

# Our Great High Priest

by Don McClure

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*Jesus Christ is the ultimate high priest, who fulfills the role of the high priest in the Old Testament and brings redemption, restoration, and forgiveness to humanity through his selfless love.*

**Duration:** 51:48

**Scripture:** Exodus 19:5, Exodus 28:36, Isaiah 49:15, Malachi 3:17, Matthew 5:17, Hebrews 1:1-2

**Topics:** "Self Worth", "Eternal Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the imperfections and struggles of our lives, comparing them to a car that is broken and failing. Despite our flaws, the preacher emphasizes that God sees value in us because He created us. The sermon also highlights the contrast between the people who were worshiping idols outside the tabernacle and the precious stones inside the Holy of Holies. The preacher encourages the audience to recognize their worth and accept God's love and acceptance. The sermon concludes by reminding listeners that one day, they will awaken in the likeness of Christ and share in His eternal life.

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## Transcript

Exodus chapter 28, though, is where I would like to ask you to turn. And I want to look at our great high priest, the one who goes into the holy place for us, the one who takes us in before him, as his great work of atonement is accomplished. But here, Exodus chapter 28, I'll read out of there.

Hear the Lord speaking to Moses, giving him instructions on the ministry going on within the tabernacle, and here specifically of the ministry of the great high priest. And take thou unto the Aaron thy brother and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab, Behu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty.

And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And these are the garments which thou shalt make, a breastplate, and an ephod, a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle. They shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. They shall make the ephod of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen with cunning work. And it shall have the two

shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof, and so shall it be joined together.

And the curious girdle of the ephod which is upon it shall be of the same according to the work thereof, even of the gold, of blue, of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen. Thou shalt take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the children of Israel. Six of their names on one stone, and the other six names on the rest on the other stone, according to their birth.

With the work of an engraver and stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel, and thou shalt make them to be set in pouches of gold. We'll hold it there and catch up with it here. One of the things that I heard, I believe it was way back in Bible school many years ago, but a wonderful little phrase about the Bible, that the new is in the old contained, and the old is in the new explained.

And it's really quite true. In one sense, there's not an awfully lot that is new in the New Testament. Much of what is in the New Testament is already contained in the Old Testament.

Some of the New Testament really merely records for us that so many things that were prophesied and laid out in the Old Testament did happen. Hold keeps the record straight. And so there isn't an awfully lot new in the New Testament.

And so in one sense, you can say the new is in the old contained, but also the old is in the new explained. That is, there's many wonderful pictures, types, symbols in the Old Testament that gain their understanding in the new. The writer of Hebrews says, God who at sundry times in diverse manners spake unto us by his prophets, now hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.

But here the writer tells us that at different times in different ways, it was all God speaking there by his prophets. But now all that the prophets were really speaking of, where it's finally fulfilled in Christ, he's now his son has come to make it quite clear. That's why Jesus, of course, later on in the Sermon on the Mount, as we are usually going through, he tells him, think not that I've come to destroy the law of the prophets.

He says, far from it. There won't be one jot or one tittle that I won't fulfill. And there as far as Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

Jesus once, of course, told the Pharisees, he said, you know, you search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life, but they are they that speak of me. The Old Testament, it's all about Christ. It's all pointing to him.

And many times when we look at it in the Old Testament, we don't quite understand it as well as when we have the New Testament to look at those two together. Whether it is, of course, the Passover lamb, which is perhaps the central and perhaps one of the greatest types of Christ in all the Bible, that there are these hundreds of thousands and indeed millions upon millions, tens of millions of animals, of lambs sacrificed year in and year out at the Passover. And yet finally there is John the Baptist when he looked upon Jesus, his first words, behold, the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

Man had presented his lambs by the millions, but now all of those were merely pointing towards the lamb that one day would come. We know that whether that the children of Israel, whether, you know, the rock from which they drank, we're told in first Corinthians five, that it was Christ. It was all about Christ.

He was the he's the water of life. He is the bread of life. He is the man of there is so many things that he fulfills that are so beautiful.

And I suppose one of the most remarkable and wonderful things that we have of all is the high priest of which, of course, is one of the greatest pictures to me of Jesus and his glory and his ministry, I suppose, in all of the Old Testament. And we know, of course, now as we pick up the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews three, one, it says, Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider they're the apostle and high priest of our calling, Christ Jesus. He said there when we are now looking at Jesus, we are looking at the high priest and hear the high priest in the Old Testament.

