

FEBRUARY 8

Exodus 28

I know the only thing the guys will take away from this section is the invention of underwear in v. 42. They will note that they were boxers.

Vs. 1-5 Notice that everything was made with meaning and it looked good. It was to give glory and honor to both God and the priest who represented the people before God. These garments were to be worn only when they were serving God.

Vs. 6-14 In the making of the ephod, notice the stones that were to be placed on the shoulders. Aaron was to be burdened with the responsibility for the people.

Vs. 15-30 You can see by the amount of space given to the breastpiece, that it was very significant. For the second time the names of the tribes of Israel are carried on his person as part of his dress. Verses 29-30 are the key verses here. For the first time in the Bible *the Urim and the Thummim* are mentioned. They were probably stones used to inquire of God for making judgments and decisions. The German Bible calls them "light and right (justice or truth)," and you get the idea that using them was to find truth and righteousness in making decisions and giving judgments. The only place in the Bible you see them used in a significant way is with David when he was running from Saul. Notice that in these verses it says three times that Aaron was to have the people *on his heart*. God says, *Thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the people of Israel on his heart before the Lord regularly.*

The disciple of Jesus bears on his heart the reaching of the lost and the making of disciples for the next generation. It doesn't burden us with guilt, but with joy and excitement; because God and the Spirit are with us to bless us. The Lord sits at the right hand of God **praying for us and working with us**. We bear the name of Christ as His ambassadors, *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20)* In the grace of Jesus and the plan of God, it should weigh on us that there are so many who do not know Christ. To think of the danger they are facing should weigh upon our hearts. *And they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the Lord. (Exodus 28:30)*

Having a reason to get up every morning should empower us. All things are ours in Christ.

Vs. 31-35 What is significant about the robe is the bells and the pomegranates in vs. 33-34. This chiming sound would be made when the priest was before the Lord in the Holy Place filling the lampstand, putting incense on the altar of incense and replacing the bread of the Presence. The people would recognize the sound of the priests representing God for them, and it would heighten the awareness of the priest that he was standing before the throne of God just beyond the veil. Anyone entering the Holy Place without this attire would die.

Vs. 36-38 The priest was to represent the people before God realizing their (and his) guilt before God and their need for holiness and forgiveness. This would make the sacrifices acceptable to God.

It is interesting here too that the German Bible uses almost the same words for *Holy to the Lord* as in the Lord's Prayer, "make the name of God holy." I think that is a part of the intent of these words on Aaron's chest. He was to present the Lord as holy before Israel.

Vs. 40-43 They were to serve the people before God with dignity both in heart and in attire.



Matthew 25:31-26:13

It is hard to keep all of the events of Christ's second coming in order. The fact that there are so many opinions of what will happen makes this hard. Also, the fact that there is an element of the Tribulation, "Jacob's trouble," that is very specific to Israel makes this order of events a challenge. The entire Tribulation will last seven years.

A general order of events is as follows. First, Christ comes for the church. All the believers of the church age, from Jesus' resurrection to that point, will be resurrected; and those alive on earth will be taken to Christ and changed into their resurrection bodies. They will be in heaven during the Tribulation.

The Jews will become believing, and they will present the gospel all over the earth during the catastrophic events of the first 3.5 years.

At the midpoint of the 7 years, it seems that an army from the north will come against Jerusalem but be destroyed in the mountains around the Dead Sea. Then the antichrist will come to Jerusalem, kill the two witnesses, break the peace agreement with Israel, desecrate the temple and launch a full scale persecution of the Jews. Destroying the Jews won't be as easy as it sounds, since the world will be wrecked and it will get worse. Still, it will be the most violent persecution of the Jews and followers of Christ that has ever taken place.

At the end of the Tribulation as the nations gather north of Jerusalem, Christ will return to the Mount of Olives. There He will gather all the Jews worldwide and resurrect all the OT believers and head to the battle at Armageddon.

