt. 9:36—10:1; Lk 6:12-13; Acts 18:5.
  - B. In order for God to answer your prayer, the first thing God will give you is pressure; by this you will feel a need and realize that you have to go to God; then you will receive His answer—2 Cor. 5:14 note 2a; 11:28; Phil. 1:7-8.
- II. This can be typified by the high priest's putting on the ephod with the breastplate when he ministered—Exo. 28:2,4, 15-21, 29-30, 41:**
- A. The breastplate is the very central and ultimate point of the priesthood—Exo. 28:4:
    - 1. The breastplate is the uniform for the priestly ministry—Exo. 28:29.
    - 2. The high priest wore the breastplate comprising twelve precious stones, each of which was engraved with one of the names of the twelve tribes—Exo. 28:16,17a, 21; 1 Pet. 2:5.
  - B. By putting in the breastplate of judgment, the Urim and the Thummim, the high priest reads the situation of God's people, which issues in definite burdens of intercession that come from the judgment and leading of God—Exo. 28:29,30; Heb. 1:2; Rev. 3:14; cf. Exo. 28:30 notes 1 and 2; Luke 1:6 note 4.
  - C. The breastplate fastened on the ephod signifies that the ministry of intercession is firmly attached to Christ's unlimited care—Exo. 28:15-16:
    - 1. The ephod was made of two pieces that were held together at the shoulder—Exo. 28:7-8, 12, 27.
    - 2. As the High Priest, Christ has the fastening power, the tying strength, and the binding ability—Exo. 28:22-28; 39:15-18.
    - 3. The new ones whom we care for can be firmly attached to us through the ministry of intercession—2 Cor. 1:21; 1 Thes. 2:8, 17.
- III. This can also be typified by the consecration of the priests—Exo. 28:40-41, note 1; 29:1-14:**
- A. The Hebrew word *consecration* means "to have one's hands filled."
  - B. This filling up of the hands becomes a mark that sets him apart from everything that is common—Exo 28:41 note 1.
- IV. The more the Lord burdens us, the more spiritual gifts we shall have—Matt.25:14-17, 20-23:**
- A. In Matthew 25:15, the talents are the possessions in verse 14:

1. The more of His possessions the Lord gives to us, the more talents we shall have.
  2. The talent is not something of your natural birth; rather, it is altogether related to your burden.
  3. If you want to receive more talents, you must have a heart to care for the saints.
- B. In Matthew 11:30, the Lord's yoke is easy and His burden is light.
- V. **The burden of the apostle Paul is to spend and be utterly spent on behalf of others—2 Cor. 12:15.**
- VI. **Reviewing all of your acquaintances—relatives, neighbors, friends, schoolmates, and colleagues—and making a list of them, to pray over the name list and seeking the Lord's leading concerning who should be the first for you to take care of, and also keeping yourself open to the Lord for His leading to visit people other than your acquaintances—1 Cor. 9:16-23; Rom. 1:14-16; Heb. 13:17.**

**Excerpts from the ministry:**

### **PICKING UP A BURDEN TO CARE FOR PEOPLE**

After we reconsecrate ourselves and deal thoroughly with the Lord, we can pick up a burden before Him. There is no need to pray particularly for a burden. Whatever burden we pick up will be the Lord's burden. We should not primarily care for business affairs. We may pick up a burden for ushering in the meetings, but the ushering itself is not our burden. Rather, our burden is to take care of people by ushering. Picking up a burden in this way will make a great difference. If we usher after having thoroughly dealt with the Lord, whenever we usher, we will minister life. There will be an outflow of life from us to others' spirits. The Holy Spirit always honors this kind of serving. (*The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church*, p. 15)

### **THE FIRST THING GOD WILL GIVE YOU IS PRESSURE; BY THIS YOU WILL FEEL A NEED**

There is a brother who asked me why his prayer was not answered. I answered that it was because there was no pressure. He then asked why pressure was necessary? I replied that prayer can be answered only when there is pressure. I often ask the brothers if God has listened to their prayer. They frequently answer, "After I pray for something three or five times, I forget about it." Why do they forget? They forget because they do not feel the pressure of the need. It is amazing that most people are like this. If you forget, you cannot blame God for also forgetting. If you just pray a few words in a halfhearted way, God surely will not accomplish it for you. Many prayers are like a composition. It would be better if you did not pray these prayers at all. Many prayers have broken the first principle of prayer. No wonder these prayers are not answered. What is the first principle of prayer? It is not faith. It is not promise. It is need. Where there is no need, there is no prayer. Therefore, in order for God to answer your prayer, the first thing He has to do is put a need within you. The first thing God will give you is pressure. By this you will feel a need and realize that you have to go to God. Then you will receive His answer.