He was merely a type and a symbol of the great high priest that would one day come. We know from Hebrews four, 14 says, Therefore, it's a scene then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens. Jesus, the son of God.

Here he tells us that our great high priest is not merely one that was, but he is a high priest right now. This very moment he is passed into the heavens. And perhaps one of the most wonderful pictures is the book of Revelation tells us there of the tabernacle that is right now in heaven and that there it sits.

It is merely the way it's a picture in the Old Testament. We're looking at that tabernacle there of the real tabernacle that is in heaven, that when here we have Aaron dressed up in all of these robes and so beautifully standing out there and all of human glory that you try to put together, it is something there that is to speak of the heavenly glory and of the ultimate high priest doing his work in heaven. Jesus for us in Hebrews 9, 11, it says, But Christ being become a high priest of good things to come by a greater and a more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not this building here.

He says that right now Christ is it is as a high priest in the heavens in a heavenly real tabernacle. And so when we're looking here at Hebrews or pardon me, at Exodus 28 with the wonderful thing is now we can look at it and realize it's all about Christ. It's all about Jesus Christ.

When we are looking at it at him and we're looking at this, everything that we see of it in there to be able to realize it is a portrayal in one way or another of our Lord reveals something of him. And so we're not stealing or changing or messing with it at all than when we're merely wanting to see all we can of Jesus. And so here when we're looking here at the high priest and we see these garments, as God speaks to Moses, these are going to be garments for Aaron and for his sons.

And he says there that they are to have a glory about them. And I suppose there's a couple aspects of the glory. There's a natural glory, but there's also a spiritual glory, I think, as we'll see as we get into it.

First of all, there's a natural glory in the sense that they were made of the costliest and the most beautiful of materials, gold, blue, purple, scarlet, fine twined linen. Here, these were all of these things were of the greatest and the most beautiful of all materials. The blue and the purple and the scarlet were colors essentially usually set aside for royalty.

And if you are aware, you probably know that back in the Old Testament time, the deepest and the richest and the most beautiful of dyes were also very costly. That just to have an outfit of a natural color was, you know, just taken of the wool or of something that they would make it of, of the fabric was no great expense. But to come up with the richest and the deepest of dyes like purple and blue and scarlet, these were extremely extravagant.

Uh, processes, very costly. We go buy an outfit and the color isn't fit into the price very much, but it certainly did then. And the, the deepest and the richest, that's why they were, they themselves were set aside for royalty and very beautiful, very expensive.

And also notice that there's a sense there's no expense of labor or of riches there to make these. And of course, the reason now we know is here, God is making these unbelievably beautiful garments as we'll see, as we look at them. There are ones that they're simply speaking of Christ, but now to look at them a little closer here in verse six, it says, and they shall make an ephod of gold, of blue, of purple, of scarlet and fine twined linen with cunning work.

And it shall have two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof. And so shall it be joined together. The curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be the same according to the work thereof, even of the gold, blue and purple and scarlet and fine, uh, twined linen.

But here we have, once again, these materials, the richest and the deepest there that go into the ephod is it is first of all given to us, but then as this, this, this first garment is made, it is a, a covering essentially there that covered Aaron from head to foot, a single piece there of a garment joined together, uh, there with the edges there of it is joined, uh, there for him. But essentially as his head would kind of come through it, it was essentially like a robe that covered him entirely. Here, Aaron, of course, uh, being a human being representative there of our Lord, he had to therefore be covered essentially, you might say, and hidden entirely that when he went before God, it wasn't Aaron, it was there a picture of our great high priest and all the royalty and all the beauty and all the wealth and all the preciousness of Jesus Christ as he went in.

And I suppose, again, that when you would stop to look at the high priest, uh, there are the real high priest, Jesus, obviously we have got to be looking at the costliest of all materials there have ever been. Who could even begin to, to dream of telling a price for him? How could you begin to put a price on his redemptive love for you and me? How could you begin to put a price on his sacrificial act, you know, of offering up his life for us? How could you begin to put a price on the, on the fine twined linen of his spotless obedience? Here's something there is even the of linen again, an extremely precious fabric, and particularly if it was fine twine linen, there's something where it absolutely perfect. And, you know, many of their fabrics, uh, you know, they'd have all sorts of inconsistencies.