After this victory, Jesus will take His throne in the temple in Jerusalem. Then He will call all the people of all the nations to come before Him. This judgment will be on the non-Jewish world. Their faith in Christ was seen in their willingness to risk life and limb in hiding and helping the Jews and other followers of Christ during the Tribulation. This is the judgment of the sheep and the goats.

Matthew 25:31-46

Vs. 31-46 This judgment will take place immediately after the Tribulation as Jesus takes His throne for His thousand-year reign over the earth. Those who helped the Jews/saints proved their faith in God and will continue in the Millennium, but those who did not help the believers proved their rebellion to God. This means that the Millennium will be seeded and begun with only believers. After the 1000 years, even with Satan bound and removed, the sin of man, with no influence other than from within, will rise up against God so that when Satan is freed, he will find hearts ready for rebellion.

V. 42 Note that the goats are condemned by what they didn't do. Too often we think that sin is only seen in what is done. Not praising God, thanking Him, or following Him is also sin.

Did you notice the differences in verses 34 and 41, and for whom those places were prepared?

This parable makes it necessary for the rapture of the church to occur before the end of the Tribulation. If all believers were removed from the earth and given resurrection bodies at the end of the Tribulation, there would be no more sheep, only goats. The best time for the rapture of the church is at the beginning of the Tribulation. The entire Tribulation is called "Jacob's trouble," and it is the fulfilling of Israel's destiny. The church has no reason to be there.

Matthew 26:1-13

Vs. 1-2 Jesus is now ready for crucifixion, except for the institution of the symbol of the new covenant and the final discourse to the disciples in John 12-17. Notice how He warns the disciples again.

Vs. 3-4 This means they wanted to kill Jesus before the feast. They will get their wish.

Vs. 5-13 This is Jesus' preparation for burial by Mary. What is touching in this act of love is that Mary, the rich, aristocratic woman, learned to do this from the example of a woman who was a sinner and low in society. Mary identified herself with those who were low and sinful, pleading before the feet of the merciful Savior. In love, facing the scorn of the disciples no less, she poured out ointment worth a year's wage at minimum wage.

V. 8 I hate to say this, but it looks like all twelve disciples had been reading, "Religion for Idiots." In John 12 it says that Judas Iscariot led the charge on this and the others followed. John mentions that Judas was the treasurer and a thief.

Vs. 10-13 I wonder if any of the disciples were shamed and surprised by this rebuke from Jesus. This momentary sacrifice is, and has been, a memorial to her and to all disciples, who pour out their lives at the feet of their Savior in fragrant sacrifice, working in His harvest.

Psalm 31:9-18

As you read this, remember that this is the experience God gave to David to teach and train him. In this psalm you can also sense some of what Jesus experienced.

V. 9 I could understand Jesus feeling something like this on the cross.

V. 10 This wouldn't have applied to Jesus.

V. 11 As with the first part of this psalm from yesterday, I see this in Jesus' death. When I read, *those who see me in the street flee from me*, it also sounds like a part of Isaiah 53:3, *He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not*. I think of Jesus being led through the streets of Jerusalem, a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. So too, says Paul, are His disciples in 1 Corinthians 4:9, *For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men*.

Vs. 14-18 I really identify with the cry for help and the plea not to be put to shame. It takes courage to follow the Lord. A common fear is that God will let us down and we will be shown to be fools for trusting Him and His Word. When you see how Jesus was mocked as He hung on the cross, it appears that His adversaries had the victory and He was put to shame. But that was only for a moment and only revealed their hearts. As the old sermon says, "That was Friday, but Sunday's a comin'." As disciples, we should expect no less. We are not better than our Master. We will share both His humiliation and His vindication.

I like v. 16. David wasn't given a permanent deliverance for many years, but God did give him little ones to encourage him and strengthen his faith. Even in our circumstances we are blessed by God allowing His face to shine upon us.

Proverbs 8:12-13

You can't deny that God wants us to seek wisdom. It isn't just knowing the Word, but using what we learn in such a way as to live skillfully and understand life. Knowing the Lord should make us like the Lord. He is wise beyond all comprehension. God is not only saying it is OK to hate evil, pride, arrogance and perverted speech; He's saying that when we are wise, we will.