It was the same with Paul. He said, "For I could wish that I myself were a curse, separated from Christ for my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:3). If Israel could not be saved, he would rather lose his own salvation. These were not just words on his lips, nor were they an outburst of his emotion. The pressure of a need gave him such a feeling. Many

times people imitate the prayers of others, but there is no power, and the prayers are useless. This is because there is no pressure. Has anyone ever prayed, "God, if You will not answer me, I will not rise up"? If you have such feelings, and you utter such words, God will surely answer. Perhaps some will go home and say the same words. That is not what is important; what is important is to feel the pressure. (*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, set 1 , Vol. 10, pp 623-624*)

### **THE PRIEST CAN READ THE SITUATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE, FOR DEFINITE BURDEN OF INTERCESSION**

Exodus 28:30 says, "And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goes in before Jehovah." In David Baron's book *The Ancient Scriptures and the Modern Jew* there is an appendix containing an article on the Urim and the Thummim. According to this article, the twelve names on the breastplate included eighteen of the twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The remaining four letters were put on a piece called the Thummim. The Hebrew word Thummim means perfecters or completers. Thus, on the breastplate with the additional piece called the Thummim all twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet could be found. Just as the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet on the keys of a typewriter can be used to compose a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph, so the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet on the breastplate and the Thummim could be used to spell out words and sentences. (*Life-Study of Exodus, pp. 1405-1408*)

### **THE BREASTPLATE FASTENED ON THE EPHOD SIGNIFIES THE MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION IS FIRMLY ATTACHED TO CHRIST'S UNLIMITED CARE**

Not only is the breastplate the first item of the priestly garments; it is also the central item of all these garments. First the high priest wore a long robe to cover his entire body. Then over the robe he wore a tunic. This tunic was perhaps the length of a coat that reached to the knee. Upon the tunic the high priest wore the ephod. As we have indicated, we can easily understand what the robe and the tunic are, but the ephod is unique. ... The ephod was over the tunic, and the tunic was over the robe. In foregoing messages we pointed out that with the ephod there were two shoulder plates, onyx stones, on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Finally, the high priest wore the breastplate comprising twelve precious stones, each of which was engraved with one of the names of the twelve tribes. We have seen that the breastplate of judgment functioned as a heavenly, divine, and spiritual typewriter to make known God's leading. This heavenly typewriter is the very center of the priestly garments.

We have seen that 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. Once again we see that the types in the Old Testament reveal details that are not found in the New Testament. I can testify that I have come to know God, Christ, the church, and the leading of God not only through what is revealed in the New Testament, but also through the types in the Old Testament. (*Life-Study of Exodus, pp. 1384-1385*)

## **THIS FILLING UP OF THE HANDS BECOMES A MARK THAT SETS HIM APART FROM EVERYTHING THAT IS COMMON**

To consecrate someone to be God's priest is to sanctify him, and to sanctify him is to set him apart. In order for someone to be set apart to serve God as a priest, his hands need to be filled. This filling up of the hands becomes a mark that sets him apart from everything that is common. If I have something of Christ filling my hands, this indicates that I have been set apart. Whoever has Christ in his hands to fill his emptiness is set apart, sanctified.

If our hands are filled with Christ, those in our family, neighborhood, or place of employment will realize that we are different. But if we are common, if there is no difference between us and unbelievers, then we are not priests. What makes us different from others is that we have Christ filling our hands. Wherever we may be, at school, at work, or at home, we need to have hands full of Christ. Being filled up with Christ will then be a mark that sets us apart from those who are common. Others will recognize that we are different. They are still empty-handed, but our hands are full of Christ. To have hands filled with Christ is to be sanctified to be a priest. (*Life-Study of Exodus*, pp. 1468-1469)

## **THE MORE THE LORD BURDENS US, THE MORE TALENTS WE SHALL HAVE**

Verse 14 says that the man gave his slaves his possessions, but verse 15 says that he gave them talents. This indicates that the talents in verse 15 are the possessions in verse 14. In other words, the Lord uses His possessions as talents for us. For example, the gospel is the Lord's possession. But when it is given to us, it becomes our talent. Likewise, the truth is the Lord's possession. But when the truth is given to us, it becomes a talent. In the same principle, all the believers are the Lord's possessions. When the believers are given to us, they become our talents. Without all the believers, my talent would not be very big. Furthermore, the church is the Lord's possession. When the church is given to us, it becomes our talent. The more of His possessions the Lord gives to us, the more talents we shall have. In like manner, the more the Lord burdens us, the more talents we shall have. (*Life-Study of Matthew*, pp. 760-761)

## **REVIEWING ALL OF YOU ACQUAINTANCES —AND MAKING A LIST OF THEM, TO PRAY OVER THE NAME LIST**

As the members of the vital groups, we need to pay off our debt of the gospel (Rom. 1:14-15) to our relatives, who are our first inner circle, our closest circle of contacts. Many of our relatives are still not saved. We have to pray for them. Starting from today, the Lord may lead you to pray for them for six months. You do not need to pray too long. Every day after rising up, you may say, "Lord, my mother is still not saved." This is your prayer. After work in the afternoon, when you get in the car, you may say, "Lord, my mother is still not saved." Cry to the Lord in this way for half a year, and see what will come out.

. This is the way to clear up our debt of the gospel with our relatives, our first circle of responsibility. Our neighbors should be considered as our second circle, and our classmates and colleagues as our third circle. The Lord told His disciples that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem (the inner circle), in Judea (the second circle), in Samaria (the third circle), and to the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). (*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups*, pp 201-202)