

*God's
Precious
Jewels*

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A Study of the
Stones on the
Breastplate of
Judgment

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my heavenly Father who continuously reminds me that, “. . . the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psalm 19:7)

To my earthly father, who lives a life of faith before me.

To my siblings, who always encourage me and are so, so supportive.

To my husband, who is my friend, my confidant, and my best critic.

And also to my pastors and Sunday School teacher, whose teachings and spiritual guidance have been very instrumental in the development of this book.

INTRODUCTION

One of our Sunday school lessons involved studying the tabernacle of the Old Testament and its properties. A part of that lesson included the high priest and his garments. Our Sunday school teacher asked us to pick an item, do research, and present our findings to the class. I chose the breastplate of judgment. In Exodus 28, God gave Moses explicit instructions regarding how the breastplate should be made, who should wear it, and why it should be worn. God told Moses in Exodus 28:29:

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 . . . and you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones . . . and the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel . . . each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.

Three things about this verse intrigued me. First of all, the phrase, *breastplate of judgment*. Secondly, the word *memorial*: what

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was there about the names of the children of Israel and the breastplate of judgment that God wanted to remember? Thirdly, why did God want the high priest to wear the breastplate of judgment in the Holy Place?

I was also curious about the Holy Place, where Aaron was to wear this breastplate of judgment; what does that have to do with me today? I found that the Old Testament reveals that Aaron, the high priest, was to enter into the Holy of Holies annually to atone for the sins of the people. But in the New Testament, Christ Jesus ushered in a new and better covenant.

Hebrews 9 reveals to us that . . . *neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . .* That chapter went on to say that . . . *“Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. . . .* By now I was excited! Christ, our High Priest, is in the presence of God (the holiest of holy), and He is continually bearing our names upon His heart before God.

My research then led me to Malachi 3:16–17 which says: *“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened; and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. ‘And they shall be mine,’ said the Lord of Hosts, ‘in that day when I make up my jewels.’”*

While reading this my heart cried out, “When You say seek My face, Thy face will I seek. Father, what did it mean when the Word said, “. . . *they that feared the Lord*”? And my Father in His gracious mercy answered me. Webster’s dictionary says fear means to *reverence*. And reverence means to have a profound and adoring respect for someone, to the point where you deliberately posture your heart to seek one’s favor and bow to one’s wishes.

When I read this, my heart almost burst from the revelation I

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received. It gave me a glimpse of the heart of God. In this verse our God was sending us a love note! His heart was touched by the fact that there were those of His people who feared (reverenced) Him, gathered together, thought about Him, and spoke about Him. The Lord heard this, and His heart was made glad. He wanted to memorialize the fact that there were those who demonstrated love for Him, freely and without prompting. His heart spontaneously said, *“they shall be mine . . . in that day when I make up my jewels.”*

I believe *that day* God spoke of are the perilous times we live in now.

I began to write the narrative of this study on September 11, 2001. I worked the night shift at that time and had been off the night before. I rose early on the morning of September 11th and spent some time with the Lord and then sat at the computer and began to write. I wrote all morning until about 12:00 noon when my husband called and asked if I had heard the news. I didn't know what was going on, because I didn't have the television on. I was communing with God.

God's heart rang out to me in Isaiah 62:1–3: *“For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.*

“Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.”

I had asked the Lord, “Father, what is a *diadem*?” Webster's dictionary states that a diadem is a crown of royalty exemplifying power and dignity.

Our Father is saying in these verses that He was not going to *rest* until the righteousness and the salvation of His people—His royal priesthood that exemplified His might, power and dignity—would burn like the brightness of a lamp for the world to see! Can you

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hear the passion in our Master's heart? Oh, imagine the joy that He felt when He noted that there were those who agreed with His heart, agreed that righteousness and salvation shall reign!

God also is saying in Exodus 19:5 “. . . *now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people . . .*” The Scriptures also reveal in Zechariah 9:16: “. . . *and the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.*” Did you know that the archaic definition of *ensign* is a banner carried at the top of a pole and used to mark a rallying point in a battle? It has never been more evident that mankind is in a spiritual battle than on September 11, 2001. God is looking for a people who will be an ensign of His love, might, and power in the midst of the battle between good and evil. This is not a fairy tale like *The Lord of the Rings*. This is a true battle between Satan and God for control over God's creation. Oh, to be like the stones of a crown in His eyes; to be lifted up as an ensign over His land!