The, the wool would be thick and thin and all sorts of things. Even as in many of our garments still sometimes, but linen, particularly a fine twined linen, absolutely perfect. Absolutely consistent.

You could look at it and just see that the magnificence of it. And here, when you were, again, we're looking at Christ, we're looking at one that you can't even begin to guess the price, how would he have all the things that you would ever put a price on and all the world of all the things, what could ever become near to the story of our redemption, the story of God's love for you, of his sacrifice of his life for you, of his promise to come and gather you together unto himself, to take him home, to take you home, to be with him forever, and there one day to wake up in his likeness, to be conformed into his image and to share his life forever. How could you guess the price? It's priceless.

It's beyond anything. Notice as well of the ephod that it was something there as were all of the garments, but they essentially, they were, they were spiritually made, made by God's spirit for it says in verse three, and thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hard to do my filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. But notice

here that the, each one of these people actually making these garments is as good as they may normally be at their craft, as good as they may be working with stones and polishing the stones and as wonderful as they may be working with gold and as talented as they may be at, you know, at weaving the fabrics and making the linens and dyeing the, uh, the fabrics or at sewing and putting things together, we are told here about this specific garment that the endowed them with wisdom, the craft there to do it.

All the skill of heaven is gone into making this garment. And of course, when you stop and realize here is those that have the spirit of wisdom again, what a wonderful picture. I think as we stop and we're looking again at Jesus, the spirit of wisdom going in there to making the great or making the high priest, because there's never been a wiser act, I suppose, a greater act, a greater proof of wisdom than has gone once again into our great high priest.

Sit there and realize that when you and I are looking at Jesus Christ, we are looking at the wisdom of God. As the Bible says, Christ was the power and the wisdom of God. And to think here, a holy God, a pure God who could not so much as look upon sin.

And yet there he loved fallen man, sinful to the core, hopelessly lost. How do you take a holy God and not infringe for a moment on his holiness and yet allow his love to capture and redeem and to restore the hearts of his loss back to himself? And yet there, when you're looking at Jesus Christ, you are realizing all the wisdom of the ages has gone into this wonderful ministry of our high priest, who he is, on how we can come and love and approach sinful men, all of our weaknesses, all of our inconsistencies, all of our wretchedness. And yet there, when you look at him, you realize that that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, the Bible says.

The wonderful thing is we see this high priest, what wisdom. No wonder the angels, Peter tells us in the new Testament, the angels love to just sit in heaven and they literally watched the unfolding drama of redemption. Is there the angels looked and watched? How is God going to do this? Even themselves couldn't understand that there was such wisdom that was to be revealed that, that the angels themselves would see, but yet they did notice as well that this garment essentially has already said it covered the, the priest completely.

And once again, we're speaking of Jesus in a sense there that what Jesus is, what he was, what he will be, he, you know, he, he is completely always totally. There's no shadow of turning in him. What he is, he just is thoroughly, totally the high, the ministry of being a high priest is something when you pick up your Bible and you begin to look at it, you realize that this role covered Jesus from eternity past all the way into the incarnation.

It covered him from cradle to cross, to an empty tomb, to the ascension. And now he ever lives to make intercession for us. He has no other service.

He has no other ministry. In a sense, you might say it entirely is overtaking him. What Jesus is, he's a high priest and he's it from cover to core.

He's it thoroughly, totally, completely. He's entirely covered in it. When you watch and you realize his life day in and day out, every day that's recorded for us, you watch the high priest wake up and go out to minister, love, restore, redeem, encourage, fill, draw people to himself unendingly so.

And you know, that's the wonderful thing is the Bible tells us one day he'll take us in his glorious image and we'll awaken his likeness. His, when his ministry of being high priest is done, when it is at his fullest point, every one of us will awaken his likeness. I remember years ago, my mother, she'd say, I don't know why she said it, but I can remember her saying at times, you know, maybe there's something that would happen.

And she'd say, boy, I'd love to be a fly on the wall for that one, whatever it was. And, uh, and I, you know, that's when you're, you go to bed at night and you look at your brothers and say, Hey, something's wrong with mom. She wants to be a fly on a wall.

