

## Exodus 28:12

*“And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders as a memorial.”*

When I am deciding on what to wear, one of the key factors is comfort. I have owned clothing that fit and might even have looked nice, but I rarely ever wore, because it simply was not comfortable. I imagine if I had a coat with two large stone shoulder pads, it would not be my first choice for a Sunday service.

When it came to the clothing of the priests, comfort was not the goal. Instead, their clothing was designed for symbolism. Every article they wore spoke volumes regarding God and the ministry. One of the most telling pieces was the stone shoulder pads with the names of the tribes engraved upon them. Each morning, when the priests suited up, they were reminded that they carried the burdens of the people into the presence of the Lord. I cannot think of a better way to illustrate the need for, and value of, intercessory prayer, than a man carrying the names of his friends and family members on his shoulders.

The New Testament reminds us to bear one another's burdens. This can be accomplished by entering the Throne of Grace on behalf of another and praying for the things which are bearing weight upon their lives. When a friend is struggling with loss, sickness, confusion, or any other of a long list of things that tend to weigh upon us, we can ease their burden with intercession.

Take some time to make a list of people close to you and begin to carry their burdens into the presence of God. You will be amazed by how much you begin to care about them, as well as, seeing how God intervenes in their lives.

Pastor Jim