

Exodus 39:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, that they should be stones for a memorial to the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Analysis

Placing the engraved stones 'on the shoulders of the ephod' for 'a memorial' (זִכָּרוֹן, zikaron, remembrance) before YHWH teaches that the high priest represented Israel constantly in God's presence. The shoulder signifies strength and support; Aaron bore Israel's names not on weak hands but strong shoulders. This memorial function prefigures Christ's perpetual intercession—He ever lives to make intercession (Hebrews 7:25), bearing His people's names before the Father. The phrase 'as the LORD commanded Moses' (the 2nd of 15 times in chs 39-40) underscores covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

The 'memorial' concept (zikaron) appears throughout Scripture for practices that bring covenant realities before God and people (Passover, Sabbath, stones at Jordan). Aaron wearing Israel's names symbolized his representative capacity—he stood before God on their behalf.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's continual intercession, bearing believers' names before the Father, impact your prayer life?
2. What does Aaron's memorial stones teach about God's covenant faithfulness to remember His people?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשֶׂם	אֶת־	עַל־	כְּתֹפֶת	הָאֵפֹד
And he put	H853	H5921	them on the shoulders	of the ephod
H7760			H3802	H646
אֲבִנֵי־	זָכָרֹן	לְבָנֵי־	יִשְׂרָאֵל	כְּאֵשֶׁת־
that they should be stones	for a memorial	to the children	of Israel	H834
H68	H2146	H1121	H3478	
צִוָּה	יְהוָה	אֶת־	מֹשֶׁה׃	
commanded	as the LORD	H853	Moses	
H6680	H3068		H4872	

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 4:7 (References Lord): Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

Exodus 28:12 (References Lord): And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel: and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial.

Exodus 28:29 (References Lord): And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the LORD continually.