That's not much to look forward to. But, uh, you know, I think a lot of us, we actually, even when you think of heaven, many of us, we'd be willing just to be a fly on the wall. If I could just go, if I could just be there to wake up in heaven, I just, just to know I can go and be there.

I don't, I'm just a fly on a wall, but let me tell you, Jesus will have none of that. He'll have none of that. Every one of us, when we will awaken his likeness, we will share his identity.

We will share his glory. We will have all of his life within us, nothing less. And that's his high priesthood ministry.

He couldn't stand to have it anything different than that. And the think there that that is his business. And he is somebody that he being a lover of men, a forgiver of sins, being an advocate, being an intercessor for us.

It's not a side job with Jesus. It's not like it's something that he can just do when it's called upon, but he has another occupation or another interest. Redeeming, restoring, forgiving, interceding, being an advocate, presenting faultless.

It's all he does. It's all he wants to do. It's all he seems to be really concerned about.

And that's his ultimate glory. That's his ultimate identity of having a love that is so selfless and into our conversion and our restoration. Into our, for the full measure of every one of our lives today, how it ought to be as we prepare our own hearts for communion to realize this is his work tonight.

Is our priest to want to take us before God and they want to pour out his love upon us. Are we sinners? Of course. And nobody, the only qualification you fundamentally have to take communion is you got to be a sinner.

What is, what's communion to anybody but a sinner. It's certainly not much of a meal if you're hungry. You know what I mean? That when you start to look, what else could this be? It is of only a value to a sinner who needs an intercessor, who needs a high priest.

That's the qualification. And tonight, as we take a communion to realize that there is one who's not just stepping aside and say, Oh, it's the first Thursday of the month. And it's time now for me to put on my priestly robe and to go and do my duty of cleaning up these dirty sinners, you know, or something.

So, and then get back to something else. He had nothing else. This is what he does.

This is what he loves doing. And when you think there, you know, how phenomenal this is, then notice as well, verse nine of chapter 28, there he says, and thou shalt take two onyx stones engrave on them, the

names of the children of Israel, six of their names on one stone and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth with the work of an engraver and stone, like an engraving of a signet, thou shalt engrave the stones with the names of the children of Israel. Thou shall make them to be set in pouches of gold.

Now we have here is the high priest came in before God, as he would stand her into the holiest of all there. He didn't come in with the, for himself or his own glory for his own beauty. He didn't come in for that.

He came in with his people, with his loved people, his redeemed people. And how wonderful here is we see the high priest notice there that a couple of things about, as he came in with these stones that first of all, they were precious stones, precious stones. You know, as we look at these onyx stones that are there and there's something there where I think the wonderful thing, he doesn't go out and just get a, you know, go get just some dirt or go get some stones or go get a piece of granite and do something.

No, he was instructed there. These, God instructed Moses. He said, you get onyx, you get these beautiful stones there.

And as you get them, because this is something that this is representing the redeemed, two stones, one on each shoulder, six of the first, the first six that according to their birth, and then the other six according to their birth on the other shoulder. But there, as they came in, it was something there as the high priest presented them, he presented them as precious before God, precious before him. Malachi 3:17, the Lord says to the children of Israel, they should be mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

When I make up my jewels, God looks there at his own redeemed. He looks at his people. He says, when I make up my treasures, my jewels, you'll be mine.

They weren't acting like it. Exodus 19, five, the Lord says, he says, you should be a peculiar people to me above all people. All the earth is mine.

He says, but you, you're peculiar. You are special to me. Oh, maybe some are in the, as we would look around.

And I suppose you can look around tonight and, you know, some are handsome or cuter or prettier or smarter or, uh, more talented or a little more or less of all of this other stuff as we measure each other. But the wonderful thing is from God's perspective, in his eyes, there's none so fair when he looks at you tonight and he looks at another, his, the, the preciousness that you have in his eyes. It is no less precious than any other being.

I suppose one of the most astounding truths to me of all the Bible, and I wouldn't believe it if it wasn't for Jesus saying it himself, I couldn't, I don't think anybody else could convince me of it, but in John 17, and when Jesus is praying for us, he says, father, for thou lovest them as thou lovest me. Now that's an amazing thing. I mean, to sit there and to think that God looks at you tonight and he loves you as much as he loves his own son.