This study of the stones in the breastplate of judgment will reveal to us what is required to be a precious jewel in God's eyes, what is required to be His royal priesthood, and a mighty soldier in His army.

CHAPTER 1

In Exodus 28 God gave explicit instructions regarding how to make the holy garments the high priest was to wear. The breastplate of judgment is part of those priestly garments. This chapter also reveals that the breastplate of judgment was to be made of four rows of stones, with three stones in each row. God gave explicit orders what stones were to be used; and the order in which they were to be placed. He stated, “. . . *thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle . . . the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond . . . the third row a lique, an agate, and an amethyst . . . and the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper.*”

God is a God of order. Everything He does He does for a reason; and in each thing He does there's a message for us all. Therefore, there's a message hidden in this breastplate of judgment and in the manner in which its stones are set.

In my endeavor to find this hidden message, my research led to the development of Table I.

TABLE I

STONES	STONE'S PROPERTIES	SON OF ISRAEL	MEANING OF NAME	BLESSING OF JACOB ON HIS SONS (GENESIS 49)
		First Row		
Sardius	Corundum; red, hard tough stone, can be used as an abrasive (used for smoothing and polishing)	Reuben	Behold a Son	My first born, my might, the beginning of strength, the excellency of dignity and power
Topaz	Salt of aluminum which has good electrical and thermal conductivity, high reflectivity and resistive to oxidation	Simeon	Hearing	
Carbuncle	A garnet, red, precious stone that also is an abrasive (used for smoothing and polishing)	Levi	To be joined to; to abide with	
		Second Row		
Emerald	A beryl, which is a salt of beryllium and aluminum used as a hardening agent in alloy (a metal mixed with a more valuable metal to give it durability)	Judah	Praise	Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies
Sapphire	A corundum; massive crystal used as an abrasive (smoothing and polishing agent)	Dan	To Judge	Shall judge his people
Diamond	One of the hardest stones in the world; used as an abrasive for smoothing and polishing	Naphtali	My Wrestling	Is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words
		Third Row		
Ligure	Also called zircon; precious orange stone used in alloys, has the capacity to be resistant to corrosion	Gad	A Troop	He shall overcome at the last
Agate	Fine grained transparent crystal (A Quartz) used in industry to set right a frequency or keep it on course	Asher	Blessed	His bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties
Amethyst	Purple crystalized quartz, used as an abrasive as well as an agent used to set a frequency or keep it on course	Issachar	Hired for Payment	A Strong ass crouching down between two burdens. . . . And bowed his shoulder to bear and became a servant unto tribute
		Fourth Row		
Beryl	A salt of beryllium and aluminum used as a hardening agent in alloy (a metal mixed with a more valuable metal to give it durability)	Zebulun	To Dwell With	Shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto zidon
Onyx	Translucent quartz in parallel layers of different colors; used to set right a frequency or keep it on course	Joseph	The Lord Shall Add	Fruitful bough whose branches run over the wall
Jasper	Translucent quartz of many colors, especially green: used to set right a frequency or keep it on course	Benjamin	Son of the Right Hand	Shall ravin as a wolf in the morning shall devour the prey and at night he shall divide the spoil

Chapter One

Some scholars of the Bible say that the names on the stones in the breastplate of judgment are inscribed according to the tribes that were listed in Numbers when Israel's first census was taken. However, that listing of the tribes leaves out Levi and Joseph. This study is based on what was done in Exodus 39:14, when the priest's clothing were actually made. That Scripture says: "*And the stones were according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes.*"

Therefore, this study of the stones in the breastplate of judgment includes the names of all of the sons of Israel in the order they were born to him.

When I looked at this table as a whole, several things jumped out at me. The first thing that occurred to me was that each stone with its corresponding property, the meaning of the name of the sons of Israel, and the blessing the sons received from their father, contained a message in itself. If you look at the meaning of the names of the first three sons of Israel in the first row of stones; you will see the hidden message: *Behold a son, hearing, be joined to, abide with.*

Isn't God awesome!