Again, I would think that would be heresy to say it if it wasn't that Jesus said it. And then I've got, you know, to realize this is what he said. It wasn't Paul who I could argue with him.

Paul, I think that's blasphemous. But to think there that as far as Jesus is concerned, he looks and God is no respecter of persons. Maybe as you would look up and down the aisle, you can see why I know why

God would love them, or I think I know why I may love them, but to stop and realize from God's perspective, he sees something that none of us, none of us have seen.

He sees the pearl of great price in Matthew chapter 13, or as well, the treasure that was hid in a field that there, the merchant, the man there who found the fee when he found this treasure in his field, he went and he sold all that he had to buy the whole field for a treasure that was hidden it right now.

You know, you and I were, we're like a pearl in a sense that we don't see anything, you know, a pearl, all it really is a pearl is just a piece of sand that somehow another got in an oyster and started causing a great irritation so that it begins to cover it over to try to soften there the tender and insides there of the oyster and there because of the pain it covers it and it covers it over and over and over and there he is certainly there that piece of sand knows that it's very core I'm just a piece of sand I don't know what's going on around me it doesn't see the pearl that is being formed it doesn't see the beauty that one day there in heaven when that it's oyster is opened up and what it has become by the by the making of that oyster by the way a pearl is the only precious stone that

actually cost the life of the creator of it and that's what you and I are we're precious we cost the life of the one who created us and the one who gave us and converts us and and makes us what we shall be but at the same time he looks in the at it and from his perspective what he's doing we see ourself we're just buried out in the field or something God sees a treasure hidden it buys the whole field dies for the sins of the whole world for those that will come to him how precious we are and wonderfully and I'm so grateful that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder I'm so grateful that God looks and he says I'll decide who's beautiful not you I'd certainly mark myself out and as I look around number of you too no but the but I mean we'd look there and when we wanna if we were doing the

picking who would who would think of this but God the wonderful thing is God has an eye like no other eye God doesn't just simply see what it is he sees what it will be I remember I had been married very long only a couple of months it's that we've been married 34 years now 34 wonderful years for me about five or six for my wife I think but anyway the but we hadn't been married very long and I was at a time in my life where I thought I understood women I think a lot of guys for the first couple months of marriage think that and then you give up after a while but the but I had something happen to me after only a couple of months of marriage one of the most phenomenal things I think ever happens to human being their entire lifetime first of all we got married and we're dirt poor so what

extra gifts we had are things we didn't want there we had duplicates of we took him back to get all the cash we could and we got a pretty good haul there you know that but wanted to see the wisdom of God in all of this one day an opportunity came to me that I think most most people never have in their entire life but an opportunity was granted to me by God to do something and again few people ever even dream of having happened but an opportunity came for me to buy a 1953 Porsche and that and all of our money was enough to get this I mean talk about God's hand you know doing something and to me I'll never forget is I went and did this no discussion with the other parties of the house and I came home with this thing I was out of you know this world in this I couldn't believe what had

happened this is so exciting to me and I it wasn't a great shape either but it it actually we figured it about 10 paint jobs that it had during its lifetime so far because you could see about that many different colors of paint somewhere on the car it had a few dents in it and the interior was pretty rotten and the headliner I remember how it kind of hung down and the fabric of that and it sounded pretty bad and burned oil and

leaked oil and the brake squeaked and the clutch slipped but other than that but I remember when I came home with this thing I was just a huge and you never seen a human being more thrilled more blessed than when I drove up in when Jean looks at this thing she walks out and she's of course mystified but she says what is this I said honey don't say that out loud

somebody might hear that you don't know what this is you know how can you talk this way this is a Porsche it's a 53 Porsche do you these are not around these are not available for mirroring humans once in a while somebody is bequeathed a blessing like this and this is us and she's what well how did we how did we come by this God provided for everything with what well the money what money well the you know the money you mean the money that was for food and for for utensils and for table and a chair to eat on and and pots and pans to cook with I said I'm looking there said that's the problem with so many people you can get that stuff anywhere anytime that is always going to be around 53 Porsches are not around and then I realized the difference between men and women and one of the major

differences to me is I look there and I realized that my wife as precious as she is had no faith had no comprehension of either what this was and what it was going to be yet again she just had worldly eyes that just saw it for as it sat there I had no such eyes I would literally sit out this is true I would sit out I had a little beach chair and I would sit out there and just stare at this thing I was so excited with this and this thing what she saw what I saw were entirely different I could go right up to that Porsche and I could go up there and just kind of you know brush it with and I could see through 15 coats of lacquer my face shining right back at me smiling in this beautiful paint job I could listen that engine and it just purred like a kitten hmm I could sit inside of it and

smell the new leather and just and she couldn't do any of that she looked at it and she saw it for it was I saw it for what it was going to be it never did become that in my keeping but to tell you the truth is an issue she does remember this is that we didn't sell it for enough that bought our tickets going to and back from England to school over there so God provided and did use it and you wouldn't have got anything for old pots and pans I assured her that but the but the thing is so but the wonderful thing is is he did you see Jesus when he looks at you and when you're upon his shoulder he sees two things you've never seen he sees your created glory from which we all fell and he also sees your future glory that only he can restore you to we don't see that but there is a preciousness

there is a beauty that is there within each one of his redeemed there that when you sit and realize now and to him who is able to present you thoughtless without flaw to realize that one day you and I will awake in his likeness in his image there will be something that the beauty that we would look at it and what we see of our life now and as we see it dented and scarred and the engine you know makes noise and we burn oil and drip oil or all the you know and we're the brakes squeak and the transmission slips and everything seems to fail we say what could God ever see in this well God made it God made you and what he sees you will yet see notice as well that these stones that they're fastened there there their settings and gold and they're fastened with chains there's that they're set upon

the high priest shoulder and set in these wonderful beautiful you know pouches of gold to fasten their God he tells the children of Israel and Jeremiah says therefore with loving-kindness have I have I drawn thee and the wonderful thing to realize that God's love he looks at you and he looks at me seeing and knowing what only he can see and know mystery to the rest of us but there is he sees he sees something that he says I'm going to draw you to me I'm going to draw you to my love and when we stop and realize how great the love of Christ is no wonder Paul once said the love of Christ constrains me to think that there's

somebody who sees in me what I have yet to see who has a plan for me that I have yet to imagine it unfolding that has yet for me what no one in the world would even

suspect let alone me and yet what he sees he loves and I'm upon his shoulder the wonderful thing notice as well about them is that these stones as I said they're on the high priest shoulders he puts the redeemed and the strongest part of his body you know you go maybe buy something you some things you maybe carry out with a finger you know you go to the market and give you one a little plastic bag you hook your finger through it and you walk out with it some things you may take your whole hand some things you may take two hands but there when there's something there that there that when you take it and you put the full weight of it on your shoulder you are now putting it upon the strongest part of your body even as Jesus tells in the parable of the lost sheep there that when the shepherd

went and he found the sheep what did he do he laid it upon his shoulders rejoicing that's what he does with you that just to think there if a shepherd would just do it with a sheep how much more to realize that God takes you and me and he puts us on his shoulders and he rejoices over Isaiah 46 for Isaiah says even in your old age I am he even your to your gray hairs will I carry you I have made and I will bear and even I will carry and deliver you God looks at you and he says I'll carry you even when you're old when the gray hairs are there when your strength you know it would would wane that makes no difference to him he said I made you I will bear you I will carry you I deliver you that's what he thinks of us do you know that he carries you right now do you know that this very moment

this very hour you have no need to carry yourself not at all and yet I wonder how many of us walking here tonight feel or theoretically or theologically knowing that but in actual reality of our own life we are carrying the way to the world whether it's our marriage our husband or a wife our children whether it's our career our health there it weighs upon us and we're like the story perhaps you heard of a hitchhiker there is one day out there hitchhiking and a farmer pulls over in his pickup truck sees him there swings the door open he says come on in I'll give you a ride and you're this hitchhiker so grateful that he pulled over and gave him a ride as he gets in the hitchhiker sits down but he's got his knapsack and he's holding on to the knapsack and he's driving down the road the

farmer looks over and realized well this fellow still he's holding up his knapsack he's straining under didn't see he's sweating what's this is crazy and he looks over at me says young man he says why don't you put your knapsack down on the floor young man looks at me says no I am so grateful that you picked me up I couldn't ask you to carry my knapsack too but is that not how many of us are what is it that on one hand Jesus is carrying our entire life right now and yet our arms are weary our hearts are weary our minds are weary we've come tired tonight and he says I'm on you you're on my shoulders I want to carry you an old poem says bear not a single care thyself one is too much for thee the work is mine and mine alone thy work is to rest in me and when you and I when we find there you

know that God designed us in such a way not to carry anything but our entire life to be resting in our high priest then notice as well the breastplate there of the high priest in verse 15 it says and thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work and after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it of gold of blue of purple scarlet fine twine linen thou shalt make it four squares shall it be doubled a span shall be the length thereof and a span the breadth thereof and thou shalt set it in settings of gold of four rows of stones the first throne shall be shall be sardis and topaz and carbuncle and so forth as now he gives these four rows of stones and going over into verse 21 it says in the stone shall be with the names of the children of Israel twelve according to their names

like the engraving of a signet one stone with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes now once again here here we have now these stones not on the high priest shoulders but now upon his heart and here we have do your four rows of twelve three in a row or twelve stones this time all precious all different and each one of them with one individual name of the tribes of the children of Israel once again all precious but now no two are alike every every one of them was created for a different dimension of beauty every one of these stones though all of them precious all of them reveal a different beauty than another and something there I think that for us to stop and realize is that that's again how I believe God looks at us no two of us are alike that makes the many of us maybe

say you know I know that but I wish that there was two of somebody else and none of me I wonder how many of us tonight I'd love it if there was you know two Chuck Smiths none of me and maybe your wife would say I'll go for that you know or something but the well I wish there was two K Smiths well we'll both go for those you know or whatever we both trade with anybody else but oftentimes when we stop there and realize from God's perspective he created every one of us and every one of us very very different and every one of us has a different story eternally to share of God's as he takes us in as he molded us and he fashioned us as he polished us that one day every one of us the stone in its finest hour when it's all converted totally and in his image every one of us will reveal a different

glory we'll have a different story there will be one glory of an Abraham and another and I was in and another of a Jacob and another of a Sarah and another of an Esther and another of a Hannah and they will all have something of God's revealed glory that only they could reveal some story of redemption that only they eternally in heaven could really share that all every one of us will have a different story and whether it says well for the woman caught in the act of adultery they'll be something of God's mercy and of his glorious mercy that she'll reveal that that Sarah or Abraham or Esther never could there'll be something there is the light shines off the diamond of her converted and restored perfectly restored life in heaven the story of God's love that nobody else could tell there'll

be something there the thief on the cross there at the last moment of God's instantaneous grace poured out that nobody else could reveal it like he will as he's perfected and he's in his image or the demoniac filled with the demons and yet there's something of God's power that he'll have a story of in in heaven again only his no one else will have it God made every one of us that way there is a story that he is fashioning he is forming that one day when every one of us wake in his likeness and each one of us there won't be see any of us it'll still kind of be gnarly or you know a stone under process or somebody say are you sure that's a diamond there I don't think that's a diamond I've seen diamonds that's not a diamond you know or that couldn't be a ruby that couldn't be and I don't know

diamond ruby I'm sure there's others I just can't think of their stones but I should ask when you women I suppose but the but all these different stones every one of them when they're polished and they're finished they reveal something the wonderful thing is is from God as he looks at us these are things that are these stones as well they're not only individual but they're bound to his heart they're bound to God's heart he loves them he just doesn't carry them it's not just a duty it is a passion no wonder David asked what is man that thou art mindful of him with a son of man that thou visited as him God why are you so consumed with man and then David of course actually in Psalm 80 goes on he answers there is God that give the glory that he created us to have and the plan that he still

has yet for us but the wonderful thing is is that God is unbelievably obsessed with us in Psalm 49 15 he says can a woman forget her suckling child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb

yay they may forget yet I will not forget you God looks and he says I know you and I can't forget you you see once one child is climbed up on his lap once you sat there for a moment can't forget you never forget that you've been there once you know it's something there of his love he's been known to you some time ago I was on an airplane returning home from a conference or something sitting next to me was a fallen I started talking to him and one thing came to another and I asked him what he did and he said he was an attorney asked me what I did and I was I said I'm a preacher and so

we both said well we got a lot of jokes to share and but after we talked for a few minutes and I asked him if he was a Christian or anything he said well I once was I said tell me about it he says back in the 60s I was going to Yale and he says I my life was all messed up and there was a very good friend of mine who lived in Washington state of Washington and he called me and shared with me how his life had been transformed by Christ so much so as he got me literally at the end of the the for the summer vacation or the beginning of it I got on a plane I went out I was so moved by the change I heard about his life I went out there with him and I no sooner got that I received Christ and I spent that summer every day we were in the Bible every day he says I couldn't get enough of God so much

so is when I returned back to Yale I changed my major to religious studies but it wasn't long till back there there was no fellowship and they didn't seem to believe the Bible and one thing led to another and after a while I changed my major and went into law now I'm a land-use attorney for the city of San Jose told me and I said do you ever think about the Lord he says I read my Bible now then I said what do you think he thinks of you he said I don't know I said I can tell you what he thinks of you he's never forgotten you the day you open your heart to him he's never forgot you you may have left him and you may be far but you're not far from his love and far from his memory and and coming home is not far he'll never forget you and I shared with him out of Isaiah can a mother forget her

suckling child and even Isaiah said well they may I won't forget you and he turned to me and I can remember just as his eyes kind of lit up with a thought he says do you think they could be true I said I know it's true the Bible says it but maybe some of us tonight do you know how much he loves you I don't care where you've been I care we've been then notice as well it's time to have communion here so just two things quickly the plate pure gold on the high priest you know on this on his forehead over in verse 36 it says there and thou shalt make a plate of pure gold and engrave upon it the engravings of the signet holiness to the Lord here is the high priest would come in and there he'd have the the names on his shoulders to carry upon his heart to love there upon his you know over his

forehead this wonderful solid gold no no no nothing plated here this was through and through holiness to the Lord he brought these people in representing them absolutely holy absolutely clean that's what was on Aaron's forehead and as Jesus brings you and I as he carries us into his presence revealing us to God he and now he ever liveth to make intercession for us and presents us and then also in verse 33 and 5 I just realized I skipped by that but he says beneath upon the hem thou shalt make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet and around to the hem thereof and bells of gold between them round about golden bell and a pomegranate golden bell and pomegranate upon the hem of the robe round about and here there was something now as the priest came in he came in with his bells in the

pomegranates or bells and smells fragrance but the wonderful thing here is here to realize there that maybe you and I we may think tonight when we take communion God will you forgive me you got to be angry you must be disappointed with me I'll tell you when Aaron came in with them there were bells smells there was a melody there is music and a fragrance when Aaron came in with them they were a song to

God's heart a sweet smelling savor under his nostrils to think that when you and I just as a sinner we come and say God will you forgive me and to think it's not just well I'm willing oh well do you mean it of course I do listen to the music of heaven listen to my love come home come home the interesting thing about this I suppose about the most interesting thing to me is only four chapters

later in the book of Exodus these very same people that in the quietness and the beauty of the Holy of Holies these wonderful stones were actually down the hill begging Aaron Moses isn't back make us a God that we can worship and here they are half drunk and half naked dancing around in an idolatrous life not even thinking of God but yet to realize there is God looks at you and I were somewhere in there but how he looks there and he and his very same people that are outside the tabernacle outside arguing with each other not getting along having their strife and their struggles and their burdens in the holy place of all they're loved and they're perfect and they're accepted and that is the power of the bread in the cup that is you and I as we have communion together tonight maybe some of

you maybe we need to come and realize Lord I am precious I don't know what you see I have no idea of what my story of redemption could be what it is that I could ever reveal of your love that nobody else in all the world could but I want to know it maybe some of you you come tonight and you're carrying things in your own arms when here we come to communion and the high priest says put it on my shoulders I will carry you your old age and your gray hairs I deliver you I'll carry you I'll bear you up but for all of us I forgive you and I love forgiving you it's all I do and I love doing it he can look and say with every one of us if you'll just let me be who I am all you have to do is be who you are no lies I won't lie about me you don't have to lie about you I'll forgive you now come and

the love of Christ will constrain you I promise father we thank you for your love we thank you dear Lord for your desire tonight to take us into communion with you in a wonderful way and Lord we ask that as we do take it you touch your heart you'd polish the stone a little he carries upon your shoulder and upon your heart Lord we just thank you and praise you for this opportunity you have given to us made none of us miss it we ask it in Jesus name